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## **NIGERIAN CULTURAL VALUES AND ADVERTISING ETHICS: PRIMA GARNET, DDB CASERS, LINTAS, NOAH'S ARK AND CONCEPT UNIT ADVERTISING AGENCIES IN PERSPECTIVE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the Nigerian cultural values and edvertising ethics with a view to find out if some advertising agencies in Nigeria like; Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit are ethically based as well as if they reflect Nigerian culture in advertisements that they create. The specific objectives of this study were: (1) To ascertain if Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies create advertisements that portray Nigerian cultural values from the residents of Lagos, Abuja and Port- Harcourt. (2) To investigate among the residents of Lagos, Abuja and Port –Harcourt whether advertisements created by Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies were based on advertising ethics. (3) To identify which advertising agency reflects Nigerian cultural values in advertisements most among the residents of Lagos, Abuja and Port-Harcourt. The theoretical framework was the Dominant theories of Ethics. Survey was the research method used while the questionnaire was the instrument for gathering data for this study. The respondents for this study were purposively selected from three major cities which make up the three main ethnic groups or regions (Northern, Western and Eastern regions) in Nigeria. A total of 360 copies of the questionnaire were shared using stratified sampling technique into 120 copies for each state to be represented equally. This study concluded that there is a strong link between advertising and culture and this relationship should not be underestimated for positive advertising impact to be achieved. This study therefore recommends that, APCON should ensure that all advertisements portrayed in the mass media meet ethical standards of the profession and reflects the culture of the people of Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Nigerian cultural values, Advertising, Advertising agencies, culture, ethics, products and services

## INTRODUCTION

Culture has an abundance of a people's way of acceptable patterns of behaviour which the people have to conform to as non-conformity to such living patterns designed by the people to suit their lifestyle becomes tagged as ethically wrong. Culture as stated by UNESCO (Paris 20 October, 2005, CLT 2005/convention Diversite) refers to the wide range of activities which are learned and transmitted from one generation to the other. UNESCO (2005) puts it that, cultures are most of the time expressed or transmitted through the efforts based on creativity of an individual, groups and organizations. This is where advertising agencies are supposed to come in to play the role of helping to transfer and educate their target audience with these sets of cultural values attached to an advert message (Nwagbara & Umor, 2012). The extent of the presence of culture in Nigerian advertisement with respect to culture is yet unknown.

In the words of Asemah and Edegoh (2013), they add that,

‘you cannot remove culture from advertising because to get the desired influence that will connect a consumer (active or potential) to like and buy a product or engage in a service, such advertisement must be in tandem with or reflect the culture and cultural values of the people targeted. To get the most effective kind of advertising, advertising creative or professionals try to create an appealing message which will be disseminated through the media to the target audience by using the set of values and norms which the members of the society accepts’.

There has to be a strong correlation between advertising ethics and the cultural values of a people for the advertisement to be effective. This has been proven by many scholars in their works like; Asemah, Edegoh, Nwagbara, Umor and Akinwunmi that, for any advertising message to be persuasive and effective, it has to take into consideration the people's culture and the values that are ethical to them. It then implies that, these set of cultures that can be used in these advertisements has to be morally and ethically right. This is where the regulatory body of APCON with its set of codes of 1988, 1990 and 1992, helps to put advertising agencies and practitioners in check when designing an advertisement (Ozoh, 2013).

It is quite unfortunate that the overall image of advertising agencies in the African continent in terms of creativity has been unknown for ‘cutting- edge advertising’ (Dohudge, 2003). This means that advertising agencies in Nigeria have never been rated among fifth most creative advertising agencies that have won international awards (Dohudge, 2003), but in terms of cultural creativity, some of these advertising agencies takes cognisance of the cultural heritage that make up and binds Nigeria together (Ozoh, 2013).

Over the years, there is this view by many that the Nigerian advertising agencies are not creative and ethical enough in delivering advertisements to meet the demands and aspirations of the standard of a good advertising agency. This, to Dohugde (2003) is due to pitfalls like borrowing ideas from foreign cultures or ‘copycatism’, cultural imperialism from media in the developed world, inadequate finance and unethical professional expertise. This is even made worse with the idea of creating advertisements that are free from indecency and immorality with complete good cultural essence (Ekunno 2003), for it is often times hard to find such due to the way advertising agencies scramble at any advertiser who is willing to pay the bills without properly going through the advertisement for review as stipulated by any regulatory body guiding the profession of advertising before it goes public.

Culture has indeed impacted on the world and countries of the world are not left out in this. If as an advertiser or an advert agency chooses to ignore the culture of the people, it is to the advertiser's peril. For example, there was a great chaos in India and Sri Lanka over an advertisement for the film- Nollywood Buddha- showing a person sitting on the head of Buddha (Moriarty, Mitchell & Wells, 2009). Coming to Nigeria, the Miss World article and advertisement on ThisDay newspaper in 2001 towards the hosting of the beauty pageant in honour of Agbani Darego, turned in to a crisis that left more than a hundred people dead in Kaduna (ThisDay newspaper, 2001). When advertising professionals do not take things seriously, things can go wrong. But culturally competent people minimise the negative impact of cultural differences by re-establishing common frameworks for people from different cultures to interact in peace ([www.commisceo-global.com/2016](http://www.commisceo-global.com/2016)). The need to ascertain if Nigerian advertising agencies like Prima Garnet, Noah Ark's, Lintas, Concept Unit and DDB Casers recognise the place of culture in the advertisements created or designed by them necessitated this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

From the numerous media advertisements disseminated daily in Nigeria, it has been observed that, the cultural aspects of the people of Nigeria are not emphasized enough going by the nature of product or service and the cultural terrain that surrounds Nigerians. For example, using partially nude girls on a transparent bus along Lekki- Ikoyi expressway in an advertisement for a lingerie, is not in agreement with the Nigerian culture ([www.sunnewsonline.com-the-ethically-objectionable-ad-2019](http://www.sunnewsonline.com-the-ethically-objectionable-ad-2019)). This is not in agreement with the Nigerian culture. It is against this backdrop that this study wishes to use this medium to fill this knowledge gap by investigating if advertisements placed in the media in Nigeria, portrays Nigerian cultural values and if these advertisements are ethical enough to be disseminated to the target audience.

### **Research Objectives**

This study's main aim is Nigerian Cultural Values and Advertising Ethics with Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies in perspective. This study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To ascertain if Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies create advertisements that portray Nigerian cultural values from the residents of Lagos, Abuja and Port- Harcourt.
- ii. To investigate among the residents of Lagos, Abuja and Port –Harcourt whether advertisements created by Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies were based on advertising ethics.
- iii. To identify which advertising agency reflects Nigerian cultural values in advertisements most among the residents of Lagos, Abuja and Port- Harcourt.

### **Research Questions**

The following were the research questions for this study:

- i. Does Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies create advertisements that portray the Nigerian cultural values? ii. Do these advertising agencies produce advertisements based on advertising ethics?

- iii. Which of these advertising agencies reflect the Nigerian cultural values in advertisements more?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework was based on the Dominant theories of Ethics.

#### **Dominant Theories of Ethics**

According to Merrill (1974) and Fab- Ukozor (2005), they noted that there are dominant theories of ethics which is generally concerned with the idea of good or bad and regarded as the yardstick for measuring rightness and wrongness of an action in an individual, union, community or society. These theories include: absolutist, relativist, teleological, deontological, legalistic, antinomian and situational.

Citing Okiyi and Eteng- Martins (2015), the absolutist theory of ethics is concerned with the fact that as a matter of principle, advertising practitioners and agencies should operate on moral universals that form the basis of a universal and eternal code in practice which includes; truthfulness, decency, legality, good taste, good language, tone, avoidance of false claims and honesty; the relativist theory bases on the argument that moral values change with time, culture and circumstances; while the teleological theory affirms that, the yardstick for measuring rightness and wrongness of an action, depends on the consequences which the action will give rise to. The deontologist holds a reverse view in the sense that, the practitioner accepts in principle that the judgement of whether an action is good or bad should be based on the action itself and not the consequence. However, the legalistic theory is based on having an absolute or objective ethical system which is based largely on tradition, social agreement or a firm moral code while the antinomian theory is against standards, laws, principles and precepts. The situational ethicist is led by the traditional code of ethics who is ready to move away if he or she thinks an action is not for public interest.

Since ethics refers to doing what is right or wrong, to behave ethically therefore, is to behave in a manner that is consistent with what is generally considered to be right or moral in the society or a profession basing it on the norms and values acceptable by the particular society, in this case, APCON standards of ethics for its members. Meaning that, unethical behaviour should not be acceptable from advertising practitioners. **Justification of Dominant Theories of Ethics to this Study**

The media creative can design advertising messages that will reflect the people's culture and the values they hold dear. The aim of this focus on the target audiences' culture is to enhance the effectiveness of the advertisement. It then implies that, for every advertisement that desires to be positively impactful, the advertising agency has to take in to cognisance the cultural values of Nigerians that the advert messages are directed to.

As a result therefore, the aspect of ethics in the advertising profession cannot be overlooked. The dominant theories of ethics clearly explains that, every profession has to be guided by the stipulated codes (like that of APCON) that is acceptable by its members and such has to be based on what is moral or immoral and good or bad. Contextually speaking, this theory is relevant to this study as it demands that ethics has to be entrenched in all professions, advertising, for example.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW Advertising and Advertising Agencies in Perspective**

Advertising is a form of communication. APCON cited in (Ozoh, 2013) defines advertising as that form of communication in the media paid for by an identifiable sponsor and directed at a target audience with the aim of imparting information about a product, service, idea or a cause. It is basically a communication process involving transference of message from the advertiser to the customer or target audience and a consequential feedback which can assume a variety of forms like buying the product, engaging in the service or taking up a cause or influence a particular audience with a particular desired behaviour.

For advertising to function properly and the fact that it is an organised profession, it is guided and directed by a body known as the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON, decree no. 55 1988; no. 93, 1992). This job of advertising goods or services according to APCON (1988) is done by the advertising practitioner who works in an agency that is skilled in planning, creating and placing advertisements in the mass media through an umbrella body called the Advertising agency.

Bovee and Arens 1986 cited In (Ozoh, 2013) aptly put it that, ‘an advertising agency is an independent organization of creative people and business people who specialize in the development and preparation of advertising plans, advertisements and other promotional tools. They went on to add that, advertising agencies also contract and buy advertising space and time in various mass media on behalf of its client.

Advertising in Nigeria have come a long way. From its modest beginnings where expatriates dominated the industry to these times where local participation began with local players who in truth have enabled the indigenisation of advertisement messages using local content and local culture to make it appeal to the local audience (Olatunji, 2018).

### **Culture and Cultural values in Nigeria: Its relationship with Advertising Messages**

Culture refers to the wide range of human activities which are transmitted from one generation to another (Njideka, 2015). Cultural values of Nigeria was shaped by Nigeria’s ethnic groups as the country has over 521 languages and over 250 dialects and ethnic groups which are viewed from the perspectives of three regions (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo) although these regions today have become divided into six geopolitical zones ([www.ncir.ng/2022](http://www.ncir.ng/2022)). Contextually speaking, this study looked at these three major ethnic groups or regions; Northern, Eastern and Western regions. Coleman (1986 cited In Oluwabamide 2003:9) states that Northern region has more than 60% of the Nigerian populace- Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, Tiv and Nupe. They are good in Hausa language.

The Eastern region in Nigeria houses not less than 30 sub- tribes and three major groups thus; Igbo, Ibibio and Ijaw including other minority tribes, which has taken a fairly large area in Nigeria (Onwuejeogwu; 1997, Ekong, 1983 cited In Njideka, 2015). The Yoruba -speaking people dominates the Western region with other minority tribes. The major groups and states therein are; Oyo, Egba, Ketu and Ijebu. Others are Illorin, Ibadan, Ilesha, Ife and Ekiti (Oluwabamide, 2003). It is good to state that, within these ethnic groups, states and regions, expressions of diverse cultural values that are priceless whether in the form of art object, music and so on contributes in no small measure to the additional attachment and awareness to the specific cultures of the consumers of the advertisement ([www.unesco.org/2005](http://www.unesco.org/2005)).

Njideka (2015) added that, all through the ages, conventions, organizations, non- government agencies and other concerned agencies have one way or the other tried to avoid cultural extinction through engaging in various platforms to enhance indigenous culture. This leads to the question- are the advertising agencies in Nigeria doing a good job in the promotion of cultural values? These cultural values and heritage of a people are distinctive and comprises of cultural events, tools, arts, clothing and textile, drama, foods, ways of greetings, marriage ceremonies (Njideka, 2015). All these are expressed through creative endeavours found in music, festivals, literature and films within the Nigerian setting, but does these cultures showcased in the advertisements designed by these aforementioned advertising agencies in Nigeria?

With the spate of cultural imperialism from foreign cultures, advertising agencies are very likely to copy what goes on in other cultures especially with the rate of communication and technological revolution across the world. But in essence when the people who are to receive the advertising message get aligned with their culture and see themselves agreeing with the advert message, the advert messages becomes more effective than if the otherwise is the case (Asemah & Edegoh, 2013). It is pertinent to state at this point that, Nigerians with clearly defined cultural values uphold and accept good moral standards. Nigerian cultural values naturally frown at indecent dressing, exhibition of bad habits and lifestyles that are not in tandem with Nigerian moral values, so creating immoral advertisements for the Nigerian audience, is not just an ineffective approach but a worthless endeavour (Nwagbara, 2019).

Even though Ekunno, (2003); Dohugde (2003) stated that the advertising world and its agencies have not been doing a perfect job and it does not seem like there will be a positive improvement in the near future. Akinwunmi (2003) on the contrary states that, advertising agencies have been putting in their best as could be noticed from the great works carried out for brands like OMO detergent and STAR beer by Lintas, First Bank and MTN by Concept Unit, Close- Up toothpaste by LTC, GLO adverts by DDB CASERS (ADnews, 2003) amongst others which aided in placing such brands at the top among competitors. Advertising cannot be said to be complete without taking cognisance of the local cultural values that make up a people (Nwagbara & Umor, 2012; APCON code, 1992). Finding out the place of culture in the advertisements by these advertising agencies necessitated this study.

### **Advertising Ethics and Nigerian Cultural values**

Ethics are motivations based on the ideals of right and wrong (Okiyi et al., 2015). In the advertising profession, there are laid down rules and regulations that guide advertisers, advertising agencies and media owners on what is right and wrong. APCON (1988; Ozoh, 2013) in their codes of advertising practice and regulations, clearly spelt out how these codes and regulatory standards should guide advertising agencies especially in core areas like the style and kinds of words or language, symbols or imagery used in the creation of an advertisement before it goes public through the mass media.

In other to bring sanity and good ethics to the profession of advertising, Okiyi et al., (2015) aptly puts it that, APCON (Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria), AAAN (Advertisers Association of Nigeria) and other groups have all emerged in other to guide the advertising profession on good morals and maintaining standard advertisements from its members. Just as Akinwunmi (2008) cited In Okiyi et al., (2015) adds that, this good ethical standing is necessary due to the fact that, the advertising sector has known phenomenal growth as it is

experiencing from the diversification of the sector into second line agencies, independent media management, direct marketing, printing and outdoor activities. Okigbo (1999) also cited In Okiyi et al., (2015) states, advertising practice has grown over the years so there is need for a creative and technical pool of professionals to perpetuate itself with statutory controls that are expected to make advertising practitioners responsible and responsive to the needs and aspirations of Nigerians.

In any profession, there are philosophical moral values and rules that must be there to guide its members (Dohugde, 2003). In APCON codes of advertising practice, Decree no. 55, 1988 and Decree no. 20, 1990, which were adopted in 2005 (and has subsequently been amended) states that, advertisement should portray the culture of the Nigerian people rightly without bias nor marginalization and so must not encourage the propagation of negative myths, indecency and superstitious beliefs.

Olatunji (2018) states that the issue of having Nigerian culture entrenched into the creation of advertisements is in accordance with laid down rules by APCON (1990). Olatunji (2018) adds that it is of great importance for advertising messages to be legal, credible, truthful, honest and culturally relevant so as to suit the needs and audience sensitivities of the target audience. In light with this, Earle (2011) cited In Asemah and Edegoh, (2013) observes that, the way of life of the audience targeted for an advertising message should be profound in the message design and such message should be carefully designed based on the ethics guiding the people and the advertising profession. The importance of this is that, when designing an advertising message, the agencies should endeavour to create advertisements that are in line with the cultural values that the people accept to be right and shy away from bad and immoral concerns in that society.

### **Empirical Findings**

Okiyi et al., (2015) titled 'Professionalism: An imperative for Ethical Practice of Advertising in Nigeria', proves that, there is need to add professionalism, encourage good conduct from advertising practitioners and give the advertising practice in Nigeria a good ethical standing through the enabling laws of authority as designed by the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON decree 93 of 1992). This empirical finding corroborates with the study.

Another empirical work was carried out by Asemah and Edegoh (2013) entitled, 'Relationship between Advertising and Culture: Views from Jos, Nigeria'. This study indicated that there is a great influence and strong correlation between advertising and culture. These researchers went on to state that, culture to a very large extent has influence on advertising as it will be most ineffective to create an advertisement without recognising the culture of the people targeted.

### **METHODOLOGY Research Design**

The research design for this study was the survey approach. Survey was chosen for this study because, the design enabled the researcher to generate opinion from respondents on what they feel about the research area (Wimmer and Dominick, 2005). The survey research design was used in other to gather data from the respondents who are the representative of the population of the study.

### **Population of Study**

As a matter of cultural significance, three cities were chosen to represent all other states in the chosen regions with specific reference to the study. These three cities were purposively chosen

to gather the perceived views of respondents concerning advertising messages in Nigeria as regards Nigerian culture. The city purposively chosen to represent the Northern region is Abuja because of the cultural heritage and the Hausa language that is peculiar to its people. The second city in the Western region is Lagos. It was chosen because its people speak Yoruba and have a unique culture different from the aforementioned. The third city is Port – Harcourt which is in the Eastern region. They are Igbo- speaking people. These three cities were purposively chosen to represent the consumers of advertising in Nigeria so as to find out if the advertisements they are exposed to are ethical and recognises Nigerian cultural values. **Sample size**

This study made use of 360 open and close- ended copies of the questionnaire as its measuring instrument.

### **Sampling Technique**

The purposive and stratified sampling techniques were chosen for this study.

### **Instrument of the Study**

The questionnaire was the instrument for gathering data for this study.

### **Reliability and Validity**

The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were discovered after a pilot study was conducted on twenty respondents who were administered the same copies of questionnaire within a period of two weeks with the aid of research assistants. The results gathered showed that there is consistency and validity in the data gathered from the respondents.

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

Of the 360 persons administered copies of the questionnaire across the cities of Abuja, Lagos and Port- Harcourt for this research, 343 copies of the questionnaire were returned and used indicating a return rate of ninety- five percent (95%) as it is an area generating concern from the members of the public. It was therefore the 343 copies of the questionnaire that formed the basis for the analysis of this study.

### **Demographic Data**

**Table 1: The socio- demographic data of the respondents.**

<b>Socio- demographic Data</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>		<b>Percentage</b>
<b>1. Gender</b>	Male	157	45.8%
	Female	186	54.3%
	Total	343	100%
<b>2. Age (years)</b>	18-28	62	18%
	29-39	45	13%
	40-50	104	30%
	50 and above	132	38.5%
	Total	343	100%
<b>3. Educational qualification</b>	SSCE	40	11.6%
	OND	61	17.8%
	B.Sc/ HND	153	44.6%
	M.Sc/ M.Ed	89	25.9%

Total 343 100%

**Source: Nwokoro and Peter (2022)**

From the above table 1, it shows that this area of study is highly supported by females than males with (54.3%), while those who are between the ages of 50 years and above (38.5%) were more involved than other age brackets. The reason for such may be that, such advanced ages best have the knowledge of Nigerian cultural values and what it takes for an advertising message to be considered ethical. The study also indicates that those who are B.Sc/ HND holders were (44.6%) which indicates that this study is for those who are educated enough to understand what an advertising message is when exposed to it.

### Data Analysis Research question 1

Does Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies create advertisements that portray the Nigerian cultural values?

**Table 2: Responses to whether advertising agencies portray Nigerian cultural value**

Responses from questionnaire item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	202	58.8%
Agree	115	33.5%
Not Sure	16	4.7%
Disagree	7	2%
Strongly Disagree	3	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Nwokoro and Peter (2022)**

The results obtained from the field as analysed from Table 2 above shows that, the total number of respondents who stated that advertising agencies produce advertisements that portray Nigerian cultural values in the advertisements showcased by these advertising agencies used for this study were many with a total of 58.8% and 33.5% for the "strongly agree" and "agree" options while the "not sure", "strongly disagree" and "disagree" options totalled 26 (7.7%).

### Research question 2

Do these advertising agencies produce advertisements based on advertising ethics?

**Table 3: Perception of respondents on whether advertising agencies produce advertising ethics**

<u>Responses from questionnaire item</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage (%)</u>
Strongly Agree that Advertising agencies create advertisements based on advertising ethics	130	38%
Agree that Advertising agencies create advertisements based on advertising ethics	162	47%
Not sure if Advertising agencies create advertisements based on advertising ethics	27	7.9%
Disagree that Advertising agencies create advertisements based on advertising ethics in Nigeria.	18	5.2%
Strongly disagree that advertising agencies create advertisements based on advertising ethics	6	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Nwokoro and Peter (2022)**

The analysis presented in Table 3 above indicates that, the number of respondents from the three cities used for this study with a total of 162(47%) and 130(38%) were of the opinion that advertising messages from these aforementioned advertising agencies were based on advertising ethics while the remaining respondents who sounded in the negative were fewer in number. This is a rating of five and four which simply means very good going by Likert Scale ratings.

**Research question 3**

Which of these advertising agencies reflect the Nigerian cultural values in advertisements more?

**Table 4: Advertising agencies that reflect Nigerian cultural values more**

Responses from questionnaire item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Prima Garnet agency	57	16.6%
CASERS agency	80	23%
LINTAS agency	82	23.9%
Noah's Ark agency	67	19.5%
Concept Unit agency	57	16.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Nwokoro and Peter (2022)**

From the data gathered in Table 4, it indicates that some advertising agencies in Nigeria (mostly based in Lagos State) reflect Nigerian cultural values in advertisements that they created. From the table above, it will be noticed that, most of the respondents affirmed that the LINTAS and DDB Casers reflect more of the Nigerian culture than other advertising agencies with a total of 23.9% and 23% respectively.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Nigerian cultural values and advertising ethics: Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, LINTAS, Noah's Ark and Concept advertising agencies in perspective was the basis of this study. The findings reveal as follows:

**Research question 1**

Does Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies create advertisements that portray the Nigerian cultural values?

These findings shows that, Prima Garnet, DDB Casers, Lintas, Noah's Ark and Concept Unit advertising agencies portray Nigerian cultural values in advertisements in Nigeria although some of them needs to improve on it as some respondents indicated their displeasure with the options "disagree and strongly disagree".

**Research question 2**

Do these advertising agencies produce advertisements based on advertising ethics?

The study indicates that, most of the respondents affirmed that, advertisements created by these advertising agencies were based on good advertising ethics which is as a result of the guiding principles set up by the regulatory body known as APCON. There is no profession without laid down rules, codes of conduct, laws and ways to sanction any erring member. That said, one can

infer that, (from the responses in Table 2) most of the respondents affirmed that advertisements created by advertising agencies in Nigeria were rated on a scale of four going by Likert Scale ratings which means good, but a few number of the respondents stated that, advertising agencies in Nigeria still needs to improve on their ethical standing as it is still far from perfect.

### **Research question 3**

#### **Which select advertising agencies reflect Nigerian cultural values in advertisements?**

From the data gathered in Table 3, it indicates that advertising agencies in Nigeria reflect Nigerian cultural values in the advertisements that they created with LINTAS and DDB Casers advertising agencies leading the others. From all indications, they all they reflect local cultural values of Nigerians. The understudied advertising agencies includes: Prima Garnet agency, CASERS agency, LINTAS agency, Noah's Ark agency and Concept Unit agency.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is good to note that these cultural values are good for advertising messages to imbibe with because going contrary to these, the advertising message will not have a positive impact on the target audience or consumer. Nwagbara and Umor (2012) adds that, Nigerian cultural elements and values when used in the creation of advertisements aids in the positive influence created upon the target audience in terms of believability and patronage for a product or service. Since culture is an integral part of any society, it will be ineffective and not worth it therefore for advertising agencies to create an advertisement without including the lifestyle of the target audience (Nigerians in this case). Advertisements should therefore reflect the culture of the people it targets. The relevance of this study is to serve as a medium in educating advertising agencies, consumers, target audiences of advertising messages and all stakeholders in the advertising profession to reflect the cultural values of Nigeria and ethically speaking, to play by the codes of APCON while creating or designing an advertisement.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study thus suggest that, the advertising agencies that are not living up to expectation as regards reflecting Nigerian cultural practices and values in addition to maintaining the ethical guidelines that make up the advertising profession should endeavour to do so. With that in mind, the following recommendations were made: APCON should ensure that all advertisements disseminated through the mass media meet ethical requirements of the profession of advertising. Critics that sound in the negative about the advertisements designed by advertising agencies in Nigeria should as this study have proved that, there are agencies (Prima Garnet, CASERS, LINTAS, DDB Casers and Noah's Ark agencies) that deliver advertisements for their client(s) based on cultural values of the target audience.

Also, advertising agencies should learn to take the nine steps as propounded by Chris Dohudge, (2003), the former Chairman of APCON to heart. They are summarised thus: invest in people, invest in technology, invest in research, talk to your competitor, lead or set the pace, advertise your agency, publicise your activities, invest in packaging, think and act big. Finally, it is often the case that, advertising agencies do not have enough money to support their creative endeavour and attend professional courses, for example, run a proper research before executing an advertisement through the media. As a result, it will be wise for government and concerned unions or organizations to help out when the need arises for such advertising agencies to be educated on the need to bring in Nigerian cultural values and heritage in to advertisements for

the local audience as this will help promote the country's image instead of allowing foreign agencies continue to beat us to the game.

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