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EXPLORING THE USE OF RHETORIC IN PRESTIGE COSMETICS ADVERTISEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Every advertising campaign is fundamentally persuasive and geared towards influencing the purchase decisions of individuals. Certain elements are employed to make advertisements apt, catchy and attention-attracting. One of such elements is rhetoric, the art of creating resources that are appellative, attention-attracting and persuasive. This paper, thus, aims at unpacking the intricacies of language use evident in the rhetorical techniques employed in cosmetics advertisements as apparatus for influencing and persuading individuals to making informed choices as they are being confronted daily by alternatives. The study is corpus based as it adopts a descriptive qualitative method to analyse data from 5 cosmetics advertisements sourced purposively from the wide corpora on the internet site of Prestige Cosmetics (www.prestigecosmetics.com.ng), a Nigerian cosmetic brand. Again, Knowles and Linn's (2004) Alpha Strategies of Persuasion is adopted as a working framework to analyse the strategies that add to the persuasive imports of the advertisements. The study reveals that aside the appeals advertisements exude, strategies of making advertisements more persuasive, adding incentives, increasing source credibility, providing consensus information, emphasizing consistency and commitment and engaging a norm of reciprocity are mechanics pulled by Prestige Cosmetics to heighten the persuasive undertones of advertisements. The paper then concludes that in cosmetics advertisements, rhetoric and all its composites are arts of creativity and persuasion tailored to sway the target into making purchase decisions.

KEYWORDS:

Rhetoric, Persuasion, Alpha Strategies of Persuasion, Advertisement, Cosmetics Advertisement.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Language is conceptualized as a distinctive human activity that functions in the exchange of thoughts and ideas. Language and its subset, communication are do-without tools of exchange that significantly smoothen the encounters and interactions of individuals within the sociosphere. As human beings live in a complex world and are continually confronted with extremely complex issues, their existence would be impossible without language and its subset, communication. Today's social-economic world revolves around global communication. In this era, several issues creep up for discussion every now and then. Debates are ever ongoing on various aspects of lifestyle and living, healthcare, education, business and other emergent phenomena. The various media of communication help give life to and amplify such discourses. As people are becoming increasingly aware and conscious of their lives, environment and the consequences of a non-challant attitude to their well-being, various practitioners are cashing in to drive points home in their practices. Advertisers are not left out in this trend. Across the media, advertisers, especially cosmetics advertisers, battle it out in a bid to sell their products which are believed to be potent in life-saving, life-elongating and life-preserving ingredients. In doing so, they employ language as a tool of effect in communication as various language devices, resources and ways of signification interplay.

Advertising is that communication sub that engages in the art of appellative language use. Zhaojing (1991:1) defines advertising as “the non personal communication, which is usually forceful and paid for in nature about commodities, services or ideas by specific organizations through the variety of media”. The indices in this definition are that advertisements (henceforth ad/ads) are non-personal, paid for and are forceful. It is the force of the ad that serves as pulling string to draw people's attention. One other variable in that definition is that it is about commodities and services. This establishes that the producers of commodities and products are in constant battle to make sales given that substitutes that are competitive abound in the market place. In doing so, language becomes a tool that underpins all and is catalytic in making all other mechanisms work, especially the mechanism of persuasion as employed in ads to influence the choices individuals make concerning a product or service they have been exposed to. The foregoing typifies that language used in ads is purposeful in influencing the target and this is reflected in Sandege, Fryburger and Rotzoll's (1989) postulation that advertising is the market instrument which advertisers use to influence the behaviour of consumers at the point of purchase. The behavioural influence of target consumers is woven into the ad copy using language resources.

Language is highly significant in the production process of marketing ads. Pizzaro (nd) has noted that there are complex ways of scripting which take cognizance of word choices and especially rhetorical resources which become facility in the persuasive undertone and import of ad messages. The treatise above suggests that advertising is replete with rhetoric as rhetorical devices are inherently persuasive.

Rhetoric is a concept that has its origin in the Aristotelean era but has not thinned down in relevance and scholarly inquiry. Rhetoric is a powerful tool of persuasion which application culminates in causing a change in the decisions and behavioural patterns of individuals. Chetia (2015) sees rhetoric as language that is used to inform, persuade or motivate an audience. This definition suggests that rhetoric is used for specific purposes and effects. Purposefulness of effect is one attribute that links rhetoric to advertising as ads are designed to create behavioural changes. It is pertinent to point out that these changes occur through persuasive effectiveness which possibility comes through the use of wide array of rhetorical techniques and devices. This research, thus, sets out to study rhetoric and its exploration in cosmetics ads. It espouses that in cosmetics ads, rhetoric performs acts of persuasion by using linguistic and non-linguistic resources that are strategically couched to attract the attention of

the target consumer and induce them through credible source testament and adding of gratuitous favours into making purchases. The study adopts Knowles and Linn's (2004) Alpha Strategies of Persuasion as a working framework. These strategies make ads more compelling and irresistible. Data for this research are 5 cosmetics ads purposively selected from the internet site of Prestige Cosmetics, a Nigerian brand and analysed to isolate the strategies of source credibility, adding of incentives, norm of reciprocity and consistency emphasis as potent persuasion drivers capable of changing the thought and decisions of individuals.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Rhetoric has continued to evolve and change in perspective. In the Aristotelean era, rhetoric was seen as an act of public speaking that was highly manipulative. In our era, rhetoric has evolved into a tool for persuasion as its application in advertising is not manipulative but appellative. Chetia cited earlier posits that rhetoric makes language more appealing to the target audience. Ad language has the potentiality to influence people and their behaviours. Both in composition and conveyance of messages, ad language lends itself to varying degrees of choices of rhetorical techniques in a bid to affect consumer choices. Widyahening and Hum (2015) opine that advertisers take advantage of rhetorical resources and figures of language to wrap up their target in well intended, attention-attracting gimmicks. Thus, the problem of rhetoric and its application in cosmetics ads is the utmost concern of this paper. The study not only seeks to espouse the rhetorical devices and how they are employed in cosmetics ads, it also seeks to point out that rhetoric makes appearance in our language acts though we may not be aware of the influence it wields and , thus, run into the problem of comprehending it. The study will also put rhetoric in its correct perspective not as manipulative but as an apparatus for persuasion with identifiable strategies.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to elucidate the rhetorical resources employed in cosmetics ads. The researcher aims at identifying and examining rhetorical techniques as used in cosmetics ads to capture the attention of and persuade the target consumer as well as compel them to make purchase. Thus, it sets out to examine how advertisers adopt rhetorical strategies as weapons of persuasion and effect. These the research will achieve by

- Identifying and extracting the rhetorical resources employed in cosmetics ads
- Investigating the persuasive imports of rhetorical resources employed in cosmetics ads
- Exploring the strategies of persuasion used in cosmetics ads.

1.3 Research Questions

This research was guided by the following questions.

- What are the rhetorical resources used in cosmetics ads?
- What are the persuasive imports of rhetorical resources in cosmetics ads?
- What are the strategies of persuasion employed in cosmetics ads?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is significant in a number of ways. It will identify and explore the nuances of rhetoric in cosmetics ads, bringing to light the appellative function of ad language as weapon of persuasion, designed to captivate the attention of the target consumer. It will project cosmetics ads as crafted language acts that are strategized tools of influencing and changing the purchase decisions of individuals. Generally, this study will broaden people's knowledge about persuasion and its strategies.

It will also help intending script writers to understand and employ good techniques of rhetoric in their ad copies.

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

This section reviews the concepts in this research. In investigating rhetoric in cosmetics ads, concepts like communication and language and their subsets of advertising, cosmetics advertising and rhetoric are explored.

2.1.1 Language

Language is conceived of as a distinctive human activity that functions in the exchange of thoughts and ideas. Language is viewed as the vehicle for the expression and exchange of thoughts, concepts, and information and the transmission of experiences and knowledge (Bussman, 1996). Robins and Crystal (2022) view **language** as a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves. The definitions above do not dwell only on what language is but also on what it basically helps humans to do. All project language as the driver and carrier of communication. Using language, individuals exchange ideas and opinions. As humans are continually confronted with extremely complex issues in a world of complexities, their existence would be impossible without language and its subset of communication given their functionality in smoothening and greasing encounters and interactions.

2.1.2 Communication

Communication is a concept that thrives on the wings of language. It has its basis in the interchange and sharing of ideas using sensory channels. In a bid to crack the concept of communication, scholars have come up with definitions. Chiavenato (2006:12) defines communication as “the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another”. He further asserts that “communication influences at least two people: the one who sends the message and the one who receives it”. For Del Socorro Fonseca (2000), communication involves “sharing something of ourselves as it is a specific rational and emotional quality of man that arises from the need to get in touch, exchange ideas with others and acquire meaning, even from previous experiences”. One notable index in these definitions is that communication involves some kind of exchange between and amongst individuals in the society. This index is captured in Schramm’s (1983: 16) treatise that “it is illuminating to think about communication as a relationship built around the exchange of information”.

Every communication act is driven by intent. Behind every communication event is the desire to inform, educate, entertain or persuade another. Whatever may be the intent, there are systems for passing them on. One of such systems is language, a human specific means of exchange. Thus, communication is the exchange of information and ideas between people made possible through the use of words and signs of language. Ahumaraeze (2020:8) posits that language and communication “enjoy a relationship of connectivity, are tools for social actions, engagement and exchange” and that “language drives communication which in turn enriches language”. This postulation typifies that language and communication have indissoluble links as the latter thrives on the wings of the former (Ahumaraeze and Chukwu, 2023).

It is pertinent to point out that communication could be verbal or non-verbal. Hermendez and Garey (2005:10) aver that “communication is a process of social interaction of a verbal or non-verbal nature,

with intentionality of transmission and that can influence, with and without intention, in the behavior of the people who are in the coverage of said emission". In verbal communication, messages are driven in the words and utterances of interactants. Non-verbal communication depicts the transmission of messages using extra linguistic cues like gestures, body movements, eye contact, physiognomy and recently, the use of signs and images in the visual space as seen in ads.

2.1.3 Advertising/Cosmetics Advertising

Advertising is a communication sub that employs language as a tool of influence. Advertising is a concept that thrives on the use of and the interplay of the dualistic notions of language and communication (Chukwu and Ahumaraeze, 2022). Arens, Weigold and Arens (2008) posit that "advertising is the structured and composed non-personal communication of information, usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products (goods, services and ideas) by identified sponsors through various media". As communication has its basics in the exchange of ideas, facts and opinions, advertising extends these communication basics by engaging the persuasive imports of language in a bid to sway the target audience into making alternate decisions. Thus, advertising has as its primary aim persuasion which it tries to achieve by captivating the attention of and compelling the target consumer to buy a product or embrace a service. This is mirrored in Cook's (1992) postulation that the distinguishing feature of advertising discourse is its function, which is usually to persuade people to buy a particular product. Chukwu and Ahumaraeze (2022) extend this discourse in the postulation that "advertising uses alluring language to convince people to consider a product" by creating messages "that are laden with strategies that are persuasive and capable of appealing to the sensibilities of the target". Advertising aims at sale promotion which it achieves by sustaining the interest and loyalty of the target to a product or brand. This is subsumed in Ahumaraeze and Chukwu's (2023) avowal that the object of advertising notwithstanding, "the purpose remains to create increased awareness, change of attitude towards a product and purchase". Thus, producers of commodities with the understanding that the market place is highly competitive battle to make sales over substitutes that abound. One of such products is cosmetics which the Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines as "a preparation (except soap) preserving or changing the appearance of a person as for conditioning, cleansing, colouring". Ahumaraeze and Chukwu (2023) conceptualize cosmetics as "all products with the potentiality of enhancing the looks of individuals who use them".

Cosmetics advertising is conceptualized as any campaign on a cosmetic product. For Bai (2018: 842) it is "a non-personal communication of information between the potential consumer and advertisers which includes the title and contents of cosmetics and aims to make their cosmetic products and service known to all and urge the consumer to buy products through the media". Cosmetics ads harp on the quest and aspirations of individuals for beautiful and flawless appearances to create appealing messages that evoke glamour, perfection and longevity using distinctive language resources. Suffice it to say that there is an advertising language which enables advertisers to weave their abilities into the production of target oriented and attention-attracting messages with the potentiality of influencing the intended target to consider the message and, by extension, the products. This must have informed Leech's (1966) postulation that advertising language is packed with the intent to influencing/changing the attitude of its recipient through its functions of attention value, readability and style suggestive of easy going social relationship between writer and reader.

2.1.4 Rhetoric

There are unarguably certain subtleties of language as employed in advertising generally that make for its efficiency. These nuances include rhetoric and its subset, persuasion. Rhetoric is a

multidisciplinary concept made prominent in the Aristotlean era, yet ever current as it attracts countless and unabated research interests. In ancient scholarship, rhetoric was regarded as a skill in eloquent speaking and oratory but in the wake of the 21st Century, the concept has assumed an interdisciplinary stance as researches in virtually all fields of endeavour have brought different perspectives to its study and analysis. One of such fields is advertising which flies on the wings of language (Zhao, 2020).

Chetia (2015) notes that Aristotle, in his first book, defines rhetorical discourse as the “art of discovering all the available means of persuasion in any given case”. Rhetoric is, thus, a tool for persuasion used in advertising to influence the target consumer. This notion is captured by Cockroft and Cockroft (2014) in their assertion that rhetoric is “art of persuasive discourse” that delivers the meaning of persuasion. Every effort in advertising is persuasion driven. Thus, rhetoric cannot be divorced from persuasion. Doan (2017) asserts that ads capture the target audience’s attention, make unforgettable impression and persuade the target to purchase a product. These are the functionalities of rhetoric. The use of rhetoric in ads makes such successful. The indisputable fact from the treatise is that rhetoric helps build up intent to purchase using specific effects. Rhetoric, therefore, employs persuasion through its techniques/devices and appeals. Doan (2017) cited earlier posits that ads use variant methods to arrive at their persuasive effects. He lists such methods to include rhetorical figures, rhetorical images and rhetorical appeals. All these are subsumed under techniques in rhetorical studies.

Rhetorical images draw a dichotomy between traditional rhetoric and visual rhetoric and are seen as special images in ads. Rhetoric was traditionally domiciled in spoken/written language but with technological advancements and the dominance of media technology, advertisers have a wide array of tools at their disposal to make their scripts more compelling and persuasive. One of such tools is the employment of images in rhetoric which scholars have termed visual rhetoric. Nordquist (2020a) posits that visual rhetoric is a branch of rhetorical studies that is domiciled in the persuasive use of images in isolation or as an accompaniment to text. Visual rhetoric aligns itself to the study of designs, images, colour, modality and all semiotic resources as instruments of persuasion. Mzoughi and Abdelhak (2002) lend weight to the use of visual rhetoric in ads stating that visual figures are significantly used to drive home ad messages and, by extension, influence the target consumer’s response through appeals to emotion and change of attitude towards brand.

Rhetoric, whether traditional or visual, makes use of strategies or elements which have come to be known in scholarship as rhetorical appeals and they are logos, pathos and ethos. These appeals are considered to be the arguments in the ads that advertisers put up for specific effects. Carrol (2010) notes that, logos is an argument for reason, which appeals to the intellect of the target. Logos presents verifiable facts using statistics, data and logical statements. Thus, logos is logical appeal or appeal to reason. Pathos is argument for emotion. It carries pathetic appeals laden with sentimentalities (Carrol, 2010) which captivate a listener’s attention and increase the convincing effect (Doan, 2017) by the use of emotional, cheerful and seductive images. Ethos has to do with the credibility of the ad personality. This informs the use of models and celebrities in cosmetics ads for it is believed that the higher the prestige of the ad speaker, the more persuasive the argument. Doan (2017) opines that these people abound in cosmetics ads and are implicative of the quality and reliability of the products. Ethos hypes on the psyche of the target that choice and consumption of the product would make them like the model figures.

Aside the rhetorical appeals that dominate cosmetics ads, there are also rhetorical techniques or devices employed by advertisers that harp on persuasion. Corbett and Connors (1999) see rhetorical

devices as “general terms of any artful deviation from the ordinary mode of speaking or writing”. Shah and Sahar (2019) note that rhetorical techniques are in themselves persuasive. They are skillful use of language to create certain effects. For Chetia, rhetorical devices function to beautify language and this they do by giving it variety, force and power. Corbett and Connors (1999) isolate schemes and tropes as typologies of rhetorical devices. The authors hypothesize that schemes deal with word arrangement and are realized as change in spelling or sounds of words resultant from addition or deleting of letters or syllables from all word positions. They have isolated 27 schemes some of which are seen in the table below.

Table of Schemes as modified from Corbett and Connors (1999:835)

NO	SCHEME	EXPLANATION
1	Parallelism	Similarity of structures in a pair or series of words, phrases or clause.
2	Antithesis	Juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, often in parallel structures.
3	Apposition	Placing side by side two coordinate elements, the first is for modification and the second is the explanation.
4	Alliteration	Repetition of initial or medial consonant sounds in two or more adjacent words.
5	Ellipsis	Deliberate omission of words really implied by the context.
6	Assonance	Repetition of similar vowel forms and followed by different consonants in the stressed syllables of adjacent words.
7	Antimetabole	The repetition of the words in a successive clause, in reverse grammatical order.

On the other hand, tropes deal with word meaning. Thus, tropes are said to be operational at the semantic level where word meaning is domiciled. Tropes are seen in the table below modified from Corbett and Connors.

Table of Tropes as modified from Corbett and Connors (1999:389)

NO	TROPE	EXPLANATION
1.	Metaphor	An implication of the comparison between two things of unlike nature.
2.	Simile	An explicit comparison between two things of unlike nature
3.	Synecdoche	A figure of speech in which a part stands for the whole.
4.	Metonymy	A substitution of some attributive or suggestive word for what is actually meant.
5.	Personification	An investing abstraction for inanimate objects with human qualities or attributes.
6.	Hyperbole	The use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect.
7.	Rhetorical Questions	Asking a question, not for the purpose to be answered, but for the purpose of asserting something obliquely.
8.	Onomatopoeia	The use of words whose sound echoes the sense.
9.	Oxymoron	The yoking of two terms which are ordinarily contradictory.

The modification was done to isolate the devices that are dominant in ads. Another prominent trope often found in cosmetic ads is hypophora which is structured as a question. According to Nordquist (2020b), hypophora is a rhetorical device, structured as a rhetorical question where a speaker raises a question and then answer it. While hypophora is the question itself, the answer is called anthypophora.

2.2 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

This section is a survey of works that have previously studied rhetoric in cosmetics ads. Shah and Sahar's (2019) research centres on rhetorical devices in Pakistani beauty products using Critical Discourse Analysis as an analytical tool and Rhetorical Structure Theory of Mann and Thompson as a working framework. Their research aims at identifying and examining the techniques used to capture the attention of and persuade the audience. Their study also reveals how gender is represented in such ads.

Chetia's (2015) work is a descriptive study of rhetorical devices in English Advertisement Texts in India. He isolates simile, metaphor, parallelism, personification, hyperbole and hypophora as dominant figures of rhetoric. Shi (2021) in his own study investigates the application of rhetorical devices in cosmetics ads and observes the extensive use of conative and emotive words. He isolates numerals, material words, comparative words, simile, personification, hyperbole, pun and parallelism as devices of rhetoric. He, however, notes that there are certain irregularities in the use of rhetorical devices caused by false information or over exaggerations and lack of authenticity. Kretzer's (2014) study is an analysis of beauty commercials using Dove sponsored beauty sketches. He highlights the dominant use of strategies of appeal; pathos, ethos and logos to capture the target audience's attention and awaken the beauty in her.

These studies present the gap for this present research. For the most part, there are no significant researches on rhetoric in cosmetics ads from the perspective of persuasion strategies though several rhetorical techniques have been isolated. Thus, the research hopes to contribute to scholarship in rhetoric by making a foray into the examination of rhetoric in ads as persuasive imports as well as exploring the strategies employed in ads to make them persuasive.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts Eric Knowles and Jay Linn's (2004) Alpha Strategies of Persuasion as a working framework. This theory was propounded to highlight the elements in ads that heighten their persuasive imports, making them compelling enough to pull the target consumer into making purchase. For Knowles and Linn, these are strategies that promote movement towards a goal, the goal being to adopt, purchase and use the advertised product which is presented as a better alternative to its competitors. These strategies create strong, believable and justifiable arguments with the capability of causing a change in the thought patterns and behaviours of the target consumer. The strategies bring everything to bear as motivation in causing a change towards a goal by making ads more attractive, compelling, convincing, credible and incentive driven. Knowles and Linn's identified 5 strategies are:

1. Make messages more persuasive - Ad messages could be made more persuasive by creating arguments that are justifiable and compel action. This means adopting improved rhetoric in ads.
2. Add incentives - Weave into ad messages inducements that trigger compliance.
3. Increase source creditability - Make the represented participant famous and more attractive so as to increase the persuasive import of their testaments as well as the entire ad. Source credibility is potent in influencing behaviours towards issues raised by the source.

4. Provide consensus information - Show that many people want it or are doing it. Show that message is popular.
5. Emphasise scarcity - Tell target that only a few of the advertised product exists.
6. Engage a norm of reciprocity - Add small gratuitous favours that obligate recipients to reciprocate.
7. Emphasize consistency and commitment - Create small actions that elicit commitment towards product purchase or those that refrain the target's prior actions so as to appear consistent with requested behavior.

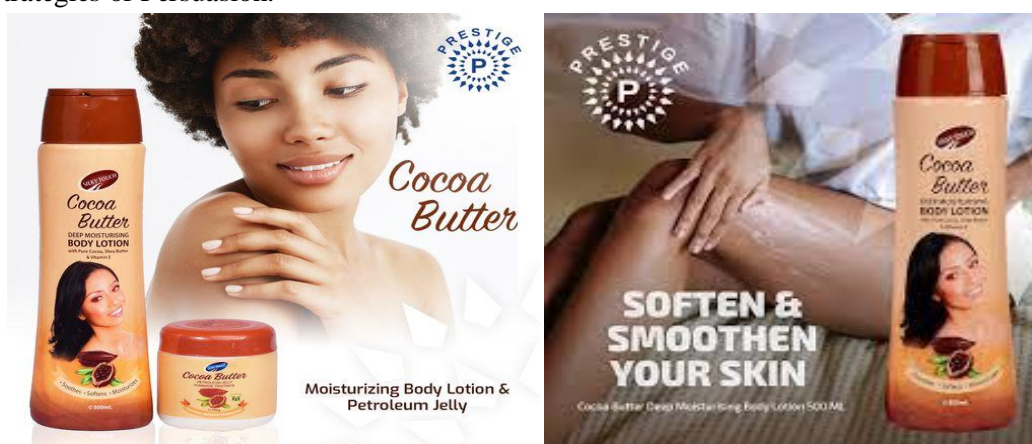
The researcher adopted this theory because in it lies rhetoric's fundamental intent, the artful use of resources that are compelling to sway the target audience into embracing ad messages and adopting advertised products.

3 METHODOLOGY

This study has adopted a descriptive qualitative method of data analysis. The study used corpus-based approach as data for the study were taken from wide corpora of cosmetics ads on the internet site of Prestige Cosmetics, a local cosmetic brand. A total of 5 ads were purposively selected. Data were analysed through the lenses of Knowles and Linn's Alpha Strategies of Persuasion to isolate features of rhetoric in cosmetics ads that contributed to their persuasiveness. The data were presented and discussion done.

4 DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, the researcher presents and analyses data using insights from Knowles and Linn's Alpha Strategies of Persuasion.



DATUM 1: PRESTIGE COCOA BUTTER MOISTURISING LOTION

DISCUSSION

In these ads for Cocoa Butter Moisturising Lotion, alpha strategies were employed to heighten the persuasive import of the message. The first strategy, **make advertisements more persuasive**, is operative in the use of images as visual rhetoric. The represented participants are projected with flawless and fully moisturised skins so achieved through product use and this carries loads of emotional and ethical appeals to those who strive to achieve flawless skin. Also, the expression, **'Silky Touch'** and the product content expressed in **'With pure cocoa skin butter and vitamin E'** communicate to the target audience the benefits derivable from product use and sends out logical appeal that tugs on their minds to adopt product. Also employed here is the second strategy, **add incentives**, which projects inducements for compliance. The expression, **'deep moisturizing lotion'** is laden with gains of product adoption and use and is, thus, persuasive. The next strategy, **increase**

source credibility, is achieved by the use of the convincing, attractive and happy images of women whose skins are perfect examples of lushness and whose slogan, ‘**soften and smoothen your skin**’ is a testament of what has been achieved from product use. This statement with ‘s’ alliteration sends messages of conviction to the target who clamour for soft and smooth skin that they have come to the end of their search. Other strategies of persuasion operative in these ads are ‘**engage a norm of reciprocity**’ and ‘**emphasize consistency and commitment**’ subsumed in these product gains ‘**soothes, softens, moisturises**’ and ‘**soften and smoothen your skin**’ respectively. While ‘**soothes, softens and moisturizes**’ are expressed gains from product use that are capable of influencing the target to adopt product, ‘**soften and smoothen your skin**’ together with the act of rubbing in product on the body which the represented participants are captured doing and the product contents ‘**With Pure Cocoa Skin Butter and Vitamin E**’ lay emphasis that consistency in product use is prerequisite for achieving flawless skin as contents are essential ingredients for skin glow. Through all these and the emotional and ethical appeals, the persuasiveness of the ads is enhanced.



DATUM 2: PRESTIGE GET ME COLLECTIONS

DISCUSSION

In this ads for Prestige Get Me Collections, Alpha Strategies of Persuasion are operative. The first strategy, **make advertisements more persuasive**, finds application in the use of visuals of colour, iconic and product images and arrangement of objects on the space. All these features add to the persuasiveness of the ads as they are pulling strings that compel the target to consider product purchase and use. Again, there is emotional appeal evident in the slogans ‘**FEEL GOOD IN YOUR SKIN**’ and ‘**UNLOCK RADIANCE & GLAMOUR**’ which are expressions that tug on the emotions and sentiments of the target consumer whose aspirations are to radiate and glow with beauty. These expressions together with the collection name ‘**GET ME**’ and the radiance on the faces of the iconic images heighten the persuasive import of the ads. Ethical appeal or appeal from credibility is expressed by the represented participants whose portraiture as symbols of beauty, flawless skin and overall feeling of goodness makes the ads more persuasive. The second strategy ‘**add incentives**’ is achieved through the represented participants whose enhanced skin and the aura they exude are enough inducements that lure the target consumer to adopt product. Source Credibility is a major persuasive tool and in a bid to make ads even more persuasive, Knowles and Linn propose their third strategy, **increase source credibility**. This is operative in these ads as shown by the radiant, beautiful and charming represented participants who epitomize glamour and whose testaments of ‘**feel good in your skin**’ and ‘**unlock radiance & beauty**’ together with their physical

acts are clear credible and expertise avowals of product potency and reliability. Other Alpha Strategies of Persuasion employed here are ‘engage a norm of reciprocity’ and ‘emphasize consistency and commitment’. The former is encapsulated in the slogan ‘feel good in your skin’ while the later is subsumed in the metaphoric expression ‘unlock radiance and beauty’. This implies that as one receives feelings of goodness as gratuitous favours from product use, the act of adopting product is akin to ushering in radiance. Thus, just as keys unlock doors, product adoption unlocks beauty and radiance as seen in the represented participants. All these are persuasive chords that subtly compel the target consumer to, in the first instance, look at the ad and in the process, get pulled to digest the message and, by extension, adopt product.



DATUM 3: PRESTIGE CONNECT ME PERFUME

DISCUSSION

There are strategies employed in this ad to make it more persuasive in a bid to convince the target audience to purchase the product. These strategies employed make for increased sales. ‘**Make ads more persuasive**’ is the first strategy extended through the represented male participant whose use of product made him connected to the woman of his dreams. Thus, the iconic images and their connectedness in a world of their own are proof of the benefits of product use and their depiction makes the ad more persuasive. The second strategy, **add incentives**, finds application in the use of the slogan ‘**THE CONNECTION FRAGRANCE**’ which is a strong argument that compels purchase. Again, the hooked up images of the man and woman is an inducement for complying with the appeal to purchase product as use validates benefits. The third alpha strategy of persuasion employed in this ad is ‘**increase source credibility**’. The connected couple are strong and credible evidence of the benefits of product use as their portraiture is that of a happy couple in their own world, unperturbed by anything that unfolds before them. The fourth strategy, **provide concensus information**, is subsumed in the expression ‘for men’ which is a proof that many people are using the product. The hyperbolic slogan ‘**THE CONNECTION FRAGRANCE**’ bestrides the strategies of ‘engage a norm of reciprocity’ and ‘emphasize consistency and commitment’ as it, together with the connected couple, is a resource that obligates the target audience to make purchase and at the same time emphasize that consistency in product use would put the target in the same position of connectedness exhibited by the represented participants.



DATUM 4: PRESTIGE BOLD SYDNEY COLLECTIONS

DISCUSSION

This ad is laden with many Alpha Strategies of Persuasion which synergise to make it more compelling and attention-attracting, all in a bid to increase sales. The first strategy, **make messages more persuasive**, is projected through the represented participant whose portraiture is that of a good looking and happy male, who wears an infectious smile, with arms in the air depicting contentment from product use. Again, the ad is made more persuasive by the strength in the argument of the slogan, **'SMELL GOOD, BECOME THE BOLD VERSION OF YOURSELF'**. This statement that one who adopts product for use smells goods and becomes better is laden with ethical and emotional appeals strong enough to trigger desire to purchase. The second strategy, **add incentives**, is subsumed in the slogan **'SMELL GOOD'** which is a strong argument with the capability of inducing the target, whose aspiration is to look and feel good, to make purchase. The third strategy, **increase source credibility** so as to make ads persuasive, is employed in this ad through the depiction of the male represented participant who is, beyond doubt, happy, attractive and who exudes compelling charm, confidence and sophistication that captivate the attention of the target who clamour for all portrayed by and in the represented participant. Thus, the represented participant communicates that using the product has made him bold and better and the target is drawn by the desire to attain transformation into purchasing the product for use. The production of different shades of the Bold Sydney Spray Collections gives the **consensus information** that people of different classes and orientation are in need of the product. **Engage a norm of reciprocity** is subsumed in the slogan **'Smell Good...'** which is depicted as gain of product use with magnificent tonnes of persuasive life wires that obligate the target whose desire is to be accepted in the society to make purchase. The strategy of **emphasize consistency and commitment** is expressed using the action of the represented participant who faces the product image placed on his right and raises hands up in the air, with face looking up to the slogan. With these gestures, he invites and induces commitment in the target consumers and persuades them that consistency in product use would leave them transformed and fulfilled like him.



DATUM 5: PRESTIGE THE CHAIRMAN

DISCUSSION

The first Alpha Strategy of Persuasion, **make messages more persuasive**, is depicted in this ad using the represented participant, his level of sophistication and the metaphoric slogan **'wear your confidence with style'**, which is a strong argument laden with pulling strings that compel the target to use product and achieve sophistication. The use of the iconic image of a confident and stylish man adds to the persuasive import of the ad and also bestrides the second strategy, **add incentives**, as the aura of confidence and class radiating from the iconic image serves as potent incentive that triggers desire to purchase. The strategy of **'increase source credibility'** is projected using the portraiture of the gracious and classy man whose confidence is deducible from his posture, gait and apparels and who mirrors that Prestige Chairman Perfume is the fountain that distils all features seen on him. Thus, wearing the perfume becomes synonymous with wearing confidence with style as the iconic image epitomizes. Again, being confidently stylish becomes the **norm of reciprocity** that obligates the target to, just like the represented participant, purchase and use product. Knowles and Linn's last Alpha Strategy of Persuasion, **emphasize consistency and commitment**, is also evident in this ad. The action of the represented participant induces commitment in the target. The man is portrayed in a well tailored suit and trendy hand beads. He sits comfortably with one hand on slightly raised right knee and the other hand on the chin, wears a grimace and a look of confidence and passes the signal that product adoption and use sets the target at par with him. These actions and gestures serve as pulling strings that attract the target and invariably increase the persuasiveness of the ad as they communicate that the ultimate price for sophistication is product adoption.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study's effort has been to explore rhetoric in cosmetics ads. It hyped the notion of rhetoric as skillful deviations in language use and application with the intent of informing and transforming the attitude of target consumer towards a particular brand by convincing argumentations that are in, themselves, appealing and persuasive. This is achieved through the appellative function of language evident in the rhetorical appeals and other rhetorical devices subsumed in Knowles and Linn's Alpha Strategies of Persuasion which served as the framework upon which the research was hinged. The research indicated that rhetoric is an essential attribute of advertising which uses arguments that are creatively and skillfully crafted using convincing ingredients of persuasion. The study pointed out that

through the strategies of increasing source credibility, making messages more persuasive, engaging a norm of reciprocity and emphasizing consistency and commitment, target consumers are subtly compelled into considering a brand. The paper concludes that in the strategies of persuasion are subsumed the rhetorical appeals of logos, pathos and ethos and the rhetorical techniques (schemes and tropes) of assonance, alliteration, metaphor and hyperbole and that these composites of persuasion are employed in ads in a bid to achieve increased sales.

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