

# Billboard Visual Design and the Inclusivity Concept: Implications for Gender Patronage of Consumer Products in Lagos State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

Billboard advertisements have become public infrastructure that shapes the commercial urge and tastes of consumers. Its all-embracing concept known as *inclusivity* provides explanation for common belongingness. In this case, visual design concepts do not exclude any member of the consumer society on the grounds of gender, race, colour and disabilities among others, and that is the canvass of this study. No one can determine how many passers-by view outdoor billboard advertisements in a day. As both human and vehicular traffic increase so its viewership grows rapidly. Billboard business would not have been noticeable without its static and location characteristics. It has more to it. Commercial billboard design concepts provide product information that is visually emphatic on the public to form positive purchasing decisions. Probing into the common notion that billboard visual designs concepts interest women more than men and that their patronage level is higher remains the problem of this study. Survey research design was adopted. Questionnaire instrument was used. Visual designs and the inclusivity concept with its attendant implications for gender patronage were examined. One research question and one hypothesis were drawn to guide the study. The objective of the study is to ascertain whether visual design concepts influence gender patronage of the products advertised on billboards. The hypothesis states that visual design presentation has no significant influence on gender patronage of consumer products. In testing this hypothesis, the responses of the male and female respondents concerning gender in Section A of the questionnaire and the items of the questionnaire concerning visual design concepts (pressure group, moral, cultural, mega-mural design, humour and propaganda, and colour in Section B were scored and the mean and Standard Deviation were computed and then subjected to t-test. The result was presented in a table. The findings of the study show that, of the six visual design concepts, only the pressure group influences gender patronage of consumer products in Lagos State.

**Keywords:** inclusivity, design concept, consumer products, gender, communication

## 1. Introduction

Billboard design concepts assume an important role in the commercial world. It is strategically common to draw the attention of all readers who ply the roads to the goods and services on display and their strengths. No one assumes a business concern without the aim of making the product or service known to the target audience. Kayode (2013) refers to billboard advertisements as communication infrastructure strategically mounted in parks and open spaces to inform or remind the public of making certain important decisions about products or services. Inclusivity is a concept that refers to making design all-embracing and it has many sides to it. Sometimes, to product designed for human consumption and other times, to other utilities such as the built-environment, which is designed for habitation and comfort people. In any of the cases, when referring to product consumption, both male and female find common use and belongingness in just same product. Zitkus, Langdon and Clarkson (2014) remark that inclusivity is a concept that takes into account the users of visual designs and making sure that they are not excluded in the benefit agenda. In visual design, people of different perspectives such as cultural, economical, social, gender and disability are allowed to have the same opportunity to a product as everyone else. The aspect of gender, as mentioned in Olurin, (2003) reflects the process of social constructs that mediate the relations between women and men. Also, in Olujimi and Bako, (2011) gender refers to the network of socially defined functions and attributes of being a woman or man in a given society at a particular time. The implications of visual design inclusivity concept for gender patronage should therefore be looked on with extensive reflection. For instance, in Macionis (1998) it is noted that inequalities abound in gender issues and gender itself guides how we think about ourselves, how we interact with others and what opportunities and constraints we face throughout our lives.

Everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones (Heskett, 2008). Unlike the *entity concept*, the inclusivity concept is being constantly modified and presented to give optimistic view of the reason for purchasing a product or co-habiting with others in a built-environment. Design professionals (Industrial Designers, Architects, Urban Planners Surveyors and Artists) at their different forums have come to a realization that the built environment would continue to support man the more if its designs are accentuated to accommodate the diverse interests and situations of users. In the case of product design, consumers are directly affected. Design as stated in Gullerin (2008) is by essence a human-

centred discipline aiming to make tomorrow better. This is at the core of contemporary design dynamics, having broad implications for constant reconsideration and re-evaluation; design should evoke a sense of pleasure and belonging in consumers. This however does not exclude the affluences or otherwise of consumers. Design inclusivity concept finds a common ground to take cognizance of the interest of the valid and the invalid, the rich and the poor, the young and the old - advocating that they all have the right to be considered and accommodated in the planning and consumption benefits of a public product. A product can be tangible or intangible. The inclusive designers therefore are most deeply committed to the problems of the right to co-accessibility and also to providing stimuli to every complex challenge that users of design find too daunting to surmount. Finding a methodology for tackling design problems which might have been created by the entity concept (exclusive design) remains a stupendous task of the contemporary designer. It is an undertaking requiring the combination of many parameters – some socioeconomic, some cultural. The eventual adaptation of each design to suit the heterogeneous mix of human conveniences is becoming even more complex in this contemporary time.

### 1.1 The background

Designers possess several striking abilities for delivering visual designs – first to conceive the ideas, express it with different media, demystify and make it usable to the public. The concepts of designers are wide and all-accommodating. For example, the *transgenerational* design concept of the designer focuses on the older people, *rehabilitation* design concept focuses on people with new or temporary disability and *accessible concept* refers to modifications made to a product for the sake of users with disabilities (WcAdams and Kostovich, 2013). Notwithstanding, competing in today's global economy according to Petermans, Janssens and Van Cleempoel, (2013) is becoming increasingly stiffer. Design imperatives have come to a level that designers have to realize also that it is research ideas and the executions that move the global economy just as it is often said that *fuel moves a nation*. Not just science and technology as commonly assumed or as it may appear to be. Technology as it were, in this context is a pedestal that is better said to be an accessory for carrying out conceived research ideas. Cute sensory apparatus is inevitable as striking accessory to spark up the power of creative reasoning and delivery for the designer. Exigencies of stiff competitions which could be exacerbated by the contemporaneous realities in product designing would therefore compel designers to rethink their courses away from bamboozle. The reality is such that the customers tend to hang on to well-packaged products and which the selling costs are convenient and discard the otherwise. Hence, the challenge that is there for the designer to strengthen the bond between consumers and their products through the product design process (Schifferstein and Zwartkruis-Pelgrim, 2008) is a truism.

The position in Macionis (1998) is that earning a living nowadays demands working with ideas rather than with things. This is the beginning of product dematerialization. Apparently, many designs are around us that are more conveniently handled in digital than analogue and in intangible than tangible forms. For instance, Canpenhout, Frens, Overbeeke Standaert and Peremans, (2013) worked on physical interaction in a dematerialized world. Its concept of dematerialization is a striking phenomenon that is still guided by design approach and the purposive theory of creative process. By dematerializing, a product breaks loose from its physically bogus limitations and becomes intangible and dynamic. Its manipulations demand less physical effort and its content reaches limitless availability (Dourish, 2001, Verbeek, 2005). With smartcards and cell phones we do not need to carry about our cash. The music album has dematerialized: traditional album carriers, CDs and LPs have disappeared and music itself only exists as files (Canpenhout, et al (op cit). Thanks to dematerialization, information can be composed and sent electronically without the conventional postal means. Users of products on the other part now begin to realize that the wave of changing from mediocrity to master piece is not just expedient, it is accelerating, and thereby making the future less certain for design inadequacies. The submissions of Locton, Harrison, Cain, Stanton and Jennings (2013) and Keinonen, (2010) that design practice is becoming increasingly focused on people is noticeable judging from the studies conducted on design for behavioural change in Redstrom, (2005), Lilley, (2009) and Wever, (2012). The striking point of those studies is that the end-users who need *value for money* is the subject of design. Also, modeling and constant evaluation of consumers' behavioural patterns, as noted in Keinonen (op cit) remains an explicit aspect of product designers' responsibilities. It is then a common knowledge to acknowledge that many jobs are insecure for designers who have challenges with their creative instincts or those who fail to move with the times.

### 1.2 Statement of the problem

Several competing theoretical and empirical positions have attempted to grasp with the gender issue in Nigeria (Egwu, 1995). The positions range from biological to social and cultural factors. However, The World Bank and The Economic Commission for Africa (1998) have argued that central to the development agenda of any nation should be the consideration of the inequalities that exist between men's and women's preferences resulting from individual differences, access to resources and the gender impact of various economic policies. Countries of Africa built strong constituencies and lobbies round the notion that addressing gender issues in the legal

framework is important for sustainable development. Brewer and Bassoli (2006) explored the ways in which gender can constitute an important factor for different types of interfaces. In another study, women showed greater intensity of both positive and negative affective responses to outside stimuli than men (Lukas, 2007). These two studies showed how males and females experience things differently based on their physical abilities and social and cultural norms. The common notion that the females in Lagos State are more tasteful and responsive to pictorial designs than men explains why the public also feels that they patronize staple commodities more than their male counterparts do. Accordingly, in this study, a questionable asterisk is placed on the hypothesis that says visual design concepts (Pressure group, moral, cultural, mega-mural, humour and colour) influence gender patronage of consumer products in Lagos State, Nigeria.

### **1.3 Objective of the study**

The objective of this study is to find out if the rendition of visual design concepts on billboards advertisements influences gender patronage of consumer products in Lagos State.

### **1.4 Research question**

Do visual design concepts (Pressure group, moral, cultural, mega-mural, humour and colour) influence gender patronage of consumer products in Lagos State?

### **1.5 Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference between visual design concept and gender patronage of consumer products.

## **2.0 Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1 Explaining Visual Design Concept**

Visual or pictorial design concepts are not superficial but artificial in the billboard context. The intention is not to confuse but to sell a product in a humorous way. It means creative vision of art dimensions derived from the designer's imagination. It is an idea that brings diverse elements into a basic relationship (Ocvirk, Stinson, Wigg, Bone and Cayton 2002). Therefore, deciphering the selling point of design concepts lies in the psychological understanding and excavation ability of the beholder to dig out the hidden meaning of the message of the artist or designer. Design concept is considered as a visual image hinged on a thoughtfully selected theme for the purpose of communicating an idea to promote a product. Product promotion itself is a form of advertisement to sell firm's services through informing, persuading and reminding the market (Kolawole, 2005). In every graphic design the dual function of a concept emerges. For instance, Porter and Naele (2000) notes that on the one hand it serves the creative process and in the other hand, it is supposed to be an immediate comprehensible means of communication with non-specialists. The two are process and product respectively. Graphic design process and product are influenced by the type of concept which enables the subject matter to be understood and to be completed in the entire sequence of thinking, reasoning and decoding of pictorial expressions.

Findings by Porter and Naele (ibid) demonstrate that both graphical and physical concepts have overtaken the progress of an unaided visualization. This assertion implies that there is always a concept underlying the images used in an outdoor advertisement. It also shows that design concepts are key issues in dictating the form of advertisements. Porter and Naele (2000) opine that design concepts encapsulate the essential spirit of a design response and can also capture the all-important first reaction that can sometimes remain as a captivator throughout the ensuing design journey. Design concepts have the tripod of visual form, reference to something and recognition by the audience as a concept. In outdoor advertising various concept are explored through the graphic design system to promote products. Some of them have been identified and operationalized in this study.

### **2.2 Use of design concepts in outdoor product advertisements**

Even though there were works on advertising, marketing research and branding issues as fields of study, the available literature emphasized aspects that are completely different from the ongoing study. For instance, product marketing communication, promotion, re-branding strategies and sales return are areas dwelt into by majority of researchers. What about the visual force which designers put into each advertisement to meet some certain goals in the general marketing mix and which is encoded in the brain of passersby to raise awareness of products being campaigned? Researchers have always stressed more on the various economic theories for marketing. For instance, Bhatia (2000) worked on 'Advertising in Rural India. The work centred on Language, Marketing Communication, and Consumerism at South West India, using 350 elements (Class Two pupils) as sample. In the study, statistical packages such as Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test and ANOVA were employed to analyse the data collected and the result of the study showed that there was a significant difference between course of study and rate of sale. Childers & Jass (2002) argued in a study that there is relationship between outdoor product advertising concepts and the rate of sales. The study sampled 300 advertisers. It applied

descriptive research of the survey type to seek the opinions of the respondents. It employed correlation statistics mean, Standard Deviation and t-test for the analysis of the data collected. The study in both Bhatia (2000) and Childers & Jass (2002) dealt with rate of sales. However, their independent variables were course of study, advertising and product advertising respectively.

This present study is on relationship between visual design concepts and product advertising on outdoor billboards in Lagos State. Oelgeschlager, Hain, Ruiz and Sicilia (2004) is another research that is all about impact of cognitive processing styles on consumer response to advertising appeals. It dwelt a little bit on visual Graphic design to determine the influence of product advertising and promotion. The study collected data on 150 market women and 150 company workers and analysed it using descriptive statistics and t-test. It was discovered that there is difference between method of graphic design concept and product advertising appeal in majority of the companies used. Even though the studies have the same variables with the present study, they took place in Chicago. But this is notwithstanding, the present study intends to find out whether the same or similar result will be obtained here in Nigeria even when the research design is not the same. Dodd (2007) emphasized the commercial significance of outdoor advertising in urban community along rural highways in Georgia. Of recent, studies such as Adeyemi (2002) and Makanju (2005) have come up with findings on billboard advertising, specifically in Lagos State but did not mention the role of visual design concepts in persuading targeted and intended consumers in the outdoor arena.

### **2.3 Advertising Agencies, Visual Design Concepts and Billboard Advertising**

The changing shopping habit of customers is a product of the conviction established by 'good' graphics. In the modern world of business a product promotion and advertising remain the issues of the first priority (Reece-Myron, 1998). The billboard advertising market has experienced an explosion in recent years, due to the fact that graphics are bigger, cheaper and can be produced more quickly (Reece-Myron, *ibid*). The outdoor medium implies the outdoor advertising agency. But when it comes to choosing a medium for advertising, Webster (2009) indicates that many factors can dictate how to decide which one is best and good fit for a business, goal and budget. First is the insight into the portfolio of the creative work that an agency has done in the past, and second, the testimonials of its integrity. An outdoor advertising should be able to complete jobs on time and on budget. Apart from these, pricing issues should be considered as the third factor, though it is understandable that different outdoor agencies have different levels of skill and this can often determine their job costing or price index. Since it is only natural that a business may be better at doing some things than they are at other, it is important to probe into the competencies of an advertising agency in order to know what they are best at. In the same vein, in most countries of the world, the electronic, print and the outdoor advertising media that constitute the major channels of communication owe their allegiance to either the graphic design or fine art. But each of the mass media options is aggregately influential institutions in their own right. Effective graphics is needed by the media for mobilization and for the reflection of the personality of the product and the integrity of the business organization. Graphics in advertising means the combination of visual illustrations, typography and sometimes the logotype. The advertising agencies in Nigeria are on the increase and are constantly seeking new artistic and colourful ways of product appeal (Ajayi, 2005). Little wonder, Paradigm Graphics and Web Design Newsletter (2004) state precisely that the power of 'good design' adds value and meaning to products and services. This peradventure is not only because of the caliber of ownership, size and the revenue generating functions but they keep the public mass-attuned and mobilized especially to changing trends. Changing trends in this regard is synonymous to the various societal demands and developments as they affect their billboard audiences and owners.

Hiebert, Ungurait and Bohn (1985) define mass media as institution of public communication, which participate in every political, economic, and cultural aspect of our society. One of the major contributions of the mass media is connecting beyond one's immediate locality. Without the appropriate use of the media, communication may not be effective. This also means that whatever hinders communication can hinder awareness let alone promoting a product. And worse still, can put the audience in the dark. The graphic design application to promotion of consumer goods and services takes an unspoken communication style or what can be called non-verbal or visual style. One contemporary dictionary, Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines the word 'communication' in various ways but the one that best supports the present discourse is "a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols and signs..." This perhaps suggests the best reason to appreciate the implications of communication for a dynamic society. Communication through the graphic design concepts means sharing information reinforced by visual concepts. According to Walker (1994), twentieth-century mass media routinely employ the fine arts in various ways, for instance, advertising, publicity and packaging appropriate images from the art of the past and the present.

Walker's assertion seems to be a testimony; it also appears to have a more proven evidence of reliability and retention capabilities than the spoken words, because through lettering and pictures the public may

be able to understand complex and abstract messages even when they can not read or write. Graphic designers have artistic challenges facing them to put certain imaginary concepts into visible designs, which is conjured up in beholder's mind for lasting impression. It is the weight force of graphics in this way that makes people look, see, retain and want to behold. Different people are motivated by different designs and are not satisfied with one design. For one reason, the global research efforts of the developed nations have necessitated the influx of successive technologies and designs into both the local and international markets. Since then designs have been dynamic, one being an improvement over another. Opportunities are there for a person who is only hearing of a design for the first time to have it by deciding and making an appropriate choice or judgment. The same person once familiar with a technology further seeks better technological satisfactions. So the assertion that, "man in the quest for aesthetic satisfaction will always discover new life in an old world and his aesthetic appreciation will continue to swing back and front like pendulum" (Akinbogun, 2000) is a truism. Today rapid changes of fashion and rapid communication are combining together to create a whirlwind of change in taste and option. Designs of yesterday's could now be obsolete, probably as a result of improvement in concept, change in materials or advancements of technology. But most noticeably, the aesthetic manners of product presentation and promotional techniques of the mass media use the instrumentality of graphic designs to reach out to all intended audiences. This means that the function of the mass media is to act as channel for informing the masses of the existence of consumer products, to persuade and convince them that it is superior to others, and encourage them to continue buying. Traditional belief system regards advertisement as a medicinal stimulus there to be exploited ad hoc for mankind's commercial breakthrough. The Modern methods of advertising support such belief as well, though not in a traditionally crude way. As the world is reflecting more and more upon massive interactive communication and mobilization process through the mass media advertising affects and is affected by decisions, choices, consumption pattern, the much sought-after commercial publicity and of a truth, the general well-being of the public. Traditional promotion of wares took the form of verbal communication, door-to-door proclamation, and street peddling. However, before analyzing the origin of graphic design it is of absolute importance to know what graphic design is.

#### **2.4 Relationship between Gender, Individual Differences and Product Patronage**

Several competing theoretical and empirical positions have attempted to grasp with the gender issue in Nigeria (Egwu, 1995). The positions range from biological to social and cultural factors. However, Egwu (op cit) argued that central to the development agenda of any nation should be the consideration of the inequalities that exist between men's and women's preferences resulting from individual differences, access to resources and the gender impact of various economic policies. Countries of Africa built strong constituencies and lobbies round the notion that addressing gender issues in the legal framework is important for sustainable development.

The literature (Banks, 2006) being reviewed on gender and product category involvement is in response to wordmark visual-verbal incongruity among undergraduate communications students. It also reveals individual differences impact on advertising response. The findings in Banks (2006) would be significantly different from the present study in that the present study intends to investigate the specific impact that gender status have on product purchases with respect to design concepts and outdoor advertising in Lagos State. Nevertheless, empirical investigations in Henderson, Cote, Leong and Schmitt (2003), MacInnis, Shapiro and Mani (1999) sampled responses among consumers of different genders. The study examined the relationship between individual differences in response to visual information. The ultimate goal of the research was to identify dimensions of consumer wordmark-response between genders so designers may rely less on creative impulse (Bennett, 2000) and create messages more in line with audiences' cognitive capabilities. The study further examined gender and product and product-category involvement as antecedents to variation among undergraduate communications students (N=62) in dealing with visual-verbal incongruity in brand wordmarks. Manifestation of these strategies was measured in terms of affects, purchase intent, cue response, and assessment of a target attribute in response to viewing a wordmark craft, opposing word meaning and typeface connotation. Gender and product-category involvement were shown to be significant influences on attitude and attitude evaluation on pressure group design concept. This work details the potential impacts of information and congruity and scheme congruity, involvement as motivation to process, cue-election theory related to gender differences and potential (Lancefield and Raven, 2006).

Product purchase decision-making behaviour and gender role stereotypes are the major thrust of Mastin, Coe, Hamilton and Tarr (2004). In this study, product categories advertised most and least often by women only, by men only, and by both women and men were examined in two women's magazines. The goal was to determine if the magazines' readers are being exposed to images that send a message that specific product purchase decision-making behaviour is gender based. A content analysis of over 14,000 advertisements revealed that advertisements fail to portray women as either capable of or having the need to make a wide range of product purchases decisions. Most advertisements printed in the magazines featured women making purchase decisions for product that pertain to the appearance of themselves, their children, or their homes. In contrast, the

magazines featured few advertisements for financial services and technology products, both of which are important product purchase decisions made by females in general and by female heads of households in particular. Trocchia and Janda (2002) is an investigation on product purchase and subsequent non-consumption. Unlike the current research which looks at design concepts and product advertisement on billboards, Trocchia and Janda's investigation specifically reports on two studies which examine why individuals purchase goods and services that they later never fully utilize or consume despite the roles of advertising that introduced the products to them. The first employed quantitative methods to ascertain consumer's motivation for purchasing unused products and their reasons for subsequent non-consumption. The second study employed survey methodology to quantify results of the earlier study. Primary motivations included self-improvement, impulse purchase, salesperson influence, unintended purchase and acquiring competence. Reason for non-usage included self-consciousness, lack of enthusiasm, disappointing results, maintenance difficulties, concern about injury, use difficulties, unmet expectations, contingency reasons and displaced by current possessions. The study in question was not carried out in Nigeria but in Britain.

### 3.0 Research Method

The study used the research design of the survey type. It involved the mean and Standard Deviation computed and then subjected to t-test statistics. Questionnaire was used as data collection instrument to elicit responses on the influence of design concepts on gender patronage of consumer products from respondents in Lagos State. The population for this study was the registered advertisers and consumers of advertised products in Lagos State whose sample size was statistically determined to be 62 and 362 respectively. The procedure for carrying out field data began with the conduct of a pilot study and reliability test of the instrument. The method of analysis was done by subjecting data to descriptive statistics. The research question set to guide the study snowballed into the only hypothesis formulated. In testing this hypothesis, the responses of the male and female respondents (in the gender item of Section A in the questionnaire.) and the items of Section B in the questionnaire concerning pressure group, moral, cultural, mega-mural design, humour and propaganda, and colour concepts were scored and the mean and Standard Deviation were computed and then subjected to t-test. The outcome was tested at significant level of 0.05.

### 3.1 Results

#### Hypothesis

Visual design concepts have no significant influence on gender patronage of consumer products in Lagos State. This hypothesis states that visual design concepts have no significant influence on gender patronage of consumer products in Lagos State. In testing this hypothesis, the responses of the male and female respondents (in the gender item of Section A in the questionnaire.) and the items in Section B of the same questionnaire concerning pressure group, moral, cultural, mega-mural design, humour and propaganda, and colour concepts in Section B(2) were scored. The mean and Standard Deviation were computed and then subjected to t-test. The result is as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of significance of t-tests of influence of Design concepts on gender patronage in Lagos State**

Design concept	Group	N	- X	SD	df	t-cal	
Pressure Group	Male	116	32.87	6.12	203	1.991	1.960
	Female	89	30.98	7.50			
Moral Group	Male	116	20.22	5.21	203	1.270	1.960
	Female	89	19.31	4.91			
Cultural Design	Male	116	12.91	3.35	203	0.3.6	1.960
	Female	89	12.76	3.64			
Megamural Design	Male	116	23.04	5.64	203	0.463	1.960
	Female	89	22.65	6.44			
Humour & Propaganda	Male	116	25.63	8.22	203	0.020	1.960
	Female	89	25.65	7.29			
Colour	Male	116	17.41	4.45	203	0.154	1.960
	Female	89	17.31	4.70			

P <0.05.

Source: Author's fieldwork, 2015

From Table 1, the mean for the influence of pressure group design concept, moral design concept, cultural design concept, mega-mural design concept, humour design concept on gender patronage of products were 32.87, 30.98, 20.22, 19.31, 12.91, 12.76, 23.04, 22.65, 25.63, 25.65, 17.41 and 17.31 respectively while their standard deviations were 6.12, 7.50, 5.21, 4.91, 3.35, 3.64, 5.64, 6.44, 8.22, 7.29, 4.45 and 4.70 respectively. The table further revealed that the t-calculated for the pressure group design, moral design, cultural design, mega-mural design, humour and propaganda design, and colour design concepts were 1.991, 1.270, 0.306, 0.463, 0.020 and 0.154 respectively. At  $df = 203$  and with the level of significance of 0.05, then t-critical values for the various design concepts is 1.960.

A close observation of the t-calculated values showed that the only t-calculated value for each of the designs that was greater than the t-critical value is the pressure group design concept with 1.991 value while the t-critical value is 1.960. This hypothesis is rejected in respect of influence of pressure group design concept on the gender patronage of products. The t-calculated values for all the other design concepts revealed that t-critical value (1.960) is greater than each of the value of moral design concept (1.270), cultural design concept (0.306), mega-mural design concept (0.463), humour and propaganda design concept (0.20) and colour design concept (0.154). The hypothesis was not rejected in respect of the influence of moral design, cultural design, mega-mural design, humour and propaganda design and colour design on the gender patronage of products in Lagos State.

#### 4. Discussion

The hypothesis which says that there is no significant difference between gender patronage of products and design concepts is rejected. Although six design concepts were carefully examined and tested on this hypothesis but it became apparent that there is significant difference between the pressure group concept and gender patronage while the study shows that there is no significant difference between the rest five visual design concepts i.e. moral, humour and propaganda, colour, mega-mural and cultural design concepts and product patronage. This result is in agreement with Brennett (2000) which examined gender and product-category involvement of graduate consumers and concluded that designs were shown on advertisements to impart significant influences on attitude and on gender patronage of consumer products. The reason for this agreement is due to the fact that the same product categories were examined and also because although only the pressure group concept was mentioned in Lancefield and Raven (2006), it used the same statistical tools (t-test) used in the current study to score the responses of both male and female product consumers in an area of study that has about the same capital city status with Lagos State. This study practically supported the position of Banks (2006) by concluding that visual design concepts such as color, paintings and cultural designs do not have significant influence on the rate at which a male or female customer demands for a product. The findings in Trocchia and Janda (2002), Mastin, Coe, Hamitton and Tarr (2004) were corroborated by this study which posits that colour, culture, propaganda and moral design concepts do not influence gender patronage but self-will, salesperson influence and acquisition competence otherwise referred to as the purchasing power.

#### 5. Conclusion

The study has orderly presented six visual design concepts adopted by advertisers in advertising products on billboards. These design concepts are so essential in defining business and livelihood in an industrial and populous environment such as Lagos State. Although colourful billboard designs attract eyes and attention, the psychological understanding of the underlying visual concepts and the harmonious value that is added by the typographic message (caption and Copy) has always been the unique professional competence of the creative advertisers. There is no other means to make products known to the public quite like billboard advertisement. It works conjunctively with visual design concepts to give inclusive designs. The study has defined inclusivity as a conscious design practice in which all users of design – male or female are both beneficiaries. Inclusivity concept finds a common ground to consider the interests of the valid and the invalid, the rich and the poor, the young and the old advocating that they all have the right to be considered and accommodated in the planning and consumption benefits of a public product. It was hypothesized that billboard design concepts have no significant difference on gender patronage of consumer products in Lagos State. Six design concepts were identified. Of the six, only the pressure group concept significantly influences gender when it comes to patronage of products in Lagos State. The pressure group concept is a subtle springboard for reaching a target audience indirectly through a stimulus or a secondary party. For instance, the Honeywell Noodles is a product of Honeywell Flour Mills Plc or the Nasco Cornflakes of the NASCO Marketing Department are foods for the entire home. Kids may not be economically competent to buy the products but they have the propensity to consume these staple commodities more than the adults who buy. Characteristically, it is in the nature of children to mount pressure on their parents to buy products that the advertisements are children-friendly in the house. In order to incite children to mount pressure on their parents to purchase a product, advertisers adopt advertising concepts that could interest children and women: like sweet colours, verbal mimicking of a public figure and visual play-way methods. Other concepts that can be brought in are adoption of nursery rhymes or jingles, use of a popular star (music, football

or comedy) and of course, the introduction of the principle of repetition and emphasis as they relate to juvenile impulsiveness and amusement.

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## APPENDIX

### FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, AKURE (FUTA) DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

#### INVENTORY (QUESTIONNAIRE)

##### GENERAL INFORMATION ON CONSUMERS/RESPONDENTS

This survey is being undertaken by a doctoral student of the Industrial Design Department, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State. It is purely an academic exercise. You are kindly requested to supply information on the under listed items. All pieces of information supplied will be treated with strict confidentiality.

This research project is titled: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DESIGN CONCEPTS AND PRODUCT ADVERTISING ON OUTDOOR BILLBOARDS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA. For the avoidance of doubt and to help the respondents to this questionnaire in the understanding of what consumer products are like, a list of some consumer products are given below:

##### SOME CONSUMER PRODUCT RANGES

Staple commodities such as Detergents, Milk, Canned food, Insecticide, Alcoholic beverages, Soft drinks, Drugs, Toothbrushes and pastes, Recharge vouchers, Textiles clothing, Toiletries, Plastic buckets, Paper stock, Confectioneries, Leather products, Ball pen, Sporting products, Phone cells, Cutleries, Food flasks, Petroleum products, Electrical materials, Electronics, Automobiles, Wristwatches, Dry cell batteries, Floor carpets, (others specify.....)

#### SECTION A

##### PERSONAL PROFILE:

1. **GENDER:** Male (  ) Female (  ) (Tick one)
2. **AGE RANGE**  
Under 20 years (  ), 21-30 years (  ), 31-40 years (  ), 41-50 years (  ), 51 and Above (  )

3. **EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**  
 Literate ( )  
 Illiterate ( )  
 Semi Literate ( )
4. **OCCUPATION/WORK PROFILE**.....
5. **ECONOMIC STATUS OF RESPONDENT**  
 Producer ( )  
 Wholesaler ( )  
 Retailer ( )  
 User ( )  
 Others (specify) ( )
6. **GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF RESPONDENT** (Urban, Semi urban, Rural)  
 .....
7. **ONE CONSUMER PRODUCT YOU PATRONIZE MOST OFTEN** (Please mention categorically from the list above) .....
8. **WHAT, IN YOUR OWN OPINION IS THE CONSUMER PRODUCT THAT IS MOST PATRONIZED IN LAGOS STATE** (Mention categorically from the list above).....

**QUESTIONNAIRE - Section B**

As a consumer of a particular product rate the level of influence you think the visual design concepts have on gender patronage of advertised products in Lagos State.

**Key:** *HI: Highly influential, I: influential, ICS: I Can't Say, HNI: Not Influential, NI: Highly Not Influential*

S/N	Variables	HI 5	I 4	ICS 1	NI 2	HNI 3
8.	Culture					
9.	Humour and Propaganda					
10.	Moral					
11.	Pressure group					
12.	Colour					
14.	Mega-mural design					c