CONSTRUCTING OPERATIONAL DIMENSIONS FOR EFFECTIVE CELEBRITY ADVERTS IN THE NIGERIAN CULTURAL CONTEXT: A FACTOR ANALYSIS OF SELF-CONSTRUAL

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Abstract

Unlike independence that prevails in western societies, interdependence rules Africans' perception of the world. That is why Africans' behaviour is contingent on their dependence on one another relative to their diverse communal experiences. Within the framework of Markus and Kitayama's self-construal theory, a factor analysis of self-construal was explored in this study to invoke the dimensions that could determine Nigerians' appreciation of celebrity endorsement adverts. The problem of this study was formulated on the backdrop of an earlier research finding that indicates ineffectiveness of celebrity adverts in the Nigerian multicultural society. From the cross-cultural view, it is argued that integrating cultural orientation of the audience into advertising messages would create path to achieving persuasion effectiveness. With the use of stratified proportional sampling technique, data were garnered from 361 respondents belonging to the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria. Singelis' Self Construal Scale (SCS) developed from the self-construal theory was used to obtain the data. The analysis of the Self-Construal Rotated Component Matrix generated three components. They are group relationship/loyalty, self-valued or self-uniqueness, and maintaining group harmony. Practical and theoretical implications of the findings are discussed in the conclusion.

Keywords: Advertising, Celebrity endorsement, Culture, Nigeria, Persuasion, Self-construal.

Introduction

Self-construal theory is all about the variation in what different cultures believe about themselves. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991:226) it is what people 'believe about the relationship between the self and others and, especially, the degree to which they see themselves as separate from others or as connected with others'. Singelis (1994:581) sees the relationship as 'a constellation of thoughts, feelings, and actions concerning one's relationship to others, and the self as distinct from others'. This constellation forms culture of similarities or dissimilarities based on the characteristics that bound individuals of a society together.

Culture is a system of ideas, interactions, institutions that guide the actions of individuals (Markus 2016). Scholars acknowledge that culture in which individuals are raised is a powerful force that does not only affect and shape individual's self-concept but also exerts direct and indirect influence on their behaviour; affects their social

interactions that form the basis for their communication styles (Gudykunst et al. 1996; Perloff 2010; Singelis 1994; Triandis 1989). These styles involve 'the way one verbally and preverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood' (Gudykunst et al. 1996:511). These styles also form the recipients' attitudes, which influence their message evaluation and judgments of communications. From this perspective, cultural variances play a key role in shaping how people think and feel about themselves and therefore influence how they react to adverts and related media contents.

In a focus group discussion (FGD) conducted in Nigeria to measure the effectiveness and perception of celebrity endorsement among the populace, it is found that Nigerians' perceptions of source credibility dimensions – as it is being used in celebrity endorsement studies – are markedly different from the Westerners'. Contrary to results documented in previous studies in Nigeria, this finding suggests that the celebrity strategy is ineffective in the Nigerian cultural context (Babatunde & Siti Ezaleila 2018). The study also proves that perception is the reality. Additionally, our pilot survey results show that the celebrity endorsement and purchase intention are significantly not related in the zero-order correlation matrix, when self-concept dimensions were deployed, the celebrity effectiveness double for the target audience.

Research findings have shown that the use of psychological dimensions based on self-concept variables is a valuable route to understanding effects of adverts (Mehta 1999). Such dimensions give a better explanation of how culture and ethnicity influence communication (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey 1988; Hesapci, Merdin & Gorgulu 2016). Moreover, some studies on self-concept congruity with brand-image have also revealed that self-concept/brand image congruity can moderate audience preferences for a product (Hesapci et al. 2016; Hong & Zinkhan 1995; Malhotra 1988; Matsumoto & Yoo 2006; Mehta 1999).

However, no studies in African context have measured self-concept congruity with advertising appeal as basis for understanding advertising effectiveness. Therefore, our submission is that failure to consider the Nigerian communication target audience's self-concept dimensions was the main reason for the ineffectiveness of the celebrity endorsement. Therefore, we operationalise advertising effectiveness in terms of self-concepts constellation of the target audience and argue that understanding and adapting these dimensions to advertising messages is likely to enhance advertising effectiveness and specifically celebrity endorsement in Africa rather than using the standardized appeal dimensions that have proved to be ineffective.

To achieve our objectives: to test self-construal theory and to validate the reliability of the Scale in the African context and to present a framework in order to identify valuable dimensions for constructing effective persuasive messages on the constellations of feelings, thoughts, and actions; we factor analysed the 24-item of Self Construal Scale (SCS) developed by Singelis. This was done to extract components of people's perceptions of the selves, which could influence behaviour and give the implications for advertising effectiveness.

Contextualisation

Being a multicultural country with a population of 197,724,142 (Worldometers 2018) belonging to more than 250 ethnic-groups and speaking some 521 languages, Nigeria is the most populous black nation in the world (Nigeria guide n.d). Nigeria is also a multi-religious society with people of diverse ideological orientation who see themselves as strange bedfellows in the wake of the British forceful marriage on the people to become an entity called Nigeria as a result of colonization (Ajayi & Ajaye 2006). For interaction purpose, English was introduced as lingua franca. Thus, ninety-five per cent of the national advertisements are in English.

On the foregoing basis, national advertisements in Nigeria are in English and patterned on the Western advertising convention and strategies. Celebrity endorsement in Nigeria follows this pattern in a culturally different society from the West. So, celebrity strategy severity and efficacy was challenged and hence, a focus group discussion was conducted which results show that Nigerians have different perceptions of the source credibility dimensions; this besides pilot study of a survey that equally reveals that there is no relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention.

Literature Review

Culture and Communication

Scholars have given a considerate attention to the need to delineate cultural variation across societies and the influence of such variation on communication methods (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey 1988; Hofstede 1980; 1983; Markus & Kitayama 1991; Triandis 1989). Therefore, there is a need for more emphasis on understanding the cultural context of

the audience especially when investigating persuasive communication effectiveness (Clary et al.1994; McCracken 1989; Mehta 1999; Perloff 2010).

Cultural dimensions often used among researchers to study cultural variances are from Hofstede's individualism-collectivism dimensions, which are assumed to reflect cultures of all nations (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey 1988). Challenging the applicability of the construct dimensions to some cultures, Markus and Kitayama presented Self-Construal (S-C) dimensions, which are independent and interdependent self. This was to prove that African and some Asian countries construal of the self, of others, and of the relationship between the self and others are more powerful than suggested in Hofstede's dimensions. In addition, the cultural dimensions influence is clearly reflected in differences among cultures (Markus & Kitayama 1991). The basic assumption underlying self-construal is that the Hofstede's individualism and collectivism aspects are not perfectly applicable to Asian and African societies. In this sense, psychologically, people would resonate with communication that is in agreement with the conception of their construal selves. Moreover, they will reject inconsistent experiences (Eagle 1991; Mehta 1999; Orne & Bauer-Manley 1991). The implication therefore is that individuals' culture heavily influences their communication and behaviour patterns and thus, cultural perspective plays a key role in communication effectiveness (DeVito 2011).

Self-Construal Dimensions

Self-construal is arguably the theory that has garnered more attention of scholars in the fields of communication, psychology, and cultural studies following Markus and Kitayama's (1991) article. Perhaps, this could have been the reason the theory has been widely applied in many advert-related communication studies (Gudykunst & Lee 2003). The basic tenet of self-construal as propounded by Markus and Kitayama (1991) lies in separateness and connectedness of an individual to others in a social context under the two contrasting dimensions of independent and interdependent views.

Independent self-construal is characterized as a "bounded, unique, egocentric, separate and self-contained" that is separated from social context. Though one may think that being independent self-construal indicates non-responsiveness to social environment, rather it is responsive but to foster strategically the best way to display the dimension's internal attributes of the self. Moreover, when the highly developed independent selves think or affirm themselves, they use as referent their attributes, desires, and preferences rather than others; these inner attributes 'are most significant in regulating behaviour and that are assumed, both by the actor and by the observer alike, to be diagnostic of the actor' (Markus & Kitayama 199: 227).

Interdependent self-construal is not and cannot be characterized as a bounded whole because 'it changes structure with the nature of the particular social context' (Markus & Kitayama 1991: 227). Therefore, it is a 'flexible, variable' self (Singelis 1994: 581). So, the view of this self in relationship to others 'features the person not as separate from the social context' (Markus & Kitayama 1991: 227) rather, as more connected to others and that one's behaviour is determined and organized by the thoughts, feelings and actions of others.

Psychologically, these dimensions reflect two segments of selves whose reactions to communication are significantly at variance. The possibility of the two – independent and interdependent self – reacting similarly to persuasion messages is seemingly very unlikely, because they are diagnosed as low-self monitoring and high-self monitoring individuals (DeBono 1987). Along this line, a different communication approach to effect attitudinal and behavioural change in this situation is inevitable and the best way to achieve this is through diagnostic dimensions of the self-concept.

Self and Behaviour

Differences in socio-cultural environment in which people live afford them various selves. Put differently, people acquire different selves because of the social and cultural environment in which they live and grow. Scholars acknowledge that two different types of selves do exist in every society; these are independent and interdependent self (Markus & Kitayama 1991) or individualism and collectivism (Hofstede 1983; 1989). Every individual, because of socio-cultural factors is assumed to have two different selves, but one self is always dominant as a function of their cultures (Gudykunst & Lee 2003; Markus & Kitayama 1991). Stephens, Markus and Phillips (2014:612) on this basis argue that these selves provide culture-specific answers to foundational questions such as 'Who am I?' and 'How should someone like me act?' In quest of self-discovery, answers to these two questions prompt the inner self to react

in a specific way that fits the self. In addition, the type of individual 'self' defines the type of behaviour the individual is likely to exude as may be determined by societal norms.

Therefore, the type of construal self-predetermines human behaviour, and what motivates people to act in specific ways comes from different psychological dimensions. For example, Markus (2016) argues that in Western societies where individualism or independence prevails, motivation comes from inside the person as an expression of the intrinsic forces of self-affirmation. This is called WEIRD—an acronym for (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic). This acronym forms the basis for behavioural studies in the West and serves as the perspectives for many theories. Scholars, Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan (2010) acknowledge that many people in the world are not WEIRD. Unlike in the independent enclave, motivation in the interdependent societies emanates from the relationships with others with whom the individual shares concern. This implies that psychological dimensions play a pivotal role in determining what motivates people based on their culture.

In their article *The Role of Self in Behavioral Change*, Stein and Markus (1996:357) highlighted extensively properties of the self-concept that are reasonably central to understanding how the self-concept functions to direct and regulate behaviour. They argue that self-concept is not only a complex and active structure that functions to regulate behaviour, but it is also highly stable and at the same time malleable. Therefore, they acknowledge that understanding 'the pre-existing relationship between the behavioural domains targeted for change and the individual's self-definition' is of paramount importance to success or failure of behavioural change. Therefore, when typology of selves determines behaviour, it becomes the 'self-ways' not only to perceive things or selves but also influences thought, feelings, and behaviour that is guided by the internal attributes of the self (Eagle 1991; Gudykunst & Lee 2003; Malhotra 1988; Markus, Mullally & Kitayama 1997).

Attitude and Persuasion

Attitude is a mental and emotional construct that characterizes an individual. Attitude shapes perceptions, influences judgments, and thus, affects behaviours. Though scholars believe that attitude cannot be observed directly, rather is inferred from people's actions (Perloff 2010). Therefore, scholars who are interested in influencing people's behaviours conceive attitudes as the 'primary object of influence because of their presumed guiding influence on choice and action' (Petty & Brinol 2008: 137). To understand the underlying dynamics of attitudes, scholars answer the question of what functions do attitudes serve people. Precisely put, of what use to people are their attitudes?

Attitudes could serve a variety of distinct functions for different people. Different people may hold same attitude towards an object but for very different reasons (see Clary et al. 1994; Perloff 2010). Therefore, to unravel the puzzle of the function of attitude, researchers have always used functional approach to investigate attitudes. Theories of attitudes that are functional always explain the *why* and *what* of attitudes, which helps to understand people better (Markus & Kitayama 1991; Perloff 2010). Thus, to influence people's behaviours, attitude function research stresses that persuaders probe the function of attitude for individuals and design persuasive message to match the recipients' functional needs. The basic rationale behind this is that:

> 'A persuasive message is most likely to change an individual's attitude when the message is directed at the underlying function the attitude serves. Messages that match the function served by an attitude should be more compelling than those that are not relevant to the function addressed by the attitude' (Perloff 2010: 85).

The tenet of this theory is that the strength of persuasion depends largely on the extent to which the message speaks to the recipient's implicit self. This implicit self of the audience can only be discerned from their psychological segmentations. Integrating these dimensions with messages is at the best to achieving persuasion effectiveness. Nevertheless, we do not discount the source of message credibility's influence on the recipients, but how the audiences perceive this is equally important. This, we need to understand from their self-ways which social context has a significant influence on. For example, people may react to celebrity endorsement similarly, let us say like it; but they may respond to the message content differently- perception's effect- depending on the content function and its relevance for them.

Self-Construal Scale

Following the argument of Markus and Kitayama's on culture and self in which they distinctly explained and captured the real difference between the contemporary Western cultures (The USA, Americans and Europe) and African and some Asian cultures (see Markus & Kitayama 1991); Singelis (1994) developed a 24-item Self Construal Scale (SCS) to measure the two dimensions - independent and interdependent self. Good as it is, the scale cannot be considered valid and reliable until used to generate data in other cultures far different from the Western societies in which it was developed. This is so because Western theories or scales may not be relevant to other cultures especially if the two cultures are markedly different from each other (Matsumoto 1999; Pornpitakpan 2003).

Method

The Study Design

This study uses a cross-sectional research design that adopted a survey method for gathering the quantitative data. The residents of Lagos state in Nigeria formed population of the study. Lagos state was chosen as the research locale because of its strategic position to national economy and its true reflection of cultural diversity in Nigeria.

The population of Lagos state is (9,113,605) dispersed in the 21 officially recognised local government councils in the state according to the National Population Commission (N.P.C. 2010). This population comprises lower class income consumers, as there is a big margin between the so-called upper class and the lower class (the middle class has disappeared) in Nigeria. The population comprises all the Nigerian tribes: Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo and their related tribes. They are literate, male and female, age 18 to 50 years who live and work in Lagos.

Data Collection

The survey was conducted in Lagos, Nigeria between the month of August 2017 and January 2018. A copy of the questionnaire was dropped to be picked-up at agreed time by the respondents.

Sampling Procedure

The sample frame for the study is the NPC list where the sample was drawn from two local governments: Ajeromi/Ifelodun. Because the population lacks homogeneity, a proportional stratified random sample was used for the sample selection to reflect faithfully the number of each stratum. This technique is the best procedure to investigate population of this type (Bhattacherjee 2012; Kothari 2004), as it can be generalised to the entire general population.

Sample Size Formula

To select sample size, Kothari (2004) suggests the following formula: if P_i represents the proportion of population included in stratum i, and n represents the total sample size, the number of elements selected from stratum i is $n . P_i$ To illustrate a sample of size n = 30 is to be drawn from a population of size N = 8000 which is divided into three strata of size N_1 = 4000, N_2 = 2400, and N_3 = 1600. Adopting proportional allocation, sample sizes for the different strata shall be:

For strata with N_1 = 4000, we have P_1 = 4000/8000
and hence $n_1 = n . P_1$ = 30 (4000/8000) = 15
Similarly, for strata with N_2 = 2400, we have
$n_2 = n . P_2$ = 30 (2400/8000) = 9, and
for strata with N_3 = 1600, we have
$n_3 = n . P_3$ = 30 (1600/8000) = 6.

Thus, using proportional allocation for the above sample, the sample sizes for different strata are 15, 9 and 6 respectively which is in proportion to the sizes of the strata viz., 4000: 2400: 1600 (Kothari, 2004: 63).

Sample

The total sample selected was 450 according to each stratum size. The three ethnic-groups make-up the sample strata which are: Yoruba, 243 (53.7%); Hausa, 95 (21.3%); Igbo, 112 (25%). Thus, 450 copies of questionnaire were distributed but 396 copies were returned. The returned rate was 88%. Out of these copies, 35 copies were not filled properly and thus eliminated. Therefore, the final sample size was n=361, which makes the valid copies collected at 80%.

Instrument Adaptation

Singelis (1994) 24-item scale was used to measure the two dimensions. Though the items were developed initially for students whereas the context and sample of this study are different therefore, the items were re-written to fit the general populace sample of the study. For instance, the item for the independent self: 'Speaking up during a class is not a problem for me' was re-written as 'Speaking up for my opinion is not a problem for me'. In addition, all items outside the study context were re-worded to be more suitable and clear for the sample as well as to tap behaviour in the real life of the respondents.

Pilot Study

The pilot test was conducted on the 25th August 2017 in another state; using respondents similar to the final study. The sample size for the pilot study was seventy-five. In addition, the reliability test for the 24 item scale of the self-construal was (a=.72), while the standardised items reliability was (a=88).

Instrument Reliability

The 24 items of the Self-Construal Scale that has 12 items for each dimension were mixed randomly as a single scale for the respondents. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a 7-point Likert scale format from (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree).

The reliability of the scale is (a= .87); while independent is (a= .76), interdependent Cronbach alpha is (a= .78). Singelis' initial reliability which is interdependent (a= .74) and independent (a= .70); our reported reliability for both the dimensions is higher than that of Singelis'.

Scholars have used this instrument to test its assumption and confirm its reliability strength; reporting only the Cronbach alpha. Therefore, reporting the Cronbach alpha of the item scale for its reliability is similar to other studies that have tested and used the scale (see: Singelis, Bond, Sharkey, and Lai 1999; Hesapci, Merdin, and Gorgulu 2016).

Results of the Study

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The main demographic characteristics of the respondents are gender, age, education, and tribal affiliations. All these characteristics are vital to the study in relation to the operationalisation of advert effectiveness in terms of the individual self-concepts. Table 1 below presents the respondents demographic information.

One hundred and ninety-four of the respondents are males and this constitutes 53.7 percent of the sample, while the remaining 46.3 percent are females. This shows normal distribution of the data among the genders.

Age distribution of the respondents is another important factor to the study, as some ages are assumed to be susceptible to their role model influence –celebrity. The distribution of respondents according to age bracket shows that respondents between the ages of 18-35 that are still vulnerable to celebrity influence form the highest percentage of 87.9; while 36-40 and 41 above have 6.5% and 5.6 percent respectively.

Education backgrounds of the respondents are also indicated in table 1which shows that small percentage of 1.7 is for respondents who have primary school education. Respondents with secondary school certificate, diploma, and first degree are 37.5%, 31.0%, and 26.5% percentage respectively, while the remaining 3.4 percent is shared among masters and PhDs. The education factor is important to the study because education shapes and influences individual's thinking and behaviour; and it may affect the respondent's interdependent culture.

The ethnic-groups of the respondents are displayed at the bottom of table 1 to show the different percentage of the ethnic groups. The Yoruba has more than half of the percentage at 50.7 percent, while the Igbo tribe has 24.9 percent and the Hausa has 21.4 percent. The large percentage of the Yoruba is due to them being the indigenous people of the state. This characteristic is used to observe influence of cultural differences on self-concept to relationship.

Table 1:   Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demographics Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	194	53.7
Female	167	46.3
Total	361	100.0
Age group		
18-24	130	36.5
25-30	106	29.8
31-35	77	21.6
36-40	23	6.5
41 and above	20	5.6
Total	356	100.0
Education attained		
Primary	6	1.7
JSS/SSS	133	37.5
NCE/ND	110	31.00
BA/BSc/HND	94	26.5
MA/MSc/M.ED	10	2.8
PhD	2	.6
Total	355	100.0
Ethnic-groups		
Hausa and related tribes	72	21.4
Igbo and related tribes	84	24.9
Yoruba and related tribes	181	53.7
Total	337	100.0

Source: Data are from the Authors' survey 2017/2018

Factor Analysis of Self-construal

Going by the structural composition of Nigerian ethnic-groups as described above, especially the cultural and ideological orientation differences, understanding the dimensions is critical to achieving communication effectiveness. In this sense, our aims are to test Self-construal (S-C) theory, validate the reliability of Self Construal Scale (SCS) and identify Nigerians construal of the self in order to delineate valuable dimensions for effective persuasive messages on the constellations of feelings, thoughts, and actions.

Findings and Discussion

For analysis of the data, the 24-item (SCS) was subjected to principal component analysis (PCA) on the SPSS Version 20. Prior to performing PCA, the suitability of collected data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin value was .73

exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser 1970; Kaiser & Rice 1974) and the Barlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett 1954) reached statistical significance of (.001), supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principal components analysis reveals the presence of three components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 30 per cent, 14.1 per cent, and 12 per cent of the variance respectively. The three components solution thus explains a total of 56 per cent of the variance.

The 24 -item scale of self-construal KMO is .825 with Bertlett test=.001. While separately, the two dimensions loaded thus: Interdependent KMO is .791, Bertlett test=.001, Independent self-construal KMO is .767, Bertlett test =.001. The above three loaded components alpha is (a.728). Factor analysis of the self-reported self-construal items loaded in three components of: "*group relationship*" loaded with 4 items, "*self-valued or self-uniqueness*" loaded with 3 items, and "*group harmony*" loaded with 3 items. Table 2 below shows the loading items.

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrixa

	Component		
	1	**2**	**3**
CINT19	.759		
CINT21	.730		
CINT13	.602		
CINT11	.524		
CIND24		.863	
CIND12		.833	
CIND20		.403	
CINT3			.812
CINT1			.798
CINT9			.406

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a.   Rotation converged in 5 iterations
Source: Data are from the Authors' survey 2017/2018

Our findings therefore validate self-construal theory assumptions that Africa culture is an interdependent self. The two components loading of the interdependent self-construal support this and indicate the dominance of the prevailing self among the people (Markus & Kitayama 1991). In addition, the results generally are in line with scholar's studies that in every society the dual selves-independent and interdependent exist (Agbo & Ome 2017; Markus & Kitayama 1991a). The findings show that '…Africans have no conception of person apart from the community' (Markus et al. 1997: 40). This means that the Africans among themselves rely on collective relationship, which is more than maintenance of symbiotic relationship between individual and the community.

In addition, this study validates the reliability of the Self Construal Scale (SCS) in the African context meeting the criteria set to extract factors (Koay 2018; Singelis 1994). However, worth mentioning here that in an ongoing separate study, the self-construal items loaded on two dimensions; one dimension is dominated with independent and the other dimension dominated with interdependent items. The loading items are indications of validity and reliability of the scale in African context, this contrary to the claim by some scholars that S-C and SCS are invalid in Africa (Levine 2005; Matsumoto 1999). The three loaded components here are for investigating the constellation of thought and behaviour of the respondent in the quest of a framework for constructing effective advert messages based on self-concepts.

The following are the analysis of the three loaded factors:

Component 1 consists of the interdependent items: (19, 21, 13 and 11) loaded at (.759, .730, .602, & .524) respectively; with item (no.19), "*I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I am unhappy with the group*" as the highest loaded item on (.759). Other items under the components are [*item 21: If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible; item 13: I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments; item 11: I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in*]. Thus, this component is referred to as *group relationship/loyalty*.

Component 2 is the only independent self-construal with items: (24, 12, and 20) which loaded with (.863, .833, and.403) respectively. The highest loaded item is (no. 24): "*I value being in good health above everything*" which loaded on (.863). Other items in this component are: [*item 12: Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me; item*

20: I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects]. Thus, this component is referred to as ***self-valued or self-uniqueness.***

Component 3 consists of the interdependent items: (3, 1, and 9) loading with (.812, .798, and .406) respectively. Item (no.3): *"It is important for me to maintain harmony with my group"* as the highest loaded item (.812). Other items in the group are: [*item1: I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact; item 9: I respect people who are modest about themselves*]. Thus, this component is referred to as ***maintaining group harmony.*** These two dimensions of interdependent self: ***group relationship/ loyalty and maintaining group harmony***, are in line with a study that members of interdependent cultures "generally learn different dominant values (e.g., harmony, solidarity) and acquire different preferred ways to conceive of themselves (e.g., as interconnected with others)", (Gudykunst & Lee 2003: 256). The components show harmony as the group value and show connectedness as self-ways they preferred to be perceived.

These two components of group relationship/ loyalty and maintaining group harmony are in support of the focus group findings, which reveal that referral and word of mouth are the reason the participants buy telecommunication service (Babatunde & Siti Ezaleila 2018). This indicates loyalty to group or peer and maintaining the harmony of the group relationship as important.

However, other unloading items of the 24-item scale is not an indication of invalidity of the scale rather, it is because the member of interdependent learn different values and acquire different ways to conceive themselves (Gudykunst & Lee 2003) therefore unrelated items have to fall apart. In addition, because the basic aim of the study was to investigate the extent of in/out-group relationships effect on commercial content, what then do the three psychological dimensions imply for effective persuasion?

The three components reveal that advertising appeal that adopts interdependent dimension in an interdependent culture is likely to be more effective than the present and standardised independent/individualism appeal that is based on WEIRD. The three components serve as an important factor that could help to analyse the effect of the C-S on advert content when integrated because they represent the inner self of the audience in a socio-cultural context. Studies have shown that advert appeal that matches the audience self-concept has high level of persuasion effectiveness (Clary et al. 1994; Hesapci et al. 2016; Wang et al.2000). Celebrities have attained their eminence in the context of their culture, thus, the creative execution of celebrity endorsement should reflect the prevailing culture of the society where it is being aired for effectiveness (McCracken 1989; Choi, Lee & Kim 2005).

Implications

This study tests the assumptions of self-construal theory among advert target audience in Nigeria, and the findings show the respondents' self-concepts dimensions. Therefore, the findings have both practical and theoretical implications for practitioners.

The practical implications of the three components are that they indicate dominance of interdependence self-ways of viewing and thinking about the self and acting accordingly (Gudykunst & Lee 2003; Markus et al. 1997). Thus, they form one major route to persuasion in the study's context. Because of the antecedent of the group relationship, the dimensions are therefore the possible moderators of the groups' action toward enhancing advertising effectiveness (Koay 2018; Malhotra 1988; Mehta 1999; Petty & Brinol 2010; Petty & Wegener 1998). Therefore, ***group relationship/loyalty, maintaining group harmony, and self-value or self-uniqueness*** form a one-dimensional construct with underlying meanings, which suggest categories of individuals for whom attitudes serve the same functions (DeBono 1987) for group relationship. Moreover, since celebrity endorsement takes peripheral route for its effectiveness (Petty, Cacioppo & Schumann 1983) just as functional theories (DeBono 1987), therefore persuasion that follows independent perspective to effect attitude change in an interdependent society will be fraught with failure.

Studies have shown that individual differences positively influence behaviour towards advertisements (Terblanche-Smit & Terblanche 2011). Because the injunctive norms are cultural differences that distinguish the individual self within a specific culture, thus constituting the recipients' variable that differentiate the way they communicate; high or low context communication (Gudykunst et al. 1996; Petty & Brinol 2010; Petty & Wegener 1998). Therefore, this makes imperative for practitioners to consider and understand recipients' injunctive norms with the aim of integrating their self-concepts with the message to achieve effective advertisement for the self-concepts are the potent drivers of behaviour (Choi & Rifon 2012; Morris et al. 2015; Savani, Morris & Naidu 2012).

Theoretically, the above constellations indicate functions of the group attitudes. Functional theorists suggest that persuasive message is most likely to change an individual's attitude when the message is directed at the underlying function the attitude serves (Perloff 2010). Scholars maintain that when advertising message is value-expressive or

utilitarian, audience persuasion is influenced through functional congruity (see Clary et al. 1994; Hong & Zinkhan 1995; Johar & Sirgy 1991; O'Keefe 2002; Perloff 2010).

To our ultimate knowledge in Nigeria, perhaps in the whole of Africa, this is an original study to test empirically C-S theory and SCS. Interestingly, this study has taken a pragmatic approach by collecting the data from practical audiences - far from the four-corner classroom students' simulation. The findings, based on the loaded components, provide operational dimensions for advert effectiveness and introduce important theoretical dimensions in behavioural change. Normatively, these results provide important considerations for communicators, marketers, and advertising agencies that work on attitudes and behaviour change and show the directions to channel their communication efforts.

Conclusion

We have demonstrated so far the importance and usefulness of consumers' culture through their self-concept dimensions to advance the operative theoretical framework and achieve effective persuasion through the constellations of feeling, thinking, and acting of the message recipients. This study can be regarded as the first study in Nigeria to (1) test self-construal theory, (2) validate Self Construal Scale, (3) propose self-concept dimensions as a framework for achieving persuasion effectiveness, and (4) integrate advert messages with the self-concept dimensions to match the target audiences' self-way to achieve the required persuasion effectiveness. However, this study represents an initial step in the investigation of cultural differences on communication's effect through S-C construct. Therefore, this study confirms the existence of two dimensions with the implication of the dominant self among Nigerians and the importance of interdependence approach to persuasion.

In conclusion, the findings have proved the dominance of interdependent culture that sees self as part of an encompassing social relationship and whose behaviour is contingent upon others in the relationship; rather than the independent self whose behaviour is regulated by its own internal attributes. Therefore, the potentiality of celebrity advert routed via this path to effect behavioural change is higher than one routed otherwise. Moreover, the findings of dominant interdependent self-construal prove 'ubuntu unbuntu' the African philosophy of humanity towards others which means 'I am because we are'.

Limitations and Future Study Suggestions

The present study has some limitations. The data were collected in Lagos state where coexistence and mingling of the different tribes could have influenced the dimensions of self-construal. Second, the dimensions were not used with any product or advert to investigate the severity of the framework and audience response.

Future study should integrate the dimensions into advertising message and product of different categories- high and low involvement- to understand further the impact of the dimensions on purchase intention. Based on the extracted components in this study, it is important to conduct a study on celebrity effectiveness that would integrate the consumers' self-construal dimensions as extracted here in the message to investigate the effects. Another study should be conducted in different domains (states in Nigeria) where each ethnic-group is the dominant dweller to know their self-construal dimensions separately. Finally, a rigorous study is essential to link these self-ways to advert and observe empirically the effects they may produce in the effectiveness of the approach.

Endnotes

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