

ASHESI UNIVERSITY

THE MARKETING MEDIA'S PORTRAYAL OF THE CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN WOMAN: IMPACT ON THE YOUTH IN GHANA

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

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I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of theses established by Ashesi University.

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Date: 27th April, 2021

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The journey of a thousand miles begins with a step.

- Lao Tzu

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the researcher examines the impact of the marketing media's sexualized representation of the contemporary African woman on African youth. Using Ghanaian youth, as representatives of the African youth, the researcher explored the youth's perceptions on how the present-day African woman is presented in most advertisements and other media; compared male and female perceptions; and extrapolated the youth's perceptions of media that employ sexualized images of females. For the purposes of the study, a qualitative exploratory phenomenological research design was used. Six Ghanaian youth of varying gender, religion, and university type served as the study participants. The results of the research study included the youth's belief that the media's impact on them and society outweighed the impact of society on the media. The media capitalizes on readily available and easily accessible technology often frequented by youth such as Twitter and Instagram. The study revealed that the female youth were not impacted directly by the media's portrayal of women as sexualized images, but the males were. The media's depictions had made the males perceive the contemporary African woman as lacking depth of knowledge and self-respect. They felt that the women were contributing to the problem by accepting the contract or agreement presented to them by the marketing media. According to the youth, the marketing media and firms are concerned with profits alone. Most study participants suggested educating society on gender equality and utilizing public outcry to hold firms accountable. They also recommended mitigating such portrayals of females through policies of governmental agencies to reduce the influence of marketing media on shaping the image of the contemporary African female.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of this study the following meanings will be used for the terms:

1. **Marketing media** refers to advertising media forms such as television, radio, magazines and newspapers, and social media.
2. **Youth** refers to young women and men between the ages of 16 and 25.
3. **Contemporary African woman** refers to the post-colonial African woman who is a third-world feminist.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The media as an age-old institution has been entrusted as the primary source of information and news stories (Media Texthack Group, 2014) and as such, is very influential on society. In this study, the researcher seeks to explore whether the media is using their platform to fabricate misrepresentative information about the contemporary African woman and whether such representations are being adopted by society, specifically the youth. The stereotypical representation of genders in the marketing media is credited to be a reason behind gender stereotyping in many societies (Ibroscheva, 2007; Holtzhausen, Jordaan, & North, 2011). However, to the 54 African countries filled with various cultures with over 3000 ethnic groups (Hofmeyr, 2018), gender stereotyping, and not the media's influence is inscribed into their matching beliefs and values. With such stereotyping, the women are either apportioned to be inferior to the males or vice versa. The African people have many different practices under each culture and ethnic group, yet most ethnic groups hold some similarities, including the positioning of the African female as a "wife" which implies a female married to a male or a female married to lineage or compound (Sudarkasa, 1986).

Paradoxically, in many ethnic groups, the African woman is the ruler of empires and founder of innovations highlighting her strength and independence (Sudarkasa, 1986). Specific examples include Princess Fatima who established the oldest university in the world, in 859 at Fes, Morocco (Cherradi, 2016), and the Queen mother of the Ashanti Kingdom, who is the ceremonial head of the ethnic group. Unfortunately, the progress and respect commanded by the African female in the past and traditions are short-lived due in part to the occurrence of colonization. She became valued mainly for her reproductive and productive capabilities as a slave and in the post-colonial period, she remains a second-class citizen, inheriting both her indigenous roles of a woman and colonial sexism (Strobel, 1982).

Society is in a state of constant flux with colonization introducing the oppression and sexualization of women in Africa and also introducing European customs to Africa (Bertolt, 2018). It exposed negative ideas of the inferiority of women in colonial times to the society yet, colonization also birthed positive movements such as Feminism and the contemporary woman in the today's world. Modernity has also increased the relations of women outside the home to include the political, social, and economic empowerment of African women (Afisi, 2010). Many African women in the present time, fuse traditional roles of being a mother and wife, with their political, economic, and social endeavors to earn a living and assist their husbands in caring for the family (Afisi, 2010). According to Diabah (2019), this implies that their partaking in economic activities for the country does not leave out their performance of domestic roles. Even with the combination of different aspects of life, the African women dominate the local markets as traders and merchants. Yet the marketing media does not often portray the empowered woman; instead, it overemphasizes her sexual traits and vulnerabilities (Alam, Aliyu & Shahriar, 2019).

Although there has been active work on feminism and efforts to promote equality among all genders, it is important to highlight aspects of feminism in contemporary African women through many means such as the theory of Third World Feminism. This is because women in Africa, Asia, and South American societies suffer more severe oppression than women in other parts of the world. The reason for this can be attributed to colonialism and also, the cultures of such regions which give more respectable roles to men and leave the women to less important jobs and roles with more work and less pay (Cortese, Djerbal & Garreston, 2012).

The marketing media is an advertising media used in conveying promotional messages for a brand's product. The information they market is meant to attract consumers based on their targeted audience. The characters they create in advertising can be inspired by society's daily

lifestyles or can be fictional. The media is constantly evolving to embrace the mode of transmission changes (Adelabu, 2015) although their characteristic roles are less transformed. "From town criers to books, pamphlets, posters, radio, television, billboards, and now social media, advertisers have always been at the forefront of experimenting with any media that can deliver their advertising messages" (Adelabu, 2015). The media tends to be hungry for attention and purchase of products and less concerned with the nature of the presentation of these messages.

Over the course of history to date, the dominating notion is that societal roles bestowed on the African woman are similarly present in the advertising media. This is because there is the belief that advertisements project 'typical' images of men and women in their environment (Furnham, Pallangyo, Gunter, 2001). The typical images in this case refer to the day-to-day activities performed by the people in a society. As a result, in an attempt to make the advertisements naturalistic and realistic, the roles a woman plays in the marketing of a product are based on the perspective of society. This research study focuses on the youth's idea of the media's stereotypical misrepresentations of the contemporary African woman and the effects and implications it has on the youth.

1.2 **Research Problem Description**

The African female's history has been tainted with conventional images of being domesticated, submissive, and inferior to the males (Diabah, 2019), but the African society is yet to realize the impact of such portrayal on the youth. The youth is the mix between young adolescents and middle-aged adults. The youth in Africa form the majority of the young population globally (Yahya, 2017) which makes them the largest group to be influenced by the media. The Nigerian youth, according to Adelabu (2015) is affected by advertisements and social media, and the advertising messages are not received as expected while the focus shifts

from the product to the misrepresentative nature of the message. For a host of reasons, marketing professionals need to note that such misrepresentative images projected by the media can be undesirable by the youth which may reduce sales (Adelabu, 2015). The youth are exposed to advertisements in magazines, billboards, and other media that are flooded with various images featuring gender stereotyping. The advertising contents in Ghana are approved by various governmental bodies for the products being advertised; for example, the Food and Drugs Authority permits the advertising of Kalyppo on Joy TV yet there are no formed authority monitoring the sexual discrimination of women in the same advertisements.

The questionable representation of the contemporary African woman by the African marketing media overexposes consumers and the younger generation in particular to a stereotypical view of women. If the media is perceived as a true reflection of real life, such advertisements may have a direct impact on the impressionable youth and how they perceive African women. It has been observed in other studies from a global perspective that the woman is constantly given stereotypical roles to play in advertisements yet very few reports focus on the impact the advertisements have on the consumers of the products such as the youth (Bakir & Palan, 2010). The youth, in this regard, refers to the young people who, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN) comprise individuals between the ages of 10 to 24 years. For this study, the young people will include people from 17 to 24 years.

According to Ibroscheva (2007, as cited in Holtzhausen, Jordaan, & North, 2011), the media's gender roles are regularly exposed to people who authenticate them by adopting the roles portrayed as normal. Although women have liberated themselves and achieved educational, political, social, and economic success, the marketing media still chooses to depict them as less than that (Holtzhausen, Jordaan, & North, 2011). The media plays a pivotal role in the enculturation of young people. The younger generation derives their social life identity

by spending a great amount of their time virtually and on social media. It is imperative to determine the extent of the impact of extremely misinformed portrayals of life in advertising such as the conformity of the contemporary African woman or the objectification of the African female body, on young minds, and to contribute to the groundwork of a possible mitigation through policy.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions are questions raised on the topic under study, to give the research direction on the aims to achieve. This research has three research questions that include:

- What is the impact of the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman on today's youth?
- What differences exist between the young men and women in their perceptions of the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman?
- From the perspective of youth, what do the marketing professionals believe is the value of presenting women in a licentious manner in advertising?

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives are:

- To assess the impact of the marketing media's stereotypical representation of the contemporary African woman on the youth.
- To explore the youth's ideals on the African woman in the contemporary era and if their view has been influenced by the marketing media.
- To serve as a resource to create policies that hold the marketing professionals accountable if they stereotypically label the present-day African women.
- To provide young men a better understanding of the modern African woman.

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to understand how young consumers perceive advertisements' impact on themselves when they feature young contemporary African women in a second-rate light. It also aims to determine from the youth's perception of brand producer's second-rate portrayal of the young present-day African women as good, sustainable marketing.

1.6 Relevance/ Significance of the research

This research may contribute to other studies by giving insight into the impact of the stereotypical media portrayal of contemporary African women on the younger generation. Additionally, brand producers may be better informed on good sustainable marketing for the youth. This insight could serve as a resource for the creation of policies that uphold, respect, preserve wholesome traditions, and protect the African female identity, mitigating unfavorable stereotyping among young adults.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the aim is to study, from extant literature, the marketing media's representations of women in order to add to the literature the impact of such images on the younger generation. The literature that examines the attitudes of young people concerning an advertisement and brand is limited to a few studies. Some are focused on attitude towards the advertising or brand and others are on the effects of advertising on attitudes. Yet only one study written by Kolbe and Muehling (1995) examined young people's awareness of gender-related content in commercials represented in traditional and non-traditional roles (Bakir & Palan, 2010). Most studies on gender representation in the media share the conflict of whether the marketing media portrays what society deems as the contemporary African woman (Furnham, Pallangyo, Gunter, 2001) or whether the society rather learns from the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman's roles and takes that as societal norms (Ibroscheva, 2007; Holtzhausen, Jordaan & North, 2011).

This chapter will discuss the global perspective (based on Europe, Asia, North and South America, and Australia) and the African perspective on how the marketing media creates stereotypical images of the contemporary African woman in advertisements. Furthermore, in this chapter, theories regarding the third world woman, theories on brand marketing, and millennial influencers will be analyzed to give readers ample information on the marketing media and twenty-first-century African women.

The marketing media comprises television, radio, print, and online advertisements that are open and accessible to all people around the world. The marketing media has been exposed in some literature and by critics for gender stereotyping roles for all kinds of brands. For example, according to Barve, Sood, Nithya & Virmani (2015), critics charge threat to

advertising as they are deceptive and unfair to young people and say they should be banned. The information passed on by the marketing media includes advertisements. Advertisements are the means of communication of a brand's product and service offering to consumers and the public (Barve, Sood, Nithya & Virmani, 2015).

2.2 **Third World Feminist Theory**

The introduction of the third world feminist theory came about because of the omission of other races and classes of women, except for wealthy Caucasian women, in the second wave of feminism (Herr, 2014). This introduced the need to give voices to the marginalized women in third-world countries who suffered colonialism and imperialism. According to the article by Herr (2014), the popularity of third-world feminism was occasioned by Chandra Mohanty's powerful critique of white feminists who dismissed the oppression suffered by Third World women as mere worse case scenarios of oppression. The motive behind the Third World women's movement is, as mentioned by Herr, not to force a drastic change in attitude and behaviors of males but rather to opt for gradual changes resulting from their collaboration with males in the same regions and around the world.

The work of Cortese, Djerbal and Garreston (2012) sheds more light on what the term Third World feminism means by explaining that, it is to bring into the limelight women of African, Asian, and South American backgrounds. According to the authors, these women are exploited as marginalized labor by multinational corporations and even though they constitute the majority of workers, they work long hours and earn low pay with no benefits. The article then mentions that it is important to give voices to the Third World women on the global forefront in terms of granting them the opportunity to find equality among white females and males in general. There is the need to key in ethnicities and cultures as well as the large populations of Third World women in an attempt to give them a voice (Cortese, Djerbal & Garreston, 2012). The Third World feminist theory announces that the women of African,

Asian, and South American descent are behind in terms of the feminist wave and need solidarity from the global market.

2.3 **The representations of women in the media globally**

The classification of women into gender roles is not limited to a particular race or continent. Although it can be argued there are subtle differences, there are general similarities that cut across all the different cultures and religions. It is important to note that the media's portrayal of the female differs based on culture, race, religion, and other large factors that differentiate countries. In Hawkins & Coney (1976, as cited in Gilly, 1988), advertising is "reflective of a culture's sex-role norms, at least on a relative basis" (p. 75) because attitudes towards the appropriate roles of women differ among cultures

In the case of some developed countries like Australia, such as Gilly's (1988), study has shown that there are no significant differences between men and women in advertisements based on roles that consider marital status, occupation, being the spokesperson for the brand, and others. On the other hand, Furnham, Pallangyo, and Gunter (2001) introduce in their article the consideration whereby males are given central figures or voice-overs and depicted as authorities and professionals in advertisements in some developed countries. For example, in an Italian study, a higher percentage of males were featured in food advertisements compared to females, based on the importance of food in Italy (Furnham, Pallangyo & Gunter, 2001; Furnham & Voli, 1989). Again, Gilly (1988) mentions that in Latin American countries, the male voice is believed to be more authoritative and convincing compared to the female voice. Hence, there are more men used for voice-overs than females.

Globally, the positioning of women based on roles has been narrowed to occupation, homemaker, and sex object by authors such as Gilly and Knoll, Eisend, and Steinghagen. The article by Gilly (1988) discusses the differences in the interest in the women's liberation

movement in Mexico and Latin America compared to America and Australia. This implies that women in Latin American media would be given more traditional roles than American women. Gilly's (1988) study, in which 1315 Latin American advertisements were analyzed, revealed that less than 1% of the advertisements had females portrayed in the occupational setting and these occupations included nurses, secretary, hairdresser, and seamstress, among other feminized positions. The remaining were all in the traditional settings of the homemaker. Aside from the occupations, other advertisements also position the female in a sexual position that implies vulnerability to make sales based on male-based products (Rajagopal & Gales, 2002).

Women in the media have generally been given more conventional roles in society. These roles are traditional roles which include dependent women and housewives, decorative roles which are physical attractiveness and sex objects, non-traditional roles such as the career-oriented women and voices of authority, and some neutral roles where they are portrayed as equal to men (Plakoyinannaki, Mathioudaki, Dimitratos & Zotos, 2008). These stereotypical roles have a direct effect on the consumer base of the brand as well as the young people who have access to all materials through the internet and technology.

2.4 **The representations of women in Africa**

As one of the oldest cultures, the African culture holds the oldest traditions of gender roles. The women, as represented in the advertising media in Africa, are constantly labeled in such primitive roles as wife or caretaker, and, in recent times, there is the addition of the roles of the career-oriented woman and sex objects for male-specific brands and products.

Furnham, Pallangyo, and Gunter (2001) stated that people are susceptible to growing up based on the media's portrayal of the given societal roles which influences behaviors known to be male-appropriate, and female-appropriate. The advertising media, according to Furnham, Pallangyo, and Gunter (2001), supposedly projects interactions of males and females in their

environment. This claim is popular in literature on African advertisements and as such, it is also made in the work of Holtzhausen, Jordaan, and North (2011) and Ibroscheva (2007) based on South African media. In the works of these authors, media-given gender roles are validated through regular exposures and adopted by the public as the standard of society. This then elevates the discord in society as women try to fight for equal representations, but society has already been swayed to accepting gender misrepresentations. Again, Diabah (2019) also mentions that the perceived norms that are considered desirable are from the "media's consistent projection of the diverse, complex, and complicating roles of contemporary women" (p. 279). Obtaining such information on the media's direct influence through advertisements helps to raise this research's aim of assessing the impact the media has over the younger generation.

Again, in the African society, the people lack interest in gender issues and accept what the media portrays rather than question their veracity (Furnham, Pallangyo & Gunter, 2001). The African society limits the woman's interests, and her needs are placed on the back burner as she is still acknowledged based on the historical-cultural roles established. Diabah (2019) in her article, further enhances this point by stating that Ghanaian women in news stories are paraphrased, which denies them the power of their voice; yet their male peers have their words quoted without any accompanying paraphrase. The lack of concern for the discussion of gender issues in Africa could be said to be part of the reason gender roles are assigned.

Also, based on the literature on African women's representations in the media, it was observed that the female is either a homemaker, a sex object, a frivolous person or social-being, a beauty influencer or decorative partner, and a career-oriented person. In the article by Holtzhausen, Jordaan, & North (2011), it was mentioned that the commercials in South Africa where women have been portrayed in these roles are from 1996 to 2008. In the case of Diabah (2019), the stereotypical roles are based on contemporary advertisements. This proves that

there have been little to no changes and modifications in society's perception of women rather, there are additions of more roles and stereotypes on whom the contemporary African woman is supposed to be. In the article by Diabah (2019), the advertisements that featured the career-oriented woman or other roles less inclined to the traditional roles were fewer. This means that the media acknowledges that there is more to the woman than the traditional roles, but they do not foresee their brands and products to sell without giving the people their prehistoric normality.

2.5 **Influence of the advertising media on young adults**

The advertising industry has long been criticized by various writers for the misrepresentations of females in their advertisements, yet very few scholarly works focus on the impact it holds over the youth. According to Barve, Sood, Nithya, and Virmani (2015), young people are vulnerable to advertisements and cannot differentiate between commercials and programs, and fantasy and reality; therefore, it is on the part of advertising companies to be careful what is projected. The younger generation attempt to make sense of gender-related information by creating cognitive structures (Bakir &Palan, 2010). It is therefore important for the marketing media to avoid stereotypical roles because they have a lasting impact on them. Yet, advertising firms continue to feature gender-related content; for example, making male characters dominate younger people's advertising (Barcus 1977; Browne 1988; Hoek and Laurence 1993; Larson 2001; Smith 1994; Bakir and Palan 2010) by showcasing the males as knowledgeable, active, aggressive and dominant (Browne 1998; Welch et al. 1979; Bakir & Palan 2010).

In the article by Bakir and Palan (2010), the young people were classified into age groupings that were labeled in stages on how they adopt stereotypical roles. According to Bakir and Palan (2010), the awareness stage applies to children from three years and below; the rigidity stage applies to minors from four to seven years and the flexibility stage is from 8 to

early adolescence. The division of young people's ages according to stages helps give the media insight into the ways their advertisements affect the younger generation. This can be used to help them re-evaluate their assigning of roles to characters in advertisements.

2.6 **Advertising Models and Theories**

In the existing literature on advertising theories, the commonality found in all of them is the analyses of the behavior of the consumer or buyer and therefore the mental implications these advertisements hold for the purchasing decision of the customers. The first theory to be discussed is the Awareness Interest Decision Action (AIDA) model. The AIDA model, created by Strong in 1925, is as a behavioral model, that represents raising Awareness of the product, stimulating the Interest of the buyer which leads to Desire formation and the Action to buy the product (Hackley, 2005; Karlsson, 2007) (See *figure*1in Appendix). This model, according to Brierly, (2002, as cited in Karlsson, 2007), implies that companies are expected to make memorable advertisements and create believable messages that will attract consumers and make them act in a certain way. Although, according to the article by Karlsson (2007), the theory has been criticized for ignoring the role of context and the environment and meditation in influencing the advertisement's effectiveness.

The next theory in advertising is the DAGMAR theory. This theory was created by Russell Colley and its acronym stands for Defining Advertising Goals for Measured Advertising Results. This theory was created to give more than a message (Mackay, 2005; Karlsson, 2007) to purchase the good: it was made to encourage attainable objectives for each stage of communication with potential buyers (Smith & Taylor, 2002; Karlsson, 2007). Although this model focuses more on the measuring of goals, the DAGMAR theory also makes the checklist of awareness, comprehension of the product and its functions, a mental suspicion or conviction, and finally, the action to purchase (Mackay, 2005; Karlsson, 2007) (See *figure*

2 in Appendix). Karlsson (2007), expresses that just like the AIDA theory, this theory also faces criticisms about customers not always passing through the stages in a linear way or at all.

The last theory is the Lavidge & Steiners' Hierarchy-of-Effects model which was published in the same period as the DAGMAR. This theory, according to the article of Karlsson (2007) was named after the authors who founded it. This theory shows a process or steps the advertiser assumes that the customer passes through in the process of purchase (Barry & Howard, 1990; Karlsson, 2007). This model considers 6 steps. The steps are Awareness, Knowledge, Liking, Preference, Conviction, and Purchase (See *figure* 3 in Appendix). The model considers that some consumers are spontaneous buyers but still go through some processes and as such the steps may not be taken in order all the time. Just as the other theories, Karlsson (2007) mentions that this theory has criticisms of being unclear in the steps and, also realizes that consumers do not always follow the steps in the appropriate order.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 **Introduction**

In this chapter the researcher describes the methods used to gather information to respond to three major research questions:

- What is the impact of the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman on today's youth?
- What differences exist between the young men and women in their perceptions of the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman?
- From the perspective of youth, what do the marketing professionals believe is the value of presenting women in a licentious manner in advertising?

The researcher sought the opinions of the Ghanaian youth in Ghanaian universities on whether marketing media portrays what society deems as the contemporary African woman (Furnham, Pallangyo, & Gunter, 2001) or whether the society rather, learns from the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman's roles and takes that as societal norms (Ibroscheva, 2007; Holtzhausen, Jordaan & North, 2011), and its impact on the youth.

3.2 **Research Design**

Research design according to Lavrakas (2008), is the examining of specific experimental research questions through a general plan or strategy. This is to give the reader the guidelines to the nature of research conducted and the responses received in line with the topic. The research design used was an exploratory phenomenological design to investigate the impact the marketing media has on the youth. A phenomenological study utilizes the experiences of participants in a study. An exploratory study is used as a valuable means of comprehending and making an evaluation of a problem especially when there are some

uncertainties based on the nature of the problem (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Therefore, the exploratory phenomenological research design used the participants' lived experiences and thoughts to comprehend the media's impact on their lives with regard to women in the media.

Qualitative research is a technique used by researchers to gather in-depth information on a topic. This type of research gives focus to the information being acquired rather than the number of people being used in the study. For this reason, the researcher's sample size was six, to allow for depth and meaning.

3.3 **Research Scope**

3.3.1 **Study area**

Although the main research focus was Africa, the scope of this study was Ghana. The researcher based the scope on Ghana as representative of Africa, as the literature demonstrated several similarities among Africa's numerous ethnic groups with respect to gender. Despite the 54 countries of numerous cultures and over 3000 ethnic groups which make up Africa, gender stereotyping beliefs and values are common (Hofmeyr, 2018; Sudarkasa, 1986).

The research study was conducted in Accra in the Greater Accra Region and the capital city of Ghana. Although some participants were selected from schools outside this region into others such as the Ashanti and Eastern regions. The Ghanaian youth were used as representatives of the African population because of their availability. Also, time and resources factored in as limitations to the research.

3.3.2 **Study Population**

This research considered the target population to be the Ghanaian youth currently enrolled in Universities. The research solicited six student participants, within the age range of 17 and 25, from three Universities in Ghana. The research was conducted with six students

whereby three of whom were males and the other three were females from different socio-economic backgrounds. Other factors considered in determining the choice of universities included regional affinity or not, and universities, private or public that have students from countries all over Africa.

3.4 **Sampling Strategy**

3.4.1 **Sample Technique**

In conducting a qualitative study, purposive sampling was used to get information-rich participants and a good representation of the youth. Purposive sampling is a method of qualitative sampling that seeks out participants that share similar characteristics, according to the needs of the theory or analysis being studied (Morse, 2011). The researcher chose participants who had knowledge of the topic and were young. Based on their profile fit, the researcher hand-picked universities that have high proportions of African students and also hand-picked the participants that represented diverse African cultures.

3.4.2 **Sample Size**

In conducting a qualitative study, the size of the participants must not be overwhelming because the focus is not on the numbers but rather on the information acquired. Therefore, for this study the sample size was six, allowing for depth of meaning and explanations on the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman from the perception of the youth.

3.5 **Data Collection**

3.5.1 **Data Collection Instrument & Procedure**

The data-gathering tool for this research was a Focus Group Discussion protocol and, a one-on-one interview protocol to gather the individual thoughts of participants. The interviews were held before assembling the participants in a focus group. A focus group is a

process whereby a small group of participants converges to discuss a topic or issue to generate data (Wong, 2008). The focus group discussion and the individual interviews were voice-recorded for reference later in data analysis. Samples of questions on the interview protocol included:

- In a few words, can you discuss whether the marketing media portrays what society displays or if society rather learns from the marketing media?
- Do you think there is a difference in the media portrayal of women and men? Could you state some examples?
- What suggestion do you have to limit the impact of the marketing media on the youth?
- What is the nature of the representation of women in the marketing media?
- Do you think companies are aware that the presentation of women differs in their advertisements?

In addition to the interviews and focus group discussion, the researcher included some visual prints and television and media advertisement samples to get the thoughts of the participants using real-life examples. This was done over a two-day period where the interview was held first, and the focus group discussion was held second.

3.5.2 **Data Analysis**

The research data, triangulated from the interviews, focus group, and visuals, were transcribed and analyzed based on codes and emergent themes. Then, the responses given during the focus group discussion were also documented and compared to the survey responses. For this reason, generally, content and thematic analysis were used to analyze the results of the study.

3.6. **Validity and Reliability**

The relevance and preciseness of research are measured using validity while the consistency of the analysis techniques and data collection is the reliability (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). In a qualitative study, the validity and reliability are combined and termed as credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness (Golafshani, 2003). A qualitative researcher seeks a "phenomenon that unfolds naturally" (Golafshani, 2003, p. 600; Patton, 2001, p.39) and as such, must remain a very neutral position in the research. The credibility and trustworthiness of this research are ensured through the neutral stance of the researcher in determining the impact of the media on the African youth. This is proven by the interpretations of the respondent's findings and ensuring that the responses are not altered based on the researcher's perspective on the topic being analyzed. The researcher enhanced validity and reliability through triangulation by using interviews, focus group discussion, and visuals.

3.7. **Ethical Considerations**

A primary consideration of research is the approval of the participants verbally and with written consent before data collection. The researcher assured the participants of the confidentiality of their responses and also sought their permission to record the meeting using a voice recorder. If a participant had not been comfortable with that, the meeting would have been written down to make the participants more relaxed to express their views Fortunately, all participants were comfortable with the audio recordings of their discussion.

In the conducting of primary research on human participants, there needs to be the approval of the institution's Human Subjects Review Committee. This research, therefore, involving university students as the population required and obtained the approval of the committee to send out the surveys and organize the focus group discussion.

3.8. **Limitations of the study**

This study involved the participation of young people and the discussion of a social topic. As a result, an expected limitation of the study included peer pressure or the fear to conform with social ideas versus personal or individual views which may be contrary to most of the youth. The response of others may then hinder some from voicing other opinions out of fear of mockery.

Also, in the Ghanaian society, there are three main practiced religions, namely Christianity, Islam, and the African Traditional religion. The researcher could not control how much religious beliefs were conflated with personal ideals.

Finally, this study was conducted online, and the researcher inability to control issues concerning internet connectivity and stability were a fear, especially during the focus group discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, the researcher captured the thoughts and viewpoints of university students across Ghana with various backgrounds for diversification. The data were then classified into codes and themes with unique responses also identified. The data are presented as responses to the three research questions focused on the media's impact on the youth, the differences in perceptions between gender, and the youth's perspective on multi-media companies' responsibilities to society.

4.1 Introduction

The measurement of the marketing media's influence and impact on the youth has been limited in the African context. In this study, the researcher enquires about the Ghanaian youth perceptions about the marketing media's portrayal of African females and assesses the direct and indirect ramifications it has on the youth in their day-to-day lives.

This study was conducted using the exploratory phenomenological study approach. This is a study that explores what people have experienced and "focuses on their experience of a phenomenon" (Duquesne University, 2020). The use of phenomenology enables the participants' stories and encounters to reveal underlying issues of the marketing media's influence on the youth through the representations of feminine roles and characters.

According to Swaen (2021), a conceptual framework helps you determine the relevant variables for a study and their interrelations within the study's aim. It may relate to variables that are unlikely to be related or variables that are related. In the conceptual framework for this research, the researcher determined the relevant variables to be the marketing media's sexualized image of the African woman, the African youth who are influenced, and the advertising and brand corporations that allow for such misrepresentations.

This study finds these interrelationships of the variables worth exploring through a conceptual framework.

4.2 Description of Samples

Using a purposive sampling the researcher identified six (6) current university students who were juniors and seniors, of different academic fields, backgrounds, and locales in Ghana. The gender of the participants was evenly split with three being females and three being males. Based on their upbringing, four had Christian backgrounds while the remaining two had Islamic backgrounds. Despite being raised in particular religious backgrounds, some had altered their religious beliefs and practices. Consequently, four participants were Christian, one was an Islamic participant, and one participant remains undetermined in religious belief.

To enable the researcher to candidly report responses, participants were given pseudonyms, to keep their identities confidential. The six participants will be referred to as Seidu, Gloria, Jerry, Alyia, David, and Gyapomaa. Participants' age, citizenship, religious belief, and gender would, however, remain factual, however, in the narrative. The following is a brief description of each participant and the unique responses of the participants.

Seidu: Seidu is a Ghanaian, Islamic-raised male who is currently 22 years old. Seidu has lived in the United States of America previously but based his responses on his experience in Ghana. He wants to be a medical doctor in Ghana, and is studying at a university college which is a religious school that is more dominated by Christianity belief systems. Seidu was raised in a Christian/Islamic home due to his parents' different religious beliefs and was exposed to both value systems. Currently, he identifies as a Muslim male. Seidu believes his responses in the interview and focus group were not as influenced by his religious beliefs, but by social media, specifically, Twitter.

In discussing the marketing media's influence over the youth, Seidu's response focused on the use of celebrities. He felt that the firms' and media's focus on celebrities and media influencers in marketing their products was an underlying issue. In his perspective, although capturing attention by using celebrities may seem harmless, there is an added influence media engage celebrities which foster many severe negative effects and influences in the youth's direct interpretation or misinterpretations of African women.

Gloria: Gloria is a Ghanaian Christian-raised female and 21 years old. Gloria lived in Liberia throughout her primary school years. She is studying law at a Ghanaian Christian university, that is very committed to religious beliefs and practices. Gloria has continually remained a committed Christian throughout her life and considers her religious faith very important. Yet, she considers her surroundings and social media as the main influence over her responses and ideas about women in the media. Her response to limiting the impact of the marketing media was centered on gender equality studies in schools and social events. She believes that adopting the Feminist ideals from an early stage may promote change in society's outlook on women and what womanhood stands for generally.

Jerry: Jerry is a 21-year-old Ghanaian university student who is studying Business Administration with a love for marketing. He was raised in a Ghanaian Christian household and continues to practice his Christian values daily as he is a devout Christian determined to share Christian beliefs with all who are willing to listen. Jerry attends a non-denominational university that is open and accepting of all religious beliefs once they do not infringe on the freedoms of others.

In Jerry's response to whether society depicts what the media portrays or the media studies from society, he uniquely said both society and the media play dependent roles on preconceived ideas from a very tender age. Also, Jerry argues that in limiting the media's impact there needs

to be an avoidance of the use of social media as a primary source of information but rather, use the old traditional means such as churches, schools, homes, and others.

Alyia: Alyia is a British-Ghanaian who was raised in a Muslim household with both parents being committed Muslims with an extended family who are also staunch Muslims. Alyia has lived in the United Kingdom and Ghana and shares stories from both backgrounds. She is a 21-year-old studying Business Administration in a non-denominational university in Ghana. In high school, Alyia renounced her faith in Allah and rededicated her beliefs to serving God under the Christian religion. Although this change was disapproved by her family, she has persevered and devoted her life to the preaching of the Bible. Experiencing both the Islamic and Christian religions, she considers her thoughts and actions to be a result of her values that are more conservative and reserved.

She believes that in the African context there is a strong parental and authoritative presence, and this should be reflected in the allowance and limitations of what children and the youth watch. Alyia thinks the foreign influence has made Ghanaian parents want to contemporaryize and left their children exposed to the ills of the media. Alyia, unlike other responders, considers placing the majority of the fault of the media's impact on the parents and less on the firms.

David: David is a 22-year-old Ghanaian male who is studying Management Information Systems at a non-denominational university. He has lived in Ghana throughout his life although he has taken vacation trips to Western countries. Although David finds himself in a non-religious environment, he is a growing Christian who practices the advice taught in church through the Bible. David was raised by Christian parents who gave him the freedom to choose to worship God. David says that his responses and thoughts are rooted in his background, culture, and society.

Unlike other respondents, David suggests that the companies should not be held accountable but, the women who audition and partake in these advertisements should be more cautious of the roles and contractual regulations. He believes if the women are uncomfortable with the portrayal, they would speak out. However, if they agree and the company makes such unprecedented changes, the matter can be taken up legally.

Gyapomaa: Gyapomaa is a strong-willed 22-year-old Ghanaian woman. She was raised in a strong Christian setting without freedom in deciding on religious preference, unlike the case of David. She says she was raised to be the 'typical Ghanaian woman, a follower, but she has decided not to abide by that. She is in a religious-affiliated institution in Ghana. Gyapomaa decided to be a non-conformist and explore other avenues of religion or no religion at all. As a result, she is currently undecided on her religion and says her relations and thoughts are only influenced by her surroundings recently and social media lately.

Gyapomaa states that per her view, the African media has no impact on her lifestyle and mannerisms as an African female. She says that she is more influenced by the foreign media and less appreciative of the African media. For this reason, she doesn't believe there is a way to limit the media's impact once she does not watch the Ghanaian media.

4.3 Research Questions

The questions this research sought to answer are:

- **What is the impact of the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman on today's youth?**
- **What differences exist between the young men and women in their perceptions of the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman?**
- **From the perspective of youth, what do the marketing professionals believe is the value of presenting women in a licentious manner in advertising?**

Using interviews, focus groups, and visual prompts, the researcher developed appropriate protocols to get responses for the three research questions. The interview protocol had the following questions:

a. How does the marketing media influence the youth in Africa?
b. What suggestion do you have to limit the impact of the media on the youth?
c. In a few words, discuss whether the marketing media portrays what society displays or if society rather learns from the marketing media?
d. What is the nature of the representation of women in the marketing media?

The researcher analyzed the common themes of the three participating males and compared the results with the common themes of the three participating females to determine whether there were any distinct differences between male and female youth's perceptions of the media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman.

The interview protocol associated with the third research question included:

A. Do you think the companies are aware that the presentation of women differs in their advertisements? In your opinion why do they do this? Does it work?
B. So, how do you think such companies should be held accountable for the impact on the youth?

4.4 Summary of findings

An exploratory phenomenological study examines how people experience a particular phenomenon, how they construct their meanings, and how such meanings shape their culture and experiences. The meanings expressed by the participants were used to respond to each of the three research questions and overarching themes and concepts were also identified and summarized. Responses to the three research questions are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Research Question 1: What is the impact of the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman on today's youth?

The participants believed that the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman led to women being objectified, sexualized, and subjected to the media's definition of beauty. Media tends to use western traditions more than African traditions, making westernization more appealing to the youth than African cultural values. Most respondents believed that the media were influencing societal behaviors, including the behavior of the youth and their depiction of women. Participants were unanimous on the more favorable portrayal of men over women, with women appearing inferior to men in the advertisement roles.

Research Question 2: What differences exist between the young men and women in their perceptions of the marketing media's portrayal of the contemporary African woman?

The responses by participants were analyzed based on their gender and there were some differences. The results revealed that the female participants found the media to be misogynistic, i.e., protective of the image of men in advertisements depicting the men as the main character or the ideal. The females also found the African media to be non-reflective of the African settings and cultures. They mentioned that the Western media and culture were more prevalent in the advertisements and they also oversexualized images of females. Lastly, the females believed one approach to limit the media's impact would be sensitization, public outcry, and education of the public. The female respondents believed that to improve the image of women it would be important to involve the entire society of males and females of all ages.

The male respondents, however, felt that the females were aware of the contractual agreement and therefore, the blame could not be on the firms alone. The male respondents all shared that the social media advertisements were the main instigators of misrepresentations about women. The males shared how the portrayal of women for their beauty and appeal made

them think less of women, whereas the men in advertisements are typically not portrayed as such. Most of the male respondents did not believe that there was a way to limit the media's impact as they felt it could not be done.

Research Question 3: From the perspective of youth, what do the marketing professionals believe is the value of presenting women in a licentious manner in advertising?

Participants agreed unanimously that the sexualized and sometimes belittling portrayal of African women by the media was intentional. It appears to sell products and because of profit-making gains, advertising does not consider its impact on young minds. The participants believe that the carelessness of firms and society's normalizing of such portrayals will persist. Some respondents believe encouraging education on gender equality of the masses, stirring up public outcry and the involvement of governmental bodies can help hold the companies accountable.

4.5 Analysis of Themes

This section in the research is to critically analyze the responses of the participants that have been classified into themes.

Precedence of Objectifying and Sexualizing

According to the participating young Africans, the marketing media influences their view of women around the media's objectifying women based on their physical appearance and using them as sex symbols, and placing value on women's physical appearance. David said, "It is a two-sided image whereby women are portrayed as sex objects and women are seen to be personality seekers or more focused on their physical appearance and that is committed to the memory of the youth." For David, the two-sided images are the two categories women are placed under. The first is that when the product aims to appeal to young and male viewership,

they portray the women as sex objects. Secondly, when the product is directed toward cosmetic users, they make the women appear highly concerned about their physical appearance. The respondents believe the youth are extremely influenced by how the marketing media often positions the woman as a vain character. David believes this has influenced his conceptualization of women in his society as conceited and that it does not showcase their brilliance, wit, and other distinct characteristics.

Another respondent stated that women's bodies are objectified, and the women are shown to use their bodies to show desperation for money. On the other hand, the male characters are seen as leaders with money and importance. Gloria stated that "The media paints a sexualized picture of women and the youth feed on that. I don't see women beyond their sexuality because that is how they make it look in adverts." Additionally, Gloria believes that "The media make women look like they are supposed to stay home and things like that and that is why society relegates the women to the kitchen, to housework and taking care of children because that is how the media has made it look like." Overall, that women are objectified and sexualized was a common response that most participants felt strong aversion to and expressed great distaste for. They felt concerned that it was becoming normalized in society and social platforms.

Access to Technology and Social Media

Another theme that emerged was the mode by which the marketing media influenced the youth and society using technology and social media. Seidu mentioned in his interview that "the information released today is open for all and cannot be blocked." He goes on to state that the responsibility has now been put on the youth to determine what they should and should not consume. Seidu among other participants felt that the information released should be streamlined and should not be left for the youth to filter.

Jerry also apportioned the blame of the information consumed today to the "unlimited access to the internet." He goes on to say that the current relations among the youth and their "reactions towards the things in society" are due to the presence of such material on any social media and other technology.

Alyia said that advertisements are constantly seen on television and other online sources; those are where the youth "pick up and end up becoming". The consensus was that society is vulnerable to the media. The participants said society learns actions and traits from the media's portrayals.

Western influence trumps African cultural values

Some participants felt that the narratives given to women in advertisements in Ghana did not reflect the Ghanaian culture and traditions instead they projected westernized behaviors. The participants felt that the accents used by characters, the clothing, and the storyline of characters in some advertisements were more reflective of the United States or Europe. Alyia was the most vocal about the Westernized presence in our advertisements in Ghana. She said, "In Africa, what we do is to copy the western culture and most of what the marketing media projects is not culturally based or Ghanaian based."

Jerry also suggested that in limiting the impact of the media, adverts portrayed should be less inclined to foreign media and more aligned with the Ghanaian culture. He suggests that "we need to go back to our old culture and harness that as a primary source of information." I found that to take a critical look at the portrayal of women and its direct impact on the youth. The marketing media and firms need to be considerate of the local culture that positions women in high esteem and with a positive light.

Encouraging Gender Equality

Most participants considered the root cause of the media's current misrepresentation of women to be the absence of gender equality in societal lessons and practices. Gloria believes that "encouraging equal roles like painting the woman as strong and independent and able to provide for her family as well." She believes that the aim is not to force feminist ideals into the system but, through education and sensitization, make the effort to showcase equal participation and importance although it may not necessarily appear as such in the African society. She says that "The media can create that women can be heads of society."

The youth dislikes the way the media portrays women. Gyapomaa strongly expressed her thoughts when she said, "The media is misogynistic even in the different classes of people." Gloria also contributed by saying, "the women are shown to be desperate for money while the men are given opposite treatment." David stated the media's bias by saying, "in the movie industry, the women are given the backside roles while the men are the main characters." Gender equality begins with equity among male and female portrayals by the media.

Paramount Profit-making Aims

The participants condemned and were very disapproving of the actions of firms and marketing professionals who happen to push the idea of gender stereotypes. All participants said and agreed that the companies are aware that women are presented in more negative ways than men. David, Gloria, and Seidu all stated that the reason the companies and marketing professionals continue to misrepresent women in advertisements is that they want to "push their agenda across the masses" which is based on "reaching the targeted audience and making predicted profits." The respondents felt that "the moral judgments and duties to society are being clouded by the money being made."

The carelessness of firms and normalizing misrepresentations by society

Responses to the actions of the firms in presenting wrongful characteristics of women were that the firms and marketing professionals "just do not care about the impact it has on the youth and society." I found that the respondents who represent the youth are confident that the companies are aware of the representations of women, but they are "unlikely to care unless the head of marketing is a woman." I also found that the unbothered behavior of the companies is because such misrepresentations have been normalized in our society. Jerry said, "It goes back to the patriarchal system and has been normalized for years so although the companies are aware, it has become a norm." In such cases, there is no condemnation which leaves the marketing professionals unaffected by the influences and effects on the youth.

Public outcry

Gyapomaa and some other participants suggested that one way to bring the attention of the youth and society to the inappropriate representations is through public disapproval on social media. She says that "in this day and age public outrage and public outcry is getting more attention and responses from people so it is something we could try." Although she makes the distinction that there a lot of negative comments online, but it would be best to project the message of disapproval over the positioning of women in the marketing media in a more friendly manner. This may encourage the companies to know that they are not being attacked maliciously but rather being encouraged to change for the better.

Involvement of Governmental Bodies

During the focus group discussion, Alyia and Gyapomaa were very vocal. They brought to the group's attention that there are agencies placed to review advertisements before they are published yet these institutions are more particular about the nature and contents of the product rather than the nature of the advertisements. The respondents agreed that the onus

was on the agencies and institutions to factor in all details about the product before, during, and after the advertisements. They also have to consider the audience and viewers and whether the message being delivered is civil. Gloria suggested that the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) delegates the monitoring and approval of advertisement contents in detail to a special force. This may keep a more watchful eye on the marketing professionals and firms that advertise their products. The focus group suggested sanctions and public reprimands for companies that produce advertisements that are misrepresentative, negatively affect society, and disregard the equality of people.

4.6 Summary

This chapter detailed the analyzed thoughts and expressions of interviewed participants. The uniqueness of each participant was expressed as part of their descriptions. The interview protocol responses were grouped under respective research questions. Responses were also grouped under emergent themes.

The themes included women being sexualized and objectified in the media, the presence and influence of technological freedom and access, and social media in spreading the marketing media's misrepresentations, the Western influence of advertisement that has undermined the African culture, and the need to encourage gender equality. Additional themes included profit-making aims, carelessness of advertising and brand firms, and society's normalizing the misrepresentations, public outcry, and involvement of governmental bodies for sanctions on non-compliant companies.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the research purpose, objectives, findings, and recommendations for stakeholders, limitations experienced during research, and suggestions for further study. The analyses done in this study were to explore the influence the marketing media had on the youth in Africa based on the created perceptions about African women in advertisements. This exploration was done from the viewpoint of the youth in Ghana as representative of the African continent.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of this research was twofold. First, it aimed to understand how the youth and young consumers were influenced by advertisements that portray contemporary African women as appealing sexual objects. Secondly, the research explored the youth's impression about companies and marketing professionals who portray the contemporary African woman negatively.

The researcher found that the media influences the youth's beliefs and behaviors, and even influences society. This is supported by Barve, Sood, Nithya, and Virmani (2015), where it was stated that the youth tend to be defenseless to the information they consume which leads them to act out what they observe. The media, on the other hand, use their constitutional freedoms to project misrepresentative images of women which are ignored by governmental bodies and adopted by the youth as trends. The youth fall prey because of the easy access to social media and technology. Through the research, it was found that the media's sexualized portrayal of the contemporary African woman has a direct and negative impact on particularly the male youth, and not as much on the female youth. It makes the male youth think that women lack discernment as they continue to ignore the media's misrepresentations in their daily lives,

and when they choose to play a part in advertisements. This also makes the males think less of the women and influences how they interact and treat women. As an outcome of this study, some young men who do not think highly of women or women's intellect should be aware of the influence of the marketing media's portrayal of women on their thinking and be more intentional to refute the effects/and make appropriate choices when engaging with women.

Again, the researcher found that the youth were disappointed in the marketing media's choice of portraying the contemporary African woman in a sexualized manner. The media's Westernized perception of contemporary African women had disregarded the African culture's celebration of women as respected wives and mothers and leaders of ethnic groups. Based on this study, there is potentially a lot of youth who do not appreciate the portrayal and choose to condemn the media's actions. The study revealed that the respondents found such depictions as disturbing especially as they know these women to be their mothers, sisters, and daughters who despite society's actions toward them, prove to be individually capable and worth more substance. There is potential for the youth to denounce the media's choice rather than succumb to their impressions of contemporary women.

This research serves as an additional resource to post-colonial women in Africa that fall under the emerging Third World feminist movement. Currently, the motive of the Third World movement is seen to create awareness of the rights of females and society's reaction to them. This study, therefore, contributes to this drive by sharing the youth's opinion on the media's roles in perpetuating falsehoods about contemporary African women. It defines the youth as a clear group that could be enlightened on the Third World Feminist movement, and a means to spread awareness to others in society.

The marketing professionals and firms, however, were noticed to be unconcerned about the impact they hold over the youth. The youth think they appear to be more considerate of

their profits than society's unintended following of their feminine portrayals. Based on the responses provided by the participants, it is evident that the marketing media has a direct impact on the youth in Africa.

5.3 Recommendations

I concur with the views of my participants in saying the marketing professionals and companies should be held accountable for their misrepresentations. The marketing professionals and firms like all other sectors in a country have to be monitored and screened. The Food and Drugs Authority in line with some private firms has to form an institution to monitor the pictures available to the public.

Also, the youth fall prey to the African woman images projected however, the onus is on the youth to restrict what they engage in and condone. I recommend that the youth recognize that women are sexual, but they are also lawyers; they are breadwinners, intellectuals, mothers, and wives. The youth should base their female perceptions and aspirations on the comprehensive view of women and the cultural perspectives.

Finally, I recommend that Ghanaians adopt the practice of calling out wrongs in sociGhanaians should feel safe to report injustices or share their thoughts on social issues in ways that get the attention of policymakers.

5.4 Limitations

This study involved the participation of young people and the discussion of a social topic. As a result, an unexpected limitation of the study included peer pressure or the fear to conform with social ideas versus personal or individual views which may be contrary to most youth. The responses of others may then hinder some from vocalizing their thoughts and beliefs out of fear of ridicule.

Also in Ghanaian society, there are three main practiced religions namely, Christianity, Islam, and the African Traditional religion. The researcher could not control how much religious beliefs were conflated with personal ideals.

Finally, this study was conducted online, and the researcher could not control issues concerning internet connectivity and stability, especially during the focus group discussion.

5.5 Areas for further study

The research determined that the youth are influenced by the marketing media through various modes, mainly through technology. This influence also affects their daily relations with African women and hinders the society from progressive growth of the young men who often do not show much respect for their women. Additional questions and areas for possible research include:

1. Additional research could be done to test the assumption that most African youths respond in similar ways. Other African cultures and countries' youth exposed to the media's misrepresentations of African women could be studied. As mentioned in the limitations, the research focused on Ghana as representative of Africa.
2. The research was based on the point of view of the youth. Additional research could focus on the perspective of the companies and marketing professionals on their choice to sexualize and alternative suitable ways to present their products without stereotyping African females.
3. Compare Christian, Islamic, and non-religious students' perceptions of the phenomenon.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1

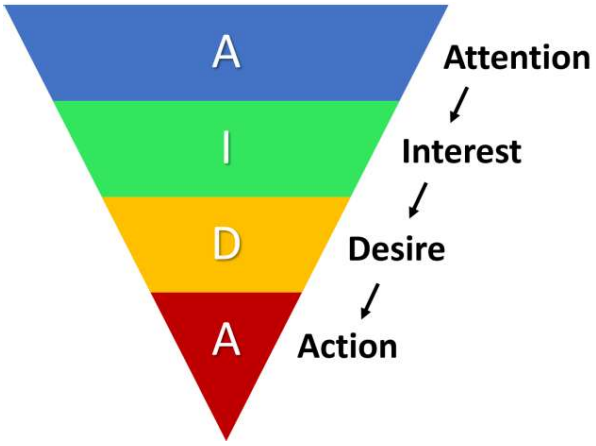


Figure 2

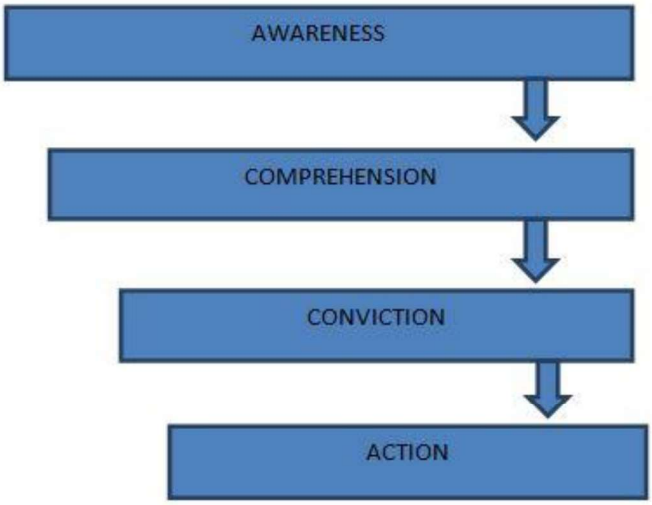


Figure 3


Hierarchy of Effects:
Awareness
Knowledge
Liking
Preference
Conviction
Purchase
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