

PERSUADING THE KENYAN YOUTH; AN ANALYSIS OF
THE USE OF SEX APPEAL ON BILLBOARDS IN
NAIROBI

BY

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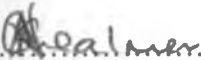
OCTOBER, 2011

DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented to any other university for a degree or anywhere else for academic purposes

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DEDICATION

To Mr. Elam Muchai: a father, a role model, and a figure of inspiration; and to Arthur, my son,
for his unconditional love.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not be a success without the enormous contributions of the following: First, the Almighty God, in whose guidance I have always lived, My Supervisor and Lecturer, Mr. Edwin Nyutho, whose serenity and insights made this paper a reality, my father and siblings whose moral support was a source of inspiration, my little boy Arthur, whose mere existence was a pushing force, all the respondents to the questionnaires and interviews conducted for this paper, for sparing their precious time and energy to provide answers, and friends and colleagues whose wide ranging contributions can not all be explained here; thank you.

ABSTRACT

With increasing focus by the Kenyan government on media content with the intention of barring subversive culture from mainstream media and advertising, this study set out to investigate the use of sex appeal in billboard advertising in Nairobi. It focused on consumers' ethical judgment towards the Ad, attitude towards the brand and purchase intentions. The results show that sexual appeal was evaluated as the most frequently used appeal on billboards in Nairobi.

From the findings of this study, respondents, regardless of their gender, did not positively receive the use of strong overt sexual appeal in Ads and had less favourable attitude towards the Ad itself. However, most respondents agreed that Ads with overt sexual themes were more noticeable and easier to remember than Ads with milder or no sexual appeal. This study however did not find a significant correlation between the degree of sexual content in an advertisement and brand attitude.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Ad-advertisement

CCK- Communications Commission of Kenya

CDT- Cognitive Dissonance Theory

ELM- Elaborate Likelihood Model

IT-Information Technology

KNBS-Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

KNPHS- Kenya National Population and Housing Census

MSK-Marketing Society of Kenya

NCBD-Nairobi Central Business District

NCC-Nairobi City Council

CIC-Cooperative Insurance Company

PR- Public Relations

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The mediascape in Kenya has been expanding rapidly over the years, accommodating new media forms and accepting innovations on existing media. The outdoor advertising industry has not been left behind this rapid growth. According to the Business Daily (September 23, 2008) the outdoor advertising industry in Nairobi has seen a major boom over the last few years after the liberalization of the Kenyan economy and the city council's decision to move from the monopoly of Adopt-A-Light as an outdoor advertising agent to make the industry more competitive. These, together with a promising economy which translates to higher spending power, have seen the rise in the need for persuasive communication strategies as multinational companies, non-governmental organizations and government institutions compete for market attention.

In a highly mobile society like Nairobi, outdoor advertising including, but not limited to, billboards is seen by a large proportion of the population. Billboards according to Sandage C. H. et al (2004) are preferred for two major reasons: they are the most effective mass medium (in relation to time and frequency of exposure), and they are easily accessible to the mass audience at no extra cost and effort. The billboards hardly segment their audience and thus are an ideal means of mass communication.

In Kenya many people use public transport and also spend very little time at home, limiting the opportunities to get through to them using conventional media such as TV and radio advertising. The focus has therefore shifted to out of home media.

Competition for market share and consumers has not only seen an increase in the number of billboards and a rise in outdoor advertising agents: it has also seen a change in persuasive strategies with some persuaders resorting “to the use of mass psychoanalysis to guide campaigns of persuasion....” (Packard 1957)

Many of us are being influenced and manipulated-far more than we realize-in the patterns of our everyday lives. Large scale efforts are being made, often with impressive success, to channel our unthinking habits, our purchasing decisions and our thought processes by the use of insights gleaned from psychiatry and social sciences...so that appeals which move us are often in a sense hidden. (Packard 1957)

The appeal most commonly used to seduce the youth in Nairobi is sex. Bovee’ and Arens (1992) argue that “...advertising is widely criticized...for its influence in our society... (It) psychologically manipulates people to buy things they cannot afford by promising greater sex appeal or improved social status.” Wilson (1992) also consents to this. He argues that “...emotional appeals based on sex have been used more and more in product advertisingsex appeal is used to stimulate emotions and sell consumer products to both sexes.”

There is a general agreement among scholars that advertisers embed sexual allusions in images to sell products that are superficially non-sexual. Attempts to justify this have been made by Engel et al (1991) who argue that “Deeper and more elaborate information processing is likely, when an important need is activated by emotional and complex message symbolism.” Packard agrees to this and argues that the advertising industry begun tailoring its ads to meet the need of the ID.

“Sex sells products in many ways.” (Wilson 1992) It is a truism of advertising. There is evidence that practitioners in the advertising and, on the whole, communication industry hold to this belief; in Nairobi, the number of billboards being erected with sexual themes such as nudity (fig 3.2), body revealment (fig 1.4), intimacy (appendix 4), subliminal advertising, (fig 1.1&1.2) suggestive language, attractiveness, among others, are almost uncountable.

1.1.1The history of billboards

The history of outdoor advertising is the history of mass communication, Tocker (1969). Born out of necessity, billboards were probably first used to convey a message to the majority of individuals who were illiterate. The oldest known billboard ad was posted in the Egyptian city of Thebes over 3,000 years ago and offered a reward for a runaway slave (Bernstein 2004). Prior to the late 1700s, the predecessor to the modern day billboard was prevalent throughout Europe, but only as an informal source of information. It wasn't until the invention of lithography in the late eighteenth century that billboards as a medium expanded into an art form. The first, art poster was created in 1871 by Englishman Frederick Walker, who was commissioned to create the

playbill for the play "Lady in White" in London. By the early 1900s, schools for poster art were being formed. (www.wikipedia.com)

The first large scale use of the billboards as an advertising tool was as circus posters printed or secured on horse-drawn trucks that would precede a show to town in order to increase interest and attendance. At this time, billboards were not standardized or controlled by any laws. During 1872-1912, organizations in the United States met to create billboard standards. Originally, the standard set was 24-sheet poster panels with a total size of 19.5 x 8.7 ft (6 x 2.6 m). Today, that size remains the same, while technology has reduced 24 sheets to 10. (www.wikipedia.com)

It was also during the early 1900s that electric billboards were used to light up cities. By the late 1920s, more people were purchasing automobiles and traveling beyond the city. Billboard advertising expanded as well, and for the first time, billboard advertising had to consider a wider range of demographic audiences. Billboard art and design changed with the times, reflecting new technologies and the mood of a generation. With the use of photography and comics, billboards portrayed a world without problems during the depression of the 1930s. The 1950s gave rise to the hand-painted billboard and use of sexual innuendo in campaigns. Billboards were extensively used in China to promote Red Army politics. It was also during this time that billboard companies utilized the boom truck with a crane to move billboards and place them in more prominent positions. During the 1960s, celebrity endorsements became essential and the advent of the superstar was born. As interest in environmentalism increased during the late 1960s and early 1970s, billboard ads borrowed images from nature. In the 1970s and 1980s, campaigns used sexually explicit rather than implied themes. (www.wikipedia.com)

1.1.2 Concerns of billboards

Many groups of people, as argued in this paper have complained about the popular use of billboards. Some have argued that having billboards along the highways pollutes the environment and degrades the beauty of the sceneries. Concerns are also raised that billboards may intrude on the surrounding landscape, because of their size, bright colors, and large fonts. They believe this may be a form of visual pollution. Some other groups believe that billboards and even advertisements in general, do not help the mentality of the public, because of their focus on material wants and needs.

Another concern over the use of billboards is that they may be distracting to drivers. Since billboards are aimed at being large, flashy, and highly visible, many drivers take their eyes off the road too long in order to look at them.

However, many studies have been performed to find a link between accidents and billboards along the roads and have concluded that billboards were not a significant source of distraction for drivers on the highways.

One important safety issue actually works for the use of billboards. On the contrary arguments for billboards are that the bright lighting provided by many billboards provides visibility and lighting for motorists along dark highways and that billboards may help relieve boredom for drivers, especially on long trips, by providing them with something to read.

1.1.3 Laws governing the use of billboards in Kenya

Many countries have by-laws governing the erection and display of billboards. In Kenya, this is dealt with both by the building code of 1969 and the physical planning act of 1996. Both of these concentrate on the placement of the billboards rather than the content. The Sexual Offences Act of 2006 makes provisions about sexual offences, their definition, prevention and the protection of all persons from harm from unlawful sexual acts, and for connected purposes.

The Sexual Offences Act, 2006, section 16 states that:

“Any person including a juristic person who -

(a) sells, lets to hire, distributes, publicly exhibits or in any manner puts into circulation, or for purposes of sale, hire, distribution, public exhibition or circulation, makes, produces or has in his or her possession any obscene book, pamphlet, paper, drawing, painting, art, representation or figure or any other obscene object whatsoever which depict the image of any child;

(b) imports, exports or conveys any obscene object for any of the purposes specified in subsection (1), or knowingly or having reason to believe that such object will be sold, let to hire, distributed or publicly exhibited or in any manner put into circulation;

(c) takes part in or receives profits from any business in the course of which he or she knows or has reason to believe that any such obscene objects are, for any of the purposes specifically in this section, made, produced, purchased, kept, imported, exported, conveyed, publicly exhibited or in any manner put into circulation;

(d) advertises or makes known by any means whatsoever that any person is engaged or is ready to engage in any act which is an offence under this section, or that any such obscene object can be produced from or through any person; or

(e) Offers or attempts to do any act which is an offence under this section, is guilty of an offence of child pornography.”

In essence therefore, the sexual offences act protects the Kenyan youth against exposure to sexually explicit images on the billboards. The Nairobi city council (NCC) the body in charge of overseeing the licensing of billboards and other public announcements within the NCBD and its outskirts and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development are yet to enforce the law that would restrict the use of sex appeal in advertising.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Harris & Scott (2002) state that viewing sexually explicit images affect the mind of members of a society; it changes attitudes towards people's morals, making them more accepting of lesser moralistic values. Neimark J, in an article titled "Eating Disorders Community" adds to the numerous negative implications of the use of sex appeal in the mass media. He argues that the media portrays an ideal body image which affects the self image of many members of the community. Lucy Ward (2005) also consents to this; she argues that "marketing messages have the potential to undermine self esteem as consumers use the media to establish unrealistic standards for behavior, attitudes or even their own appearance"

Despite these numerous arguments against the use of sex appeal in advertising, no academic study of this nature or legal steps have been undertaken in Kenya to establish or eradicate these fears; This research therefore set out to explore the degree of sex appeal in billboard advertising in Nairobi and assess its impacts on young people's attitudes and behaviour.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study set out to:

1. Ascertain the degree of sexual content used in billboard advertising and its influence on brand attitudes.
2. Establish the effectiveness of sex appeal as a persuasive strategy.
3. Explore consumers' ethical judgment of the use of sex appeal on billboards in Nairobi.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Through this research, the following questions were answered:

1. What degree of sexual content was used in advertising on billboards and how did it affect young people's attitudes towards the brand?
2. How effective was the use of sex appeal as a persuasive strategy?
3. What were the ethical implications of the use of sex appeal on the brands?

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

The Kenyan youth has become a target audience to advertisers as their earning power increases; advertisers embed their messages on billboards with sex appeal to hook them. The hypothesis of this research therefore was:

HO: Billboards in Nairobi use sex appeal to persuade the youth.

H1: Billboards in Nairobi do not use sex appeal to persuade the youth.

1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Mass media content and its effects on young people has been of great concern to social science scholars over the years. These scholars have concentrated on mainstream media such as television, movies, newspapers and magazines and more recently, the internet. Little effort however, has been put in the study of the content of billboards and their effects regardless of the fact that advertisers in their pursuit for market share and brand loyalty by consumers are likely to transcend ethical and cultural norms in an attempt to be “heard” especially on outdoor advertising which by virtue of its target audience-travelers and passersby-must be succinct yet eye catching.

Outdoor advertising remains "one of the least researched of any mass medium" (Katz 2003). Even among the limited number of studies that have been conducted, few have focused on what factors drive its effectiveness (Donthu, Cherian, and Bhargava 1993).

This is, despite the fact that outdoor advertising, especially billboards, remain a “true” mass medium in this era of demassification of the media since their audience has no control or barring ability over them and they hardly segment their audience in terms of economic and social class. (Sandage et al 2004). With this in view, it was necessary that the contents of billboards especially content innuending pervasive culture be studied.

Pervasive culture including but not limited to explicit sexual images and suggestive language have been a concern of educationists, sociologists, religious institutions and moralists at large. In Kenya, efforts have been made to bar explicit sexual content from school curricular and children’s literature with the justification that it perverts young minds. The Kenyan government too through the Media Council of Kenya and the Communication’s Act of 2007 has given

guidelines on the regulation of the content of media with the intention of protecting the youth against the influence of pervasive culture; the greatest irony however is that the most accessible mass medium, billboards, still exhibits strong use of sex appeal, an issue that contradicts both the ethics of advertising and communication.

The use of this appeal in advertising often also amounts to subliminal advertising; a form of advertising that takes place beneath our levels of awareness or consciousness, which is unethical (see figures 1.1 and 1.2).

If persuaders hide appeals and manipulate symbols in their messages as a portent to engineer our consent to their propositions, it is necessary that this manipulation which (Packard 1957) refers to as “anti-humanistic and representing regress rather than progress for man in his long struggle to become a rational and self guiding being” be investigated.

Major research indicates that subliminal advertising including the use of sex appeal does not influence purchase decision; marketers however continue to use sex as a selling bait in their advertisements. This contradiction created a need for academic research into the use and effects of sex appeal in advertising.

The findings of this research will be of great use to marketers who spend a lot of money both in advertising and market research; it will open a window into the all time marketing question of “Does advertising work?” The findings are also very important to policy makers, that is government, ethists in general and media schools to lobby for the inclusion of controls of the contents of billboards as a means of protecting consumers and society at large.



Figure 1.1 (Billboard with subliminal advertising)

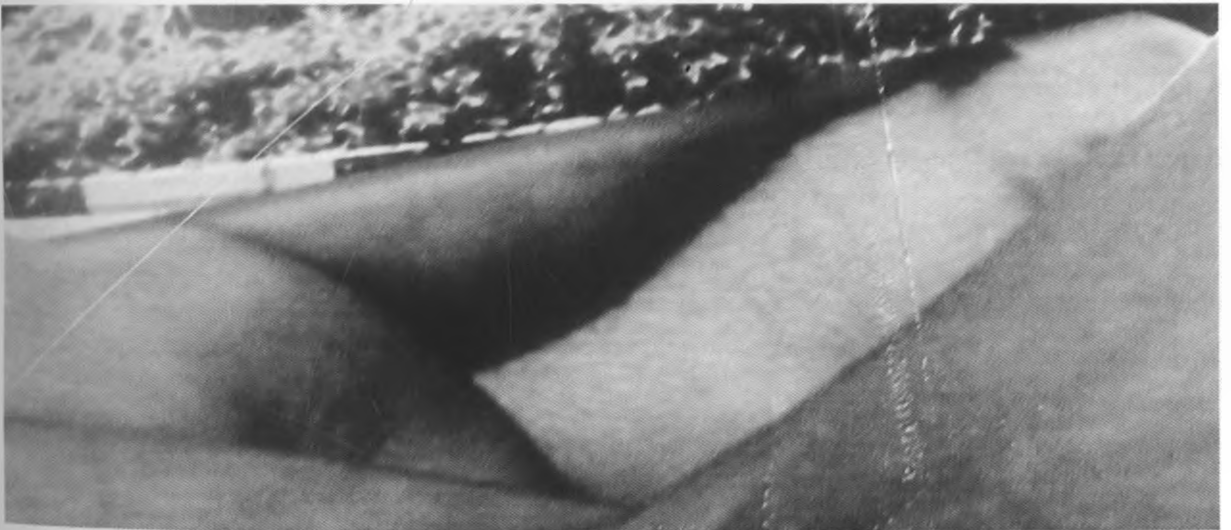


Figure 1.2

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The growth of outdoor advertising has included a considerable increase in the use of non-traditional formats, including electric poles, street furniture (e.g., bus shelters, kiosks), alternative media (e.g., arenas and stadiums), and transit (e.g., buses, airports). The focus of this study was on billboards, however, which remain the most common form of outdoor advertising.

This study did not explore the intricacies of human behavior and need gratification as these have been highly explored by psychologists in various studies; it however relied significantly on the use of theories stipulated in these studies to explain the relationship between persuasion and attitude change in particular relationship to the use of sex appeal on billboards.

This research paper was limited to the study of the effects that sex appeal has on young people (15-29 years), in Nairobi. This is because according to the 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census report, there are about eleven million, one hundred and forty-five thousand and eight hundred and seventy-two (11,145,872) youths in Kenya. This forms about thirty (30) per cent of the total population.

In Nairobi alone, the total population of people is three million, one hundred and thirty-eight thousand and three hundred and sixty-nine (3,138,369). Out of this population, one million, two hundred and ten thousand, and one hundred and thirteen are youths. This makes a percentage of about thirty-nine (38.56%) of the population.

With this statistics, together with the findings of other research works on the effects of the mass media on young people (discussed under 2.3) there was no doubt that this section of the population (youths in Nairobi) was a target audience for marketers.

This study was also limited to billboards within Nairobi County; that is; NCBD and major high ways leading to Nairobi City.



Figure1.3 (a street bin used to advertise)

1.8 THEORIES

This study borrowed heavily on the following two theories that were considered relevant in exploring the use and effects of sex appeal on billboard advertising:

1.8.1 Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT) focuses primarily on an individual's psychological response to inconsistencies in beliefs and actions. Because dissonance produces distress, human beings seek to maintain consonance or the appearance of consonance whenever possible. This adverse effect may mean changing one's behaviors or realigning one's beliefs through some type of rationalization.

1.8.2 Elaborate Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) views persuasion primarily as a cognitive event, meaning that the targets of persuasive messages use mental processes of motivation and reasoning (or a lack of it), to accept or reject persuasive messages. Developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), ELM posits two possible routes or methods of influence: centrally routed messages and peripherally routed messages. Each route targets a widely different audience.

1.8.3 The Social Learning Theory

This is a theory highly relied on by behaviorists. It was stipulated by Albert Bandura, although earlier scholars such as Julian Rotter had already suggested some of its key tenets. It suggests that behavior can be learned from others or from the media by observation and modeling.

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

For purposes of this research paper, the following operational definitions were used:

1.9.1 Youth

One of the most common definitions of youth in quantitative terms is that a youth is a person between the ages of 15 and 24. It is used by both the United Nations and the World Bank and is applied in many statistics and indicators. Young people are grouped together to form a statistical entity, making it possible to compare data across time and countries.

Different scholars have provided different ways of defining youth. Curtin (2002), quoted in the U.N. World Youth Report 2003, defines it as a phase when a person moves from a time of dependence (childhood) to independence (adulthood)

This qualification of the term youth led us to stretch the definition of this term quantitatively to come up with our operational definition of the term youth as a person between the ages of 15 and 29 since this is the ages when most people complete their education, begin to look for work and leave home.

The term young or young people will be used synonymously with youth for the purposes of this study.

1.9.2 Billboards

Wikipedia defines a billboard or a hoarding as a large outdoor advertising structure typically found in high traffic areas such as alongside busy roads and presenting large advertisements to passing pedestrians and drivers. Typically billboards show large, ostensibly witty slogans, and distinctive visuals. They are highly visible in the top designated market areas.

Billboard is the common term used to describe a type of outdoor advertising initially found along major highways. This definition continues to change every day as changes occur in the field of billboarding.

1.9.3 Advertisement

The physical planning act of 1996 defines an advertisement as any word, letter, model, sign, placard, board, notice, device or representation, whether illuminated or not in the nature of and employed wholly or in part for the purposes of advertisement, announcement or direction.

1.9.4 Persuasion

Olson and Zanna (1993) define persuasion as attitude change resulting from exposure to information from other(s). Scheidel's definition of persuasion is more illuminating of the concept; He describes persuasive speaking as "...that activity in which a speaker (communicator) and listener (target audience) are conjoined and in which the speaker consciously attempts to influence the behavior of the listener by transmitting audible and visible symbolic cues"

Persuasion has its purpose as the changing of attitudes and behavior of the receiver.

1.9.5 Sex appeal

Wikipedia defines sex appeal as “...a person's ability to attract in a sexual or erotic manner the interest of another person. The attraction may be to a physical quality of a person, or to other, more amorphous qualities of the person.”



Figure 1.4 Nivea Ad with sex appeal

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In attempting to answer the question ‘how does the use of sex appeal on billboards influence the youth in Nairobi?’ it was essential to begin by researching the body of scholarly literature available on the subject of ‘outdoor advertising.’ It soon became apparent that this literature alone was not going to be sufficient to tackle that question. Not only was this body of theory small, but it was generally lacking a critical, cultural studies approach. It revolved around five general areas of inquiry: an industry-based history of the medium and ongoing research into its profit-generating effectiveness internationally; analyses of outdoor advertising regulation; ‘effects’ based studies focused on narrow issues such as tobacco advertising on billboards; feminist critiques of outdoor advertising imagery; and a few individual studies that opened the door to a critical analysis without venturing much farther. While many of these studies were limited, they did provide ‘clues’ which signaled a host of theoretical literature that could be used to create a critical analysis of outdoor advertising as it intersects with the broader issues of globalisation, persuasive appeals and consumer culture. This study concentrated on how sex appeal in the mass media influenced the purchasing intentions and brand attitude, and how it contributed to the predominance of consumer culture as our everyday paradigm.

This literature review therefore begins by critically examining the scholarly literature on outdoor advertising in order to highlight how it is useful in some respects, and yet inadequate in central ways

2.2 USE OF BILLBOARDS AS AN OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

Frank Jefkins, (1994) states that outdoor advertising is the oldest established form of advertising. The long history of controversy over outdoor advertising continues to the present. On one side of the debate are those who argue that outdoor is an effective medium that helps to create jobs and is widely appreciated by the public. On the other side are the critics of the industry who use terms such as 'visual pollution,' and 'the junk mail of the American highway' to describe billboards (Taylor & Franke 2003).

The earliest 'scholarly' writing on outdoor advertising available is eerily optimistic. Authors such as Frost (1941) wrote about it in such a gleaming light. Frost (1941) went to great depths 'grounding' outdoor advertising as the earliest form of mass media, connecting it with the early stone tablets of the Egyptians and the crests worn by the Crusaders, claiming: "The medium mightily helped in the propagation of Christianity by its exaltation, multiplication and display of the cross throughout Europe and the near East" (Frost 1941)

"Over the years, advertising has been both condemned and eulogized. To some, it has been characterized as an insult to the intelligence of thinking men; others profess that advertising is a necessary and desirable catalyst of our private enterprise system" (Enfield 1969).

A more contemporary body of literature exists, that relates to outdoor advertising from a marketing perspective. There is a great amount of literature in advertising trade journals and publications declaring the versatility of the medium and praising its contributions to visual

culture and society at large, often using quantitative 'evidence' to support its effectiveness at 'capturing' the attention of consumers. In Bernstein's (2004) *Advertising Outdoors: Watch This Space!* a contemporary celebration of the outdoor advertising form, the discourse echoes that of Frost in its praise for the medium. He claims that the most understated strength of the outdoor medium is: "A poster message happens in the public arena where important things take place" (Bernstein 2004: 114).

"Certainly advertising, like propaganda, seems almost inescapable. It is visible everywhere and intrudes incongruously at almost every vantage point" (Horsbrugh 1969).

The literature on outdoor advertising is completely polarised between advocates on one hand, and critics on the other.

In summary, outdoor advertising's existence has been recorded either: in its own interests, in the interests various group taking issue with it (particularly the advertising of tobacco and alcohol on billboards), or by detached others who neither supports nor condemns it.

2.2.1: Characteristics of billboards

Textbook authors and academic researchers have identified a variety of distinctive characteristics of billboards and outdoor advertising (e.g., Kelley and Jugenheimer 2004; Sissors and Baron 2002; Taylor 1997; Woodside 1990). The advantages of using billboards include, among other things: (1) potential placement of the advertisement close to the point of sale, (2) high frequency of exposure to regular commuters, (3) high reach "...Outdoor advertising is great because it does

not chance its viewership. Its visual and that in itself is the most efficient in achieving awareness. It leads all other senses into action!" (Magnet Ventures 2011) (4) 24-hour presence, (5) geographic flexibility for local advertisers, (6) economic efficiency in terms of low production costs and low cost per thousand exposures, (7) visual impact from advertisement size and message creativity, and (8) brand awareness. Disadvantages include: (1) the need to limit the number of words in the message, (2) short exposure to the advertisement, (3) low demographic selectivity, and (4) measurement problems. A recent study of billboard users found that compared with other media, billboards were rated higher in terms of ability to (1) communicate information affordably, (2) attract new customers, and (3) increase sales (Taylor and Franke 2003). While many advantages of billboards have been identified through academic study, there is a need to investigate whether frequently listed advantages overlap with each other, and to examine whether the advantages supersede the concerns earlier discussed.

2.2.2 Types of billboards

There are many types of billboards, all of which are used all over the world. There are traditional billboards, digital billboards, mechanical billboards, and mobile billboards. Each one has a unique way of advertising their product or person. Billboards are especially popular because they can be custom designed to the buyer's specifications. Sizes of billboards vary, but typically run about 14 feet high and 48 feet wide. This size can vary greatly, however, due to many different factors. Billboards are popular because of the large lettering used on them, making them nearly impossible to miss.

2.2.2.1 Traditional billboards

Traditionally billboards are divided into two categories: Bulletins are the largest, most impactful standard-size billboards. Located primarily on major highways, expressways or principal arterials, they command high-density consumer exposure (mostly to vehicular traffic). This name is most frequently given to large steel-framed signs, which are mounted on poles 20-100 ft (6.1-30.5 m) above the ground. Most often, the sign is printed on large poster sheets, which are affixed to the face of the sign. These signs may also be equipped with a variety of special lighting and display effects.

Posters are the other common form of billboard advertising, located chiefly in commercial and industrial areas. Posters are a smaller format than bulletins and are viewed principally by residents and commuter traffic, with some pedestrian exposure. (Wikipedia)

2.2.2.2 Mechanical billboards

A mechanical billboard uses a technology called tri-action movement, also known by some as tri-visions or multi-message billboards. These billboards show three separate advertisements in a rotation that is moved with the use of a mechanical system. They are uniquely rearranged, so the billboards surface can be rotated to show three separate flat display surfaces. The advertisements for these mechanical billboards are printed on strips of vinyl, and then attached to the front of the triangular panels. One strip from each of those three different ads is attached to each individual panel. The panels then rotate simultaneously, and pause. When paused, one of the advertisements is displayed. In this way, one billboard can advertise three messages by using one structure. They are also very eye-catching, attractive, and each ad lasts anywhere from 5 to 10 seconds.

There is another type of mechanical sign called a scrolling billboard, which can show up to 30 images per side by using a roll-up mechanism that is computer controlled. Backlit vinyl is used to print images that can then be seen easily at night as well as in daylight. These types of billboard advertisements are typically used for permanent mall ads or even on large vehicles for mobile billboards.

2.2.2.3 Digital billboards

Technology has come a long way in the types of billboards used for advertising. Many billboards in Nairobi are now of the digital variety, using LED and similar techniques to get their messages across. Advertisers can now change the content of their adverts on one billboard at any time from a computer hundreds of miles away.

These large billboards have the ability to rotate ads every few seconds, and this enables the owner of the billboard to sell the same exact space many times over.

2.2.2.4 Mobile billboards

Mobile billboards are a great way to get a particular advertisement or message across to many people all day. The mobile billboard industry began by printing large banners that were then mounted onto panels and installed on large flat bed trucks. These trucks were used solely for advertising space, and they were parked in locations that were highly visible to consumers, such as near sporting venues or entertainment centers. They could then be moved to other locations and parked, targeting a different audience.

The technology for mobile billboards has evolved into the design of a mobile billboard truck, allowing local advertisers the ability to rent one themselves. Trucks now have the capability to advertise in the same way a mechanical billboard does, only on a vehicle. Three ads can also be displayed in rotation, usually at about 7 to 8 second intervals, allowing a mobile billboard to advertise many things at once.

There are other areas of travel that employ mobile billboards as a means of advertising. An entire vehicle can be “wrapped” in a specific advertisement. These vehicles are usually personal cars or trucks, and the owner gets money for advertising that particular product a good example is the Kenya Bus Service. Some billboards are put onto train cargo containers.



Figure 2.1 (Ad Truck)

Human billboards are also a form of mobile billboards common in Nairobi. Human billboards in Nairobi often take the form of several people dressed in specific brand colours and often carrying a placard each, advertising or promoting a product and issuing fliers in heavy traffic areas. They are very commonly used to launch new products and advertise promotions. There are many ways to employ mobile billboards into everyday life, and companies realize that this is a great way to get their advertisements across, as many people see them every day.



Figure 2.2 (sample human billboard)

2.2.3 Bill board use in Nairobi

The History of billboard use in Nairobi is scanty with very little published information on it. The earliest forms of billboards in Nairobi were mainly wall wraps or wall scapes where billboards were mounted in walls. The use of billboards has tremendously grown over the years especially after the liberalization of the economy after 1997. The use of street furniture as a form of advertising was highly popularized by Adopt a Light through the electricity pole light Ads and later adopted by ENG and the city council.

Currently in Nairobi there are about five main types of outdoor advertising: billboards, bus shelters, bus backs, electricity pole lights and street posters. Billboards generally run on a lease system where a property, irrespective of a change of ownership, earns a specific amount of revenue each month from allowing a billboard to be erected on the site. (Mr. Njoroge-NCC PR department)

Bus shelters are owned and operated by the NCC and are common at bus terminus such as the Globe Cinema round about, Machakos bus station and in Westlands. Street posters are confined to street notice boards and specific sites on walls and fences.

71% of Today's Kenya population is under the age of 32 (Steadman 08) and with a rural to urban population of 80:20 (Steadman 08) it says without question that most of Kenyans are young; inevitably they spend over 75% percent of their time outdoor either making a living or going to school, whilst moving from point A to B. You can't beat outdoor for sheer audience size: a single billboard can get market penetration that beats any medium! (Magnet Ventures 2011)

2.3 MASS MEDIA AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The subject of mass media effects on young people has been widely discussed in academic discourse. The studies have often focused on the following media: television, radio, internet

video and lately games (both video and computer). Little research has been done on the effects of outdoor media on young people.

The first serious academic study on media effects was the Payne Fund Studies. These were a series of studies of the effect of movies on children's behavior. They were paid for by The Payne Fund, a private foundation. (Lowery and De Fleur) These studies though very fundamental in the field of mass media research, have been highly criticized for their lack of scientific methodology.

Another early study titled "Television in the lives of our children" was undertaken by Wilbur Schramm, Jack Lylle and Edwin Parker over a period of two years (1958-1960). The study focused on the uses and gratification theory and came up with the following possible impacts of television on children:

Physical

Emotional

Cognitive

Behavioral (Schramm W. et al 1961)

Many more researches continue to be carried out on media effects; many however, apart from focusing on mainstream mass media also concentrate on three major areas of impacts namely: tobacco in ads, alcohol advertising and media and aggressive behavior.

The conclusion of Schramm and others was that:

For some children, under some conditions, some television is harmful. For some children under the same conditions, or for the same children under other conditions, it may be beneficial. For most children, under most conditions,

most television is probably neither particularly harmful nor particularly beneficial

Research on the impact of media on young people's behavior has mainly concentrated on the wider topic of mass culture and often missed out the very critical aspect of sex in the media.

Theories in the area of media effects have also developed over time; there are four main media influence theories: hypodermic needle model (1930s behaviorism), two-step flow model (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955), limited effects (Lang & Lang, 1953), and the spiral of silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1984).

Other more current literature in the field of marketing has more often taken a psychological angle of the subject;

Solomon M. et al (2006) asserts that the teen market is the most materialistic generation of youngsters in history with a high spending power and great influence on parental expenditure. He also suggests that even though today's teens are advertising literate, they are also greatly influenced by adverts.

Young people are an upcoming market for many products; Many look up to the media for identity since they want to move away from dependency to their parents and identify themselves with support structures such as peers and media (Solomon 2008) as such, they become a target of advertisers seeking brand loyalty. "Marketers see teenagers as 'consumers in training' since brand loyalty is developed during this stage."

2.4 OVERVIEW OF PERSUASSION

A key obstacle to persuasion effectiveness in advertising is the volume of advertising to which consumers are exposed. Godin (1999) reports that an average American consumer is exposed to approximately one million marketing messages every year. The situation in Nairobi may be slightly different, but there is no gainsaying that consumers are equally exposed to big volumes of advertisements. To manage this volume of information, consumers control their own information processing and engage in selective perception, which leads to processing only a limited number of advertisements and ignore others.

Selective perception has been conceptualized as a four-part process consisting of selective exposure, attention, comprehension, and retention. In an advertising context, selective exposure refers to people limiting the communications they see and hear to those that conform to their pre-existing ideas and attitudes (Burgoon, Hunsaker, and Dawson 1994). Selective attention refers to actually paying attention to the advertisement once exposed to it. Selective comprehension involves the process by which the consumer reconciles the advertisement's content with pre-existing beliefs. Finally, selective retention is defined as remembering messages that are more consistent with one's prior beliefs and one's own self-image. As a result, advertisers must consider how selective perception is affecting their ability to get a message through to consumers.

Because of the heavy volume of advertising to which consumers are exposed, they must decide which advertisements to screen out and which to process. As media-planning expert Erwin Ephron has observed, outdoor advertising is unique in that people are not involved in the medium as they would be when watching a television program or reading the newspaper. As a result, Ephron (2004) has described outdoor advertising as a unique case in which the "medium

is the message." When driving by a billboard, a motorist is not bombarded with other media options, so selective perception is not as much of an obstacle as in some other media. Although the short exposure time and lack of involvement in the medium mandate that higher frequency of exposure is necessary for billboards to have the same impact as other media (Cannon and Riordan 1994; Murray and Jenkins 1992).

2.4.1 Appeals in persuasion

The Greek philosopher Aristotle and the many authorities that would echo him described three kinds of persuasive appeals:

Logos-The appeal to reason,

Pathos-The appeal to emotion

And Ethos- appeal to character

2.4.1.1 Sex appeal

This is an emotional appeal that this research mostly concentrated on as justified in the scope.

Lang et al (2003) carried out a study showing a correlation between the presence of sexual appeal and increased attention to billboards. By measuring heart rate and carrying out 'skin response' tests. They ascertained that "the presence of a sexual appeal in the billboards significantly increased resource allocation for male participants but had little or no effect on resource allocation for women" (Lang et al 2003). The second positive correlation they deduced

was between level of alcohol consumption and “increased arousal” in relation to sexual appeal in a billboard. Lang et al (2003) concluded that “the presence of sexual appeals in product and alcohol billboards clearly increases attention, seems to increase positive valence, and, at least for some groups, increases arousal.”

In Consumer Behaviour, Solomon et al (2006) suggest that people are likely to change attitudes better when the source is an attractive person. Attractiveness, they argue exerts effects on consumers’ purchase intentions or product evaluation.

Rosewarne (2004) is highly concerned about the ‘street harassment’ that sexualised imagery in outdoor advertising creates. In discussing ‘public space’, Rosewarne (2004) uses a much broader definition than previous scholars do which has been very useful for enabling the development of further critical analyses. She chooses the model of ‘street harassment’ because it is a measurable concept and “a simple term that will give legitimacy to concerns and, ideally, attach stigma to the kinds of images used in street ads.

Rosewarne (2004) makes a very important argument about gender. She argues that masculinity dominates public space because outdoor advertising helps construct (or maintain) that space as a visual playground for men while it is the woman who is subordinate, featuring far more often than men in sexualized outdoor advertisements and routinely being portrayed as merely decorative.

She argues that just as the display of ‘sexually suggestive’ material in the workplace is deemed sexually harassing, such publicly displayed material on outdoor advertising should also be dubbed ‘street harassment’ (Rosewarne 2004)



Figure 2.3 (a sample billboard with sex appeal)

2.5 Ethical considerations

The use of advertising in general has ethical questions associated with it, but these questions are amplified when young people are the target of techniques such as sexual appeals. This is important because there is no denying that sex is used to target the youth

(<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu>)

Considerable research has been done on ethics in marketing, partly because marketing is the business function most often charged with unethical practices. The discussion gets more complex when sex appeals are used to lure young people.

Most of the general ethical complaints on advertising fit into the following list provided by Cohan (2001)'s article in the *Journal of Business Ethics*:

1. Advertising often fosters the philosophy that human happiness depends on the possession or prestige value of material things, with little concern for the big picture of what matters in life.
2. The advertising industry is too dominant in setting societal values, creating its own values, which may be false and artificial, as to what is "good" for the consumer. "It certainly promotes beliefs and behavior that have significant and sometimes harmful effects on the individual, the family, the society, and the environment" (Kilbourne, 1999).
3. Advertising is an entertainment technique, which is deployed to attract and keep the attention of viewers and make them more susceptible to persuasion.
4. Marketers use small exaggerations about the superiority of their product or service, and this is seen as legal, since it is puffery, and morally permissible since it is considered by the average person to be in the normative culture of advertising.
5. Advertising is preoccupied with the body and the use of sexuality to play on the physical appetites and pursuit of pleasure by the viewer, which affects the ability of men and women alike to be persuaded. (Cohan, 2001)

The latter is also known as "sex in advertising which was the main concern of this study.

The issues surrounding sexual content in advertisements “are more difficult to define and handle because they reflect a large variety of personally subjective, culturally related and historically changing values and attitudes” (Boddewyn, 1991).

Marketing to young people has ethical implications which need the attention of consumer advocate organizations and watchdog groups to lobby for protection of the youth from commercial exploitation since the targeting by advertisers has an unhealthy effect on teens, children and young people as a whole

The use of sexual appeals in advertising often is not appealing to viewers and may produce potentially negative side effects (e.g., sexual obsessions, gratuitous sex) (Gould 1994). Therefore, the consequences (in terms of unwanted or unintended side effects) of the use of sexual appeals in advertising, as well as the fundamental moral rightness or wrongness of its use are of concern (Gould 1994).

Clearly, advertising operates within the parameters established by society. As the morals and ethical considerations of society change over time, what is considered appropriate and acceptable in advertising must also change. As Zinkhan, Bisesi, and Saxton (1989) have pointed out, the influence and impact of "moral idealism" change over time. It is therefore prudent to continually re-evaluate the assumptions on which strategic decisions are based. Advertisers considering the use of sexual appeals need to examine all potential social issues at stake. Advertising executives should consider not only the unintended consequences of using such appeals, but also the perceived morality of doing so (Gould 1994).

During the past two decades, the use of sexual appeals in print advertising has become almost commonplace (LaTour, Pitts, and Snook-Luther 1990; Soley and Reid 1988).

Ethical judgments on this subject, like many others, are subjective and complex, and deal with cultural norms. Yet, there is another dimension of ethical questions when sexual appeals are used to promote products to young people.

Over the past several years a trend has emerged that looks at children (and young people) as consumers. One of the first books to consider children as such was *Children as Consumers: Insights and Implications* by Dr. James U. Another scholar who widely discussed the concept of children as consumers is McNeal. In his book, McNeal (1992) concluded the following findings regarding children:

- Present-day consumers
- Influencers on purchases for their families as well as for themselves
- Future consumers who form important branding opinions at an early age and can dramatically impact a company's future earnings once they have grown up.

These three criteria also apply to the youth, who have increasingly large disposable incomes and thus purchasing power.

Marketers are accused of attempting to establish “cradle to grave” brand loyalty among the purchasers of goods and services (Linn, 2004). As Kilbourne notes in the first chapter of her book: “Buy this 24-year-old and get all his friends absolutely free” (Kilbourne, 1999). While this

statement can be applied to younger audiences, the point is the same. Peer pressure can work in ways that will increase conformity during the years of the youth.

While it is not possible to say that sex appeal is unethical or ethical because of its subjective nature, the findings of this research study reveal that most of the billboard advertisements have varying forms of sex appeal used.

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.5.1 The Elaborate Likelihood Model

Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) model depicts persuasion as a process in which the success of influence depends largely on the way the receivers make sense of the message. The more complex of the two paths is known as the central route, also referred to as an elaborated route. Centrally routed messages include a wealth of information, rational arguments, and evidence to support a particular conclusion; however, not all individuals are capable of receiving centrally routed messages thus the need for the peripheral route.

2.5.1.1 The Peripheral Route to Persuasion

Elaborated messages are ineffective when targeted participants are not capable and interested in the information (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Although the persuader might prefer an involved audience so as to produce enduring change, it is unreasonable to expect every persuasive target to be motivated or skilled enough to understand the barrage of influential messages put forth each day. As a result, when motivation or ability is missing from the target audience, the

persuader can use the peripheral route to persuasion. Peripheral messages rely on a receiver's emotional involvement and persuade through more superficial means. This is what sex appeal users rely on.

Thus, ELM predicts that when the audience is unmotivated or unable to process an elaborated message, persuaders should focus on quick and easy ways to produce change. One significant drawback is that the peripheral route leads only to short-term change.

Types of peripheral cues:

Cialdini (1993, 1994) identified seven common cues that signal the use of a peripheral message: authority, commitment, contrast, liking, reciprocity, scarcity, and social proof.

Using authority as a peripheral cue, the persuader uses the perception of authority to convince the audience to accept the beliefs or behaviors presented.

Peripheral messages that rely on commitment emphasize a person's dedication to a product, social cause, group affiliation, political party, and so on (Cialdini, 1993, 1994). For example, some people publicly announce their commitment to a certain group or cause; they attend rallies, run for office, or wear pins, hats, and other logos that symbolize the affiliation (Canary, Cody, & Manusov, 2003).

Persuading through contrast or using contrast effects requires the communicator to set up uneven points of comparison (Cialdini, 1993, 1994).

Liking messages stress affinity toward a person, place, or object (Cialdini, 1993, 1994). That is, if we like you, we will like your ideas.

Companies often rely on such messages of liking. By using sexy models to sell products, these companies expect that if you like the model, you will also like their product (and will buy it).

Messages of reciprocation try to influence by emphasizing a give and-take relationship (Cialdini, 1993, 1994). Advertisers also use reciprocation; “Buy this cream and say goodbye to cellulite”

Similarly, scarcity is a peripheral message that preys on people’s worry of missing out on something. This approach creates a sense of urgency for receivers.

Finally, the peripheral cue of social proof relies on the age-old notion of peer pressure (Cialdini, 1993, 1994).

It is important to stress that these peripheral messages emphasize fleeting emotional responses and are not likely to create long lasting change.

Types of peripheral messages:

As with centrally routed arguments, peripheral messages can be evaluated as positive, neutral, or negative. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) Positive peripheral messages are those that are perceived favorably by the audience and create a positive affective state. Positive peripheral messages have a chance at yielding weak, positive changes in attitude.

Neutral peripheral messages leave the receivers feeling emotionally ambivalent; they really don’t know or care about the cue used to capture their interest (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Finally, negative peripheral messages produce negative or disapproving emotional responses within the receiver.

To review, ELM makes very clear predictions; the theory predicts that if listeners are motivated and able to consider an elaborated message, persuaders should rely on strong, factually based arguments. Arguments can backfire if they are weak or poorly presented, however. Conversely, persuaders should focus on emotionally based peripheral messages if receivers cannot or will not consider an elaborated message.

2.5.2 Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Cognitive dissonance theory (CDT) predicts that influence is often an intrapersonal event, occurring when incongruence between our attitudes and behavior creates a tension that is resolved by altering either our beliefs or our behaviors, thereby effecting a change.

According to Festinger (1957, 1962), when presented with a new or unfamiliar stimulus, individuals use schemata—that is, cognitive structures for organizing new information. Essentially, for new information to be understood or useful, we must find schemata with which to link the new stimulus to previously understood experiences. Importantly, however, when newly presented information is inconsistent with our previously established beliefs (i.e., schemata), we will experience an imbalance or dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

It is this dissonance that becomes a highly persuasive tool because, according to Festinger, humans feel so uneasy with holding contradictory beliefs and actions that they will make every attempt to minimize the discomfort. In other words, when individuals behave in a manner that is incongruent with their beliefs, dissonance is created; dissonance creates discomfort. Because

humans do not like to feel unnerved, individuals actively seek to change the situation to restore a balance between thought and action.

The relationship between beliefs and behaviors

Three possible relationships between beliefs and behaviors exist: irrelevance, consonance, and dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Briefly stated, irrelevance simply refers to beliefs and behaviors that have nothing to do with each other. Thus, irrelevance is the absence of both consonance and dissonance. Second, consonance occurs when two stimuli or pieces of information are in balance or achieve congruence.

According to Festinger (1957), individuals prefer consonant relationships; that is, we strive to feel consistency between actions and beliefs.

Conversely, dissonance occurs when two stimuli or pieces of information contradict each other (Festinger, 1957). CDT predicts that this dissonance makes one uncomfortable, at least until he can rationalize or augment the dissonance—either by shifting his belief or by changing his behavior.

However, not all dissonance is created equally. That is, a magnitude of dissonance exists whereby some forms of incongruence produce greater discomfort than others (Zimbardo, Ebbesen, & Maslach, 1977).

Persuasion through dissonance

CDT assumes that humans prefer congruency between beliefs and behaviors. When we engage in an action that opposes our attitudes, we experience distress known as dissonance. Depending on the importance of the issue and the degree of our discomfort, we are motivated to change our

beliefs or behaviors (i.e., be persuaded). CDT is often considered a postdecision theory, meaning that individuals attempt to persuade themselves (Gass & Seiter, 2003).

According to CDT, motivation results from an individual's internal struggle to change beliefs or behaviors to restore consonance (Festinger, 1957). Consequently, if a persuader can create or exploit dissonance while also offering a solution to minimize the disparity, it is likely that the receiver will adopt these suggested new behaviors (or change beliefs).

Advertisers have been using principles of CDT for decades, convincing consumers to buy their clients' products. For instance, the beauty industry has made billions of dollars by preying on the average persons' insecurities about their appearance and body image.

We are motivated to relieve the dissonance by purchasing so-called miracle products such as fat blockers, diet supplements, cellulite creams, and even low-energy beer. Thus, by presenting an easy alternative, these manufacturers help consumers to minimize their discomfort by realigning their beliefs and behaviors, if only on a temporary basis.

By offering a solution, product, or course of action that bridges the gap between receivers' incongruent beliefs and behaviors, communicators may influence receivers to use these methods to create cognitive harmony.

However, this method cannot be overrelied on as Gass and Seiter (2003) noted, if you create too much dissonance, the receivers may simply create balance by changing their attitudes so as not to like you. Likewise, ethical issues abound when individuals plot to exploit consumers' or employees' dissonance for material gain.

If creating or magnifying another's dissonance strips that individual of self worth, then such techniques should be avoided.

2.5.3 The Social Learning Theory

Many experiments and surveys have used The Social Learning Theory as their conceptual basis. As spelled out by Bandura (1977), the theory explains how people learn from direct experience or from observation (or modeling). Some key elements in this theory are attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivations. According to Bandura, attention to an event is influenced by characteristics of the event and by characteristics of the observer. For example, repeated observation of an event by a person who has been paying close attention should increase learning. Retention refers to how well an individual remembers behaviors that have been observed. Motor reproduction is the actual behavioral enactment of the observed event. For example, some people can accurately imitate a behavior after merely observing it, but others need to experiment. The motivational component of the theory depends on the reinforcement or punishment that accompanies performance of the observed behavior.

Applied to the area of sex appeal in the media, social learning theory predicts that people can learn antisocial or pro-social acts by watching them from the media. The model further suggests that viewing repeated antisocial acts makes people more likely to people who are heavily exposed to violence and antisocial acts becoming less anxious about the consequences.

Bandura (1977) summarized much of the research on social learning theory. In brief, some key findings in laboratory and field experiments suggest that children can easily perform new acts of aggression after a single exposure to them on television or in films. The similarity between the circumstances of the observed antisocial acts and the post-observation circumstances is important in determining whether the act is performed. If a model is positively reinforced for performing antisocial acts, the observed acts are performed more frequently in real life.

Likewise, when children are promised rewards for performing antisocial acts, they exhibit more antisocial behavior. Other factors that facilitate the performance of antisocial acts include the degree to which the media behavior is perceived to be real, the emotional arousal of the subjects, and the presence of cues in the post-observation environment that elicit antisocial behavior. Finally, as predicted by the theory, desensitization to violence can occur through repeated exposure to violent acts.

Sexually explicit images on billboards obviously facilitate an emotionally arousing environment for young people to reproduce these antisocial behaviors. This together with the fact that most of this behavior among young people is likely to be positively reinforced especially by their peers means that sexual images and suggestive language is likely to highly influence the young people exposed to it.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explicates in detail the methodology adopted in carrying out the study. It covers the following aspects; research design, area under study, population of the study, study sample and sampling procedure, data sources and data collection procedure, ethical considerations as well as data analysis and presentation. The researcher has discussed these aspects by highlighting the reasons why some techniques were selected for the research design.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Churchil, Brown & Suter (2010) define a research design as “the framework or plan for a study used as a guide in collecting and analyzing data.”

This research paper combined explorative research and descriptive research. It involved reviewing the content of a selected sample of billboards through content analysis to establish whether there was the use of sex appeal. The billboards with content found to contain sex appeal were photographed and the photos attached to the questionnaires. These questionnaires together with the photos were then given to the sample population of young people in Nairobi with the view to determine their attitudes towards the use of sex appeal, the brands and their purchase intention. This information was collected through structured questionnaires. This research paper

therefore highly relied on primary data to establish the effectiveness of the use of sex appeal as an advertising tool.

These two approaches were adopted as they were deemed fit to adequately answer the research questions thus achieve the objectives of the study. The first bit of the study employed the survey method on the contents of billboard with a view of finding frequency of the use of sex appeal; the second part of the study measured the effectiveness of this use (of sex appeal) with the hope of helping decision makers in the advertising world to come up with concrete principles on the use of sex appeal, based on verifiable objective information.

3.3 TARGET POPULATION

A population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. The population forms an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common (Donald Kisilu et. al 2006).

The first part of this research explored billboards on four major highways in Nairobi city. These were; Thika, Mombasa, Ngong and Jogoo roads. These roads were selected bearing in mind that they are the busiest roads in Nairobi thus have people on transit. The population of people interviewed was done both purposively and randomly from different individuals- male and female between the ages of 15 and 29 years. Individuals were first purposively selected in accordance with their ages. This is because; our hypothesis pre-supposes that the use of sex appeal in advertising targets the youth.

Further research has shown that this age group is more persuassible with little or no prior loyalty to specific brands, thus a perfect target to advertisers.

3.4 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The study made use of both probability and non probability sampling techniques. First, several billboards along the four highways stated in 3.3 above were randomly selected based on the parameter of sex appeal. The content of these billboards were then exposed to respondents who were purposively sampled from Nairobi as earlier stated under scope in chapter one.

The respondents were then picked using stratified probability sampling to ensure that the research is representative. The ratio of male to female respondents was 1:1. Similarly, the ages were divided as follows to ensure representation;

15 years- 19 years

20 years- 24 years

25 years-29 years, and the ratio of respondents in terms of the stratum was 1:2:2.

With a total population of 1,210,114 youths in Nairobi, as stated in the 2009 KNPHC, the researcher believed that a sample population of (200 respondents) was representative.

Age (in years)	Population (Nrb)
15-19	270,064
20-24	477,396

25-29	462,753
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Population of youths in Nairobi and Kenya according to the KNPHS

3.5 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The study relied heavily on primary data which basically entailed content analysis and observation of billboards to ascertain the use of sex appeal, followed by conducting interviews using self administered questionnaires on the sampled respondents. The use of questionnaires as tools for gathering information was deemed to be effective in terms of time saving and upholding confidentiality.

To a minor, though appreciable degree, secondary sources of data from various research books and organizations like CCK and MSK, were useful in providing the body of literature and theoretical frameworks, with respect to audience research along which this study is based. These secondary sources of data provided crucial information to complement the data from first hand sources. Similarly, organizations like CCK, MSK, NCC and Ministry of planning were also resourceful in offering the background information on which the research is based.

3.6 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The study relied heavily on primary data which entailed content analysis of messages on billboards and conducting interviews using self administered questionnaires (see Appendix 1) on the sampled respondents.

The billboards found to have sex appeals were photographed and the pictures attached to the questionnaires. The questionnaires mostly had structured questions which included open – ended and closed – ended questions that provided the research with qualitative and quantitative data especially attitudes towards products or services containing sex appeal.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections;

Section A; Questions based on personal information and background of the respondent.

Section B; Information related to knowledge, beliefs and attitude of respondents towards products employing sex appeal in advertising.

The questionnaire, though effective in terms of time saving and upholding confidentiality, limits the respondents' expressions either by having closed – ended questions or limited space in which to answer. Some questions were also ignored by some of the respondents making it necessary to back up the questionnaires with interviews which were conducted to a limited sample.

Through the interviews, the researcher was able to tell the extent of honesty through body posture, movement and intonation, thus verify the validity of the instruments.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The researcher and his research assistant analysed the content of billboards on the selected highways, then took photographs of sample billboards illuminating sex appeal. These sample photographs were then attached to the questionnaires and given to respondents. The respondents were then allowed sufficient time of 20-30 minutes to fill in the questionnaires. Thereafter, the

researcher and her assistant collected the completed questionnaires from the respondents. This was meant to ensure maximum return of the completed questionnaires.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

The data collected was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively based on the responses from the completed questionnaires, personal interviews and documentary sources. Data collected for the objectives of this study was analyzed qualitatively using SPSS version 12.0. This was significant for both description and inferential statistics. At analysis, descriptive statistics involving the use of percentages and mean scores was used while tables, pie-charts and bar charts was used to present the data.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 CONTENT ANALYSIS

The analysis of the purposefully sampled billboards using the prepared code sheet (appendix 2) revealed that indeed, the billboards in Nairobi contained sex appeal. Most of the sampled billboards used a combination of the different forms of sex appeal in varying degrees to appeal to their target audience. The most common form of sex appeal used on the billboards was attractiveness, with 18 out of the total twenty billboards sampled using attractive or good looking models, it can be said that it is the most common, yet the mildest form of sex appeal. Both government advertisements (e.g. ad for vision 2030) and private institutions employed this form. The second most common appeal found on the billboards in Nairobi was body revealment. The advertisements for Cocacola and Nivea (see figures 4.1 and 1.4), both international brands, best executes this form. Body revealment was used in combination with other forms of sex appeal such as bodily shape, attractiveness and intimacy. Out of the twenty billboards analysed, 15 had varying degrees of this form of sex appeal.



Figure 4.1 (Cocacola Ad-showing body revealment)

Intimacy is the third most common form of sex appeal used. 10 out of the twenty billboards sampled employed varying degrees of intimacy. The billboards that employed this form of sex appeal mostly used models of different sexes. Out of the ten billboards that had used intimacy as a persuasive appeal, only one had used models of the same sex (women) in an intimate position. (See figure 2.3). Nudity is also commonly used to appeal to people in billboard ads in Nairobi. The Vaseline Ad (figure 4.2) is the most outstanding form of nudity found. Other less obvious forms were figure 5.1 and 5.2.



Figure 4.2 (Vaseline Ad with nudity)

Interestingly, Advertisers had not conspicuously used suggestive language on the billboards. Out of the four roads chosen for this study, the researcher did not find any ad that completely relied on this form of sex appeal. This could be explained by the fact that outdoor advertising relies more on images than on words. The only advert that used a mild form of suggestive language, which could only be deciphered in relation to the image, was the PK Ad (figure 1.3) that read, "Fresh breath, fresh moments".

The result of the analysis of the twenty billboards showed that sex appeal was used by all advertisers including the local private sector, the international corporate and the government in varying patterns as has been summarized in the graph below:

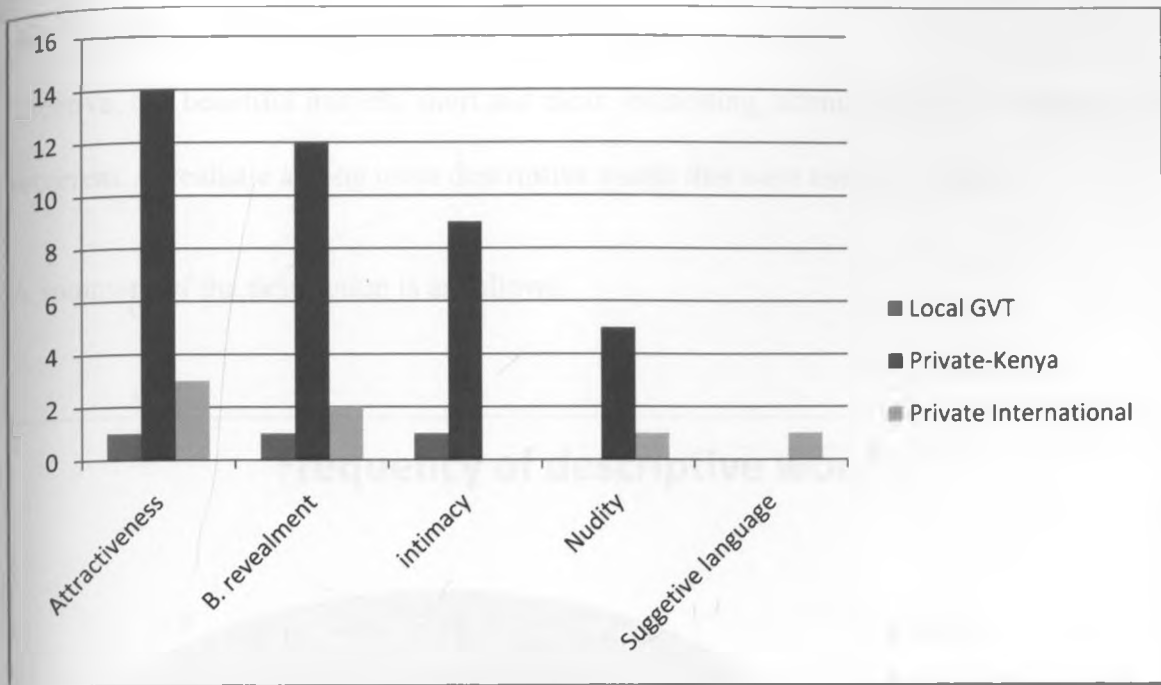


Figure 4.3-graph illustrating the frequency of the use of different forms of sex appeal

4.2 ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRES

From the survey to establish young consumers' ethical judgments of the use of sex appeal on billboards in Nairobi, the following analyses were made;

46% of the respondents (92 people) were students, 31% were employed, 17 % were unemployed while the rest were either working and studying or studying and looking for employment at the same time. All the respondents were young people (between the ages of 15-29) as this was purposefully done to fit in the scope.

All respondents admitted to looking at billboards often. 35% of the respondents said they intentionally looked out for billboards while 65% unintentionally looked at them.

The respondents characterized billboards in the following ways in the order of frequency of the use of words:

Creative, use beautiful models, short and clear, interesting, attention getting, intrusive, annoying, recurrent, unrealistic among other descriptive words that were used only once.

A summary of the description is as follows:

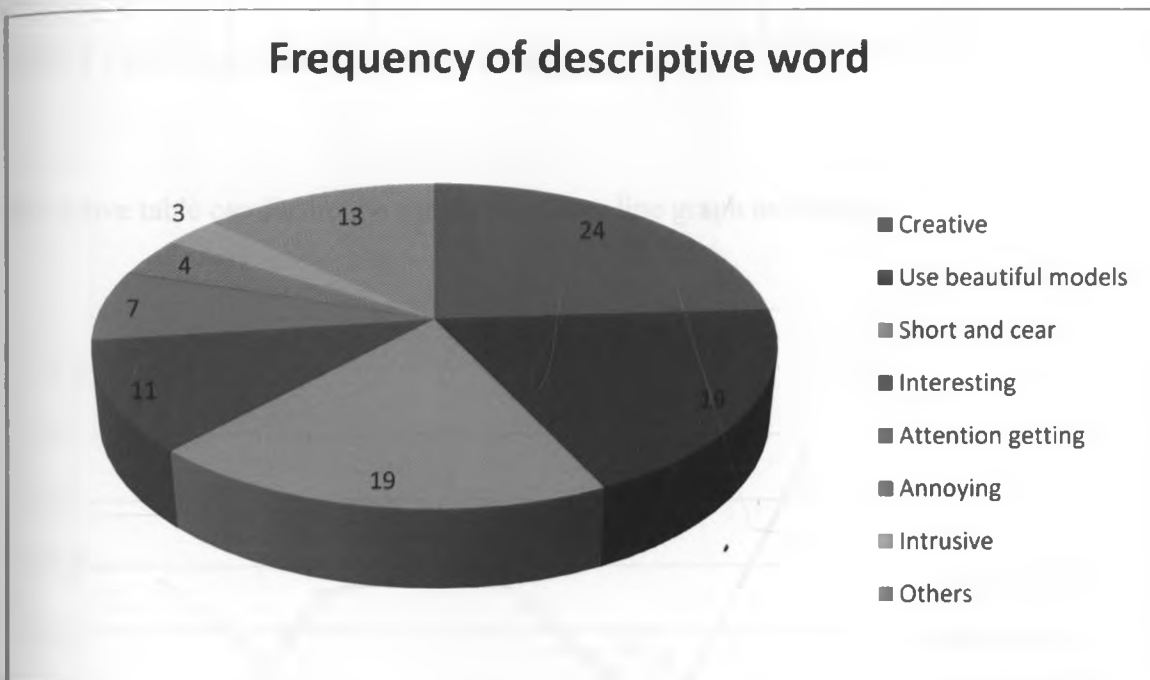


Figure 4.4-characteristics of billboards as stated by respondents

As concerns the different forms of sex appeal, the following words were used to describe them in the order of frequency:

	Very pleasing	Pleasing	Not pleasing	Annoying	Very disgusting
Appeal					
Nudity	4	12	48	20	16
Revealment	17	46	28	8	1
Intimacy	24	50	14	11	1
Suggestive language	20	27	40	11	2
Attractiveness	67	30	3	0	0

Table 4.1 The figures above are in percentages

The above table can further be summarized in a line graph as follows:

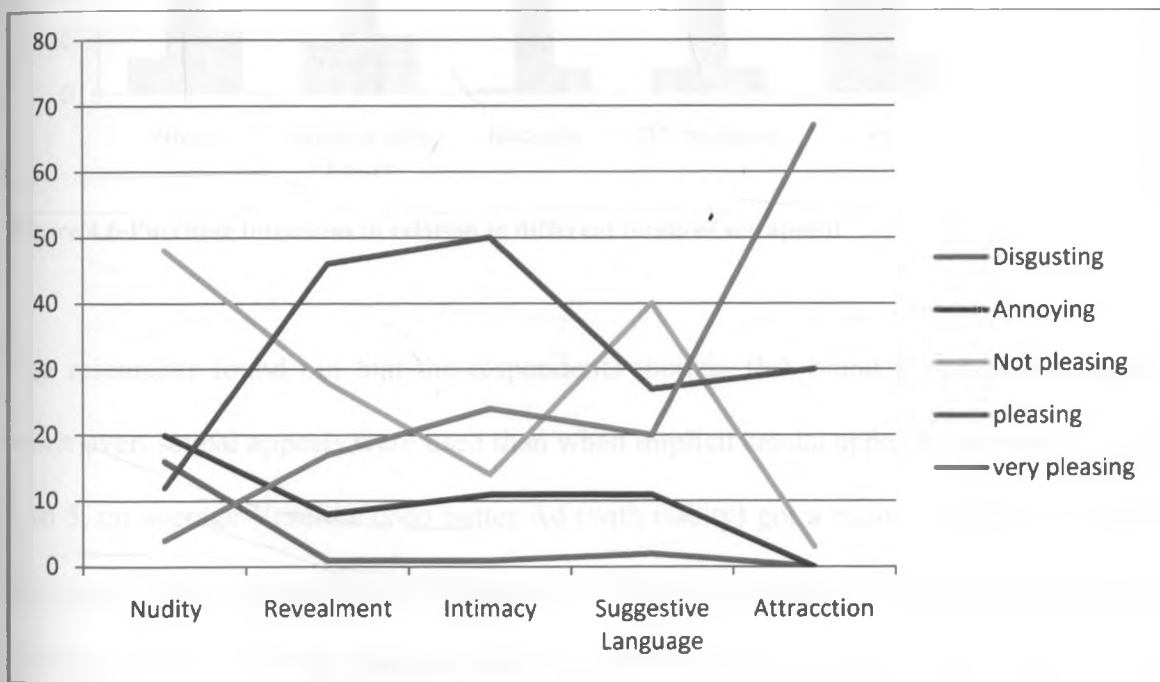


Figure 4.5-line graph showing attitude towards sex appeal

The use of sex appeal did not seem to have a significant influence on attitude towards the brand; however, when asked about purchase intentions there was a significant positive influence shown by most respondents. The following is a summary of the data collected and analysed:

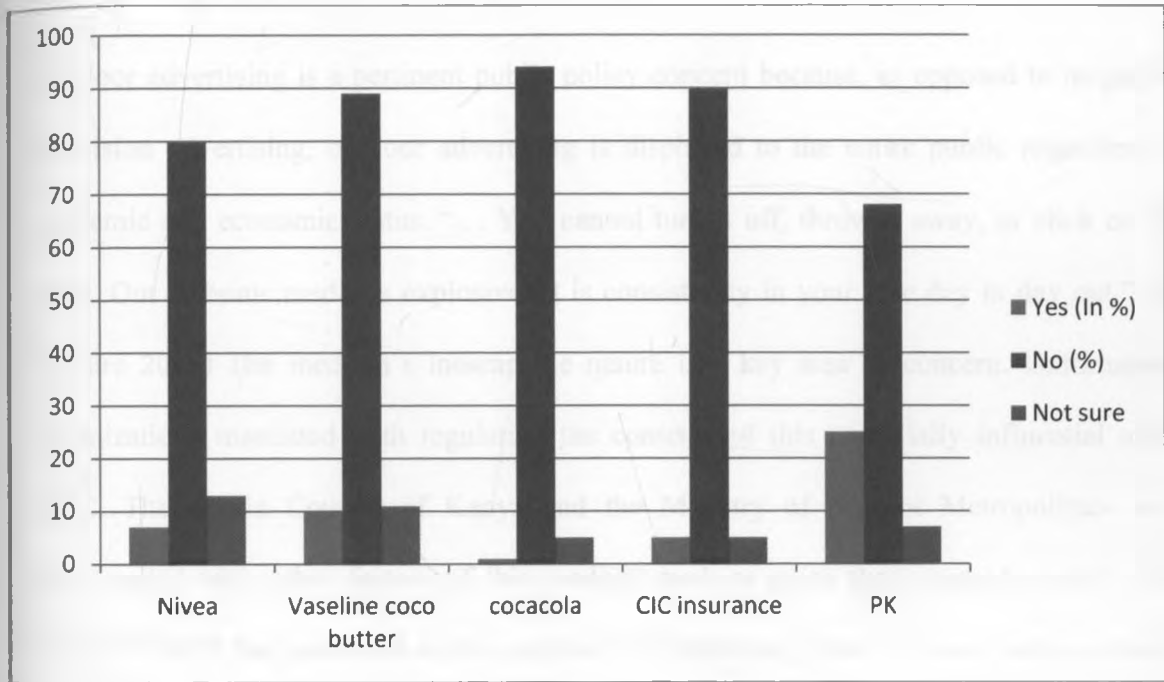


Figure 4.6-Purchase intentions in relation to different forms of sex appeal

The researcher found out that the respondents thought that brand promotion was more likely when overt sexual appeals were used than when implicit sexual appeals were used. On a scale of 1 to 5, on average Vaseline coco butter Ad (with nudity) got a mean rating of 4.4, in promoting the brand, Nivea Ad and the Coca-Cola Ads (with body revealment) had a mean rating of 3.9 and 3.76 respectively, the PK (intimacy and suggestive language) had a mean rating of 3.4 and the CIC Ad (with attractiveness which the researcher believes is the mildest form of the appeal) had a mean rating of only 2.1.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Outdoor advertising is a pertinent public policy concern because, as opposed to magazines and television advertising, outdoor advertising is displayed to the entire public regardless of age, academic and economic status. "... You cannot turn it off, throw it away, or click on the next page. Out of home media is explosive! It is consistently in your face day in day out." (Magnet venture 2011) The medium's inescapable nature is a key area of concern. Unfortunately the organizations mandated with regulating the contents of this potentially influential medium – NCC, The Media Council of Kenya and the Ministry of Nairobi Metropolitan- are more preoccupied with other factors of this medium such as gains than content control. The City Council has in fact partnered with a number of advertising firms to house certain adverts. The ENG company and earlier, Adopt-A-light have been partners with the NCC on street furniture and street lighting respectively.

From the findings of this study; 100% of young people interviewed in Nairobi look at billboards with their sexualised images that go largely ignored by policy makers. Although highly controversial images gain a lot of audience yet the general 'sexual' nature of images in the medium go unchallenged.

The pornographication of outdoor advertising as seen from the samples of the study is occurring largely because of the consistent stretching of the boundaries of what is acceptable in ethical

discourse and what is unethical. On one hand is the liberal and open to change individuals who see no wrong in the sexualized images and on the other are the conservatives who are seen to be unwilling to 'progress.'

As proposed by the theories evaluated in this study, the advertising industry in Kenya indeed has a great influence on young people's perception of reality. It creates dissonance between the ideal body image and actual body image and thus exploits the inherent nature of humans to want to reclaim consonance by offering quick solutions.

The media therefore teach the young a lot of popular culture which highly impacts on their traditional values.

Clearly, from this study and from the literature reviewed in this study, the major concern of sex appeal through sexualized images should not be on brand attitudes but should rather concentrate on defining a clearly and very fine line between what is decent and indecent, so as to shield the young people from the unethical attitudes towards pornography. As it is now, there is a very obscure line between what is seriously offensive and what is just offensive, what is offensive and what is acceptable and what is acceptable and what is out rightly offensive offensive.

Another reason as to why concerted efforts need to be put by practitioners in the advertising world to bar pornographic images from outdoor advertisement is that they do not do a lot of justice to the Ads. Other than creating attention, billboards with explicit sex appeal do not help in promoting a brand. A possible explanation for this has been projected by Reichert, Heckler, and Jackson (2001) who propose that when sexual stimulus is used in advertising, viewers' perceptual and processing resources are directed towards the sexual information in the ad rather than towards the brand.

Certainly, sex appeal, like any other persuasive strategy changes over time. An appeal that has worked well before may not work for a different or even the same product because of current moral philosophical sensitivities. For example, sexual ad portrayals that have worked well in the past may not be as well received in today's "advertising climate" because of the focus on the moral/ethical issues surrounding female role portrayals in advertising as a feminist issue (Ford and LaTour 1993).

Finally, there has been evidence to suggest that overt sexual appeals may have detrimental effects on attitudes toward the ad and brand, and therefore may reduce purchase intention (Grazer & Keesling: 1995) although this was not directly deduced from this study.

I therefore conclude that there is no doubt that sex does sell. Intimate, attractive, partially clad models do facilitate recognition of an advertisement, and can create favorable attitude ratings. On the other hand, brand recall may not increase brand information processing, as in most cases the attention is diverted to the detriment of brand name and copy recall. Too much reliance on sex for advertising, especially if it is not relevant, can be counterproductive. Thus, this research found out that sex is effective so long as it is used in a relevant context and within the appropriate level of explicitness. Sex does not just sell to the young, products such as APA insurance (figure 5.1) and Impala Double Glazed (figure 5.2) unit obviously targeting the older generations also employed sex as a persuasive strategy.



Figure 5.1-AAP insurance for elderly people



Figure 5.2- Advert for a noise and heat reduction unit targeting the older people

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A cultivation approach to understanding media effects is critical in understanding attitude and behavior change in the youth. The instructive point here is that effective outdoor media control may effectively help society deal with pervasive culture.

Further, policy issues regarding content of media should not be restricted to mainstream media but should be expanded to out of home media which in the view of the researcher of this study is accessible to everyone who is able to leave their home.

An important implication of this research is the need for advertisers to recognize the moral/ethical complexity involved in the use of strong overt sexual appeals and to incorporate that understanding within their strategic thought. Specifically, advertisers must carefully test assumptions about the efficacy of such appeals for targeted customers and the "social impact" (i.e., the impact on other individuals not targeted by such appeals) (Gould 1994).

Finally, it is important to scrutinize the social responsibility function of all forms of mass media in Kenya. Mass media influences us in a variety of ways and as such it should exercise its powers (to influence) with a sense of responsibility.

5.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There is still a lot of academic gaps in the area of outdoor advertising; a similar study could be conducted but with focus on other emotional or logical appeals. Similarly, a study on the use of sex appeal could be done on other forms of outdoor advertising for instance, on public transport in Nairobi.

5.4 THE FUTURE OF OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

With the rapid growth in communication technology, the future of outdoor advertising is bright: with the invention of digital billboards, technology advancement in bill boarding can only be taken a notch higher. Already, IT savvy people are experimenting on digital billboards fitted with cameras that use face recognition devices to get demographical data (gender and age) of individuals who view the bill boards. (Daily Nation Thursday, September 23, 2010) This will be

a great innovation in marketing since advertisers will be able to tailor their Ads to suite their audience.

A second Innovation already being experimented on is the use of billboards that are able to emit scent at specified intervals. This, if implemented will revolutionize outdoor advertising as the advertiser will not just appeal to the eye, but will also appeal to the nose.

In Kenya, Truck Ads are already a reality (appendix 3) Mobile trucks fitted with digital screens that run various adverts sequentially are proving a major threat to mainstream outdoor adverts. These truck ads are generally cheaper than the stationary ads and are likely to be viewed by a lot more people than the traditional billboards.

Some companies internationally, are also currently experimenting using WiFi transmitters and Bluetooth® technology which enable the billboard to send a message directly onto one's phone when you pass by that particular billboard.

With Higher market competition and technological advancement, outdoor advertising is surely headed for major transformation from the old solid adverts to more vibrant, more interactive and more creative ads. This calls for concerted efforts by the government, civil society groups, media practioners and society as a whole to bar unethical practices such as the use of sex appeals from the youth especially on outdoor advertisements.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE USED TO COLLECT INFORMATION

PERSUADING THE KENYAN YOUTH: AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF SEX APPEAL ON BILLBOARDS IN NAIROBI

Kindly help us find information on your feelings towards the use of sex appeal on billboards in Nairobi by completing this questionnaire. This is for research purposes only and information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality. I will appreciate if these questions are answered as sincerely as possible. More information relevant to this study can be written at the back of the questionnaire.

Thank you.

Angela Muchai

(University of Nairobi-School of Journalism)

Part 1: General information

1. Name (optional):

Sex (*tick one*): Female Male

2. Age (in years)

3. Occupation

Student

Unemployed

Employed

Other (please specify)

Part 2: Technical Information

1. How often do you look at billboards?

2. What is the most memorable thing about billboard advertising in Nairobi?

3. What is your general view on billboard advertisement with the following aspects:

a) Nudity

b) Attractive models

c) Body revealment

d) Suggestive language

e) Closeness

4. Please look at the photos presented and answer the following questions in relation to the photos. The photos have been numbered 1- 5 for easy identification;

(The photos represent the following forms of sex appeal: Photo 1-nudity, photo 2, attractiveness, photo three, body revealment, photo 4 suggestive language and photo 5-intimacy)

How would you describe the photos? (tick)

	Photo 1	Photo 2	Photo 3	Photo 4	Photo 5
Very pleasing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pleasing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not pleasing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annoying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Very disgusting

5. What is your opinion towards:
(Please explain)

a) Nivea

b) Vaseline body lotion

c) Cocacola

d) CIC

e) PK

6. In general, would you say you could buy the following items because of these advertisements? (Tick one)

a) Vaseline Coco butter

Yes No Not sure

b) Nivea moisturizing body lotion

Yes No Not sure

c) Coca-Cola

Yes No Not sure

d) APA insurance life cover

Yes No Not sure

e) PK

Yes No Not sure

7. In your opinion how much does each of the advertisements in the photoswork in promoting the brand?

a) Vaseline Coco butter

(Circle one)

Excellent1

Very good2

Good3

Fair4

Poor.....5

b) Nivea moisturizing body lotion

(Circle one)

Excellent1

Very good2

- Good.....3
- Fair4
- Poor.....5

c) Coca-Cola

(Circle one)

- Excellent1
- Very good.....2
- Good.....3
- Fair4
- Poor.....5

d) APA insurance

(Circle one)

- Excellent1
- Very good.....2
- Good.....3
- Fair4
- Poor.....5

e) PK

(Circle one)

- Excellent1

Very good.....2

Good.....3

Fair4

Poor.....5

Thank you for your help!

APPENDIX 2: CODE SHEET USED TO ANALYSE CONTENT OF BILLBOARDS

1. Advertising institution
(Tick one)

Government

Private

NGO

2. Area of operation
(Tick one)

Education

Communication

Health

Entertainment

Finance

Other (specify)

3. Advertising firm
(Tick one)

Local

International

4. Type of product
(Tick one)

Cosmetic

Sanitary

Food/ Edible

Service

Other (specify)

5. Frequency of occurrence of the billboard
(Tick one)

Once

Twice

Thrice

Multiple

6. Language used
(Tick one)

English

Swahili

Local

Foreign

7. a) Models used

(Tick one)

yes

No

b) Sex of model (s)
(Tick one)

M

F

Both

8. Form of sex appeal
(Tick one)

Nudity

Body revealment

Intimacy

Suggestive language

Attractiveness

More than one of the above (specify)

Other (specify).....







