

Current Trends in Advertising Education and Professional Practice (The Nigerian Angle) Problems and Prospects

Ayozie Daniel Ogechukwu., Ph. D

*FCIM (UK), MCIM, Chartered Marketer (UK), RPA, MNIM, Department of Marketing,
The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Ogun State, Nigeria*

***Corresponding Author:** *Ayozie Daniel Ogechukwu, FCIM (UK), MCIM, Chartered Marketer (UK), RPA, MNIM, Department of Marketing, The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Ogun State, Nigeria*

ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper will be on the historical account of the development of advertising education in Nigeria. Advertising was formerly an adjunct of marketing or mass communication, before it was officially regarded as a profession, courtesy of the APCON Decree 55 of 1988. This is paper consider the Advertising Curricula in our polytechnics and universities, and professional institutions. In addition, the important issue of the relationship between the Advertising Education and the Advertising Profession will also be considered, and efforts would be made to highlight some of the current problems facing advertising education, and suggest some practical remedies.

Keywords: *Advertising Education, Advertising, Marketing, Commercial Transaction, Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON), Marketing*

INTRODUCTION

Maurice Mandel (1974) in his book on advertising, made the assertion that, of all activities, probably none is better known, widely discussed or more highly criticised worldwide than advertising. The reason being that, advertising has become the spokesperson of the world and in many Nigerian Businesses. It has become an integral part of our social and economic system and has grown over the years to assume importance both as a business activity and as a social phenomenon. It has affected both our business and the society. It is seen as a necessary evil.

Malickson and Nelson (1977) in Bonee and Arens (1982), confirmed the assertion, "whether we like it or not, advertising is all around us". An average student, worker or consumer is exposed to thousands of advertising messages, between the time he opens his eyes in the morning and clicks off the light at night. Anyone living, studying or working in the modern Nigeria is under the influence of advertising, either as a consumer, producer or as a citizen.

Everyday, we see and hear many advertisement messages, (e.g. Harp for Happiness, Shine Shine Boboo for Star Beer, Omo washes brighter and it shows, Be born again, Vote for APC, PDP,

APGA, LABOUR PARTY, Daniel or Jonathan, Buhari, Come to Jesus or Muhammed). A student either reads the newspapers, watch television or listens to radio, or walk around the streets or campus. He/She will find it impossible to avoid some forms of publicity, either it is a handbill, trade display at Oshodi, Yaba, Kano or Umuahia markets, uninvited handbills pushed through the doors inviting one to attend the programmes in the mosque, churches or to exclusive social parties. Advertising has become an integral part of the internet, especially in the social network sites of facebook, myspace, my year book, Badoo and even on our Automated Teller Machines (ATM), it is seen in our stadia and bus stops. So advertising is important both for the students of Marketing, Mass Communication, Graphic Arts, Business Administration, Engineering, Accountancy and Sciences, who are all consumers of products. To a house wife or husband, it is a source of information to guide family purchase. To a publisher of Daily, Weekly or Monthly newspaper, and magazine, or the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director or Broadcasting Station, Advertising is what pays for the printing or the station operations. To the marketer, producer and manufacturer, it is a means of talking simultaneously with millions of customers both

present and potential. Advertising is seen as the greatest teaching system and the greatest artistic force of the 20th and 21st century. (Ayozie, 2013).

What then is Advertising? In Search of a Definition.

Advertising definitions are as numerous as the number of advertisements we have on our mass media. There is yet to be a universally acceptable definition, but it permeates each area of our lives everyday. We are bombarded with it on television, newspaper, radio, magazine, internet, stadia, bus stops, billboard and poster. Permit me to ask you this question, “What then is advertising?” The commercial we all saw or heard recently readily comes to mind. But there is much more to advertising than that, it exists and is experienced by the average Nigerian.

Advertising means different things to different people. To some, advertising is a profession, (those in the Advertising Agencies or Academic Institutions) a business tool to many and a form of communication to almost everyone (Bidemi Osunbiyi, 1991). Advertising as we all know can be either good, bad, amusing, wasteful, helpful, useful, boring, deceptive, silly or can be a necessary evil (Ayozie, 1996, Ayozie 2013, 2012).

The Advertising Age Magazine (1963) in its article on the world of advertising says, that “advertising is much like electricity, we know a great deal about it and its uses, but we are not very successful in defining it or delimiting it”.

In a study of the consumer view of advertising carried out in 1974 by the 4As (The American Association of Advertising Agencies) more than half of the respondents described advertising as channel of information from the producers to consumers. More than a third of this sample of consumers, defined advertising as a form of salesmanship or persuasion. Some of them defined it as manipulation, propaganda and misleading.

Telser (1974) in his book “Advertising and the Consumer”, states that: “while the marketer or marketer sees advertising from the angle that it sells products, the advertising technicians focus on how it aids communication, which was why Ogilvy (1975) said that “I do not regard advertising as entertainment or any art form, but a medium of information”.

Bovee and Arens, in their book, Contemporary Advertising (1989), defined it as: the non-personal communication of information, usually paid for an usually identified with sponsors through the various media.

Moemeke, (1996) in Ayozie (2013, 2006) a past president of AAPN (Association of Advertising Practitioners of Nigeria) and Post-Chairman of the APCON Council, sees advertising as “messages published in newspapers, billboards, radio, television, cinema, for products and services”.

The Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) (1988, 1997) established by Decree 55 of 1988, defined advertising as a form of communication through the media, about products, services and ideas paid for by and identifiable sponsor.

Jefkins (1998) defines the subject of advertising as; the means by which we make known what we have to sell or what we want to buy.

A more widely acceptable, used comprehensive definition was provided by the American Marketing Association (AMA) which says; “advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services by an identified sponsor(s)”.

This definition has been amended by Mass Communicators, and the most striking definition provided by them says; “advertising is a group of activities aiming at, and including dissemination of information in any paid non-personal form, concerning an idea, product or service, to compel action in accordance with the intent of an identifiable sponsor.

Doghuje (1987) (Advertising in Nigerian Perspective, 1985) commenting on this definition, said “advertising is not one activity but many”. It included the very first step of research to determine the problems and prospects of a given product or service, design actual writing and placement of the advertising message in the media to the last step of measuring the effectiveness of such a message.

An analysis of the definitions given above reveal certain common characteristics inherent in the word. These properties include; **Commercial transaction motive, Mass Communication, Persuasive in intent, Unbalanced and Subjective nature and Communication in essence.**

Historical Origin of Advertising Education in Nigeria via the Marketing Education

Advertising Education until of recent when it was accorded the status of a profession through the APCON Decree of 1988, is an integral part of the marketing and management education, and mass communication education and practice.

A historical review of the development of Advertising Education reveal that it began its journey 30 years ago and emanated from the management schools. The University of Nigeria, Nsukka which pioneered the management education in Nigeria, established the College of Administration in 1961 (Nwokoye 1989). It admitted its first set of students for the Bachelor's degree programme in two departments, Business Administration and Finance in 1974/75 session. The faculty later expanded into four departments to include Accountancy, Finance, Management and Marketing. So, with the teaching of marketing as a separate courses in UNN in 1974, advertising as an important and integral part of marketing education came into being.

Nwokoye, (1989), marketing education in Nigeria, postulated that, "marketing was not initially accorded a separate status, but was taught within the B.Sc. Programme in Business Administration at the University of Nigeria, from 1961 to 1974.

Onah and Ani (1979) mentioned that of the Kaduna Polytechnic offered the Ordinary National Diploma Courses in Marketing, Purchasing and Supply which provided middle level manpower and a Higher National Diploma in Marketing, and graduated 19 students in 1974, and that no other polytechnic offered full marketing programmes before 1975. It would appear that the Kaduna Polytechnic was the first higher institution of learning in Nigeria to offer full academic programmes in marketing, and the earliest this could have started would be on the establishment of the polytechnic in 1968 (Nwokoye, 1989). The introduction of marketing education implies that advertising as a course must be taught in either the B.Sc, HND and OND Programme.

The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Ogun State, started its National Diploma Programme in Marketing under the auspices of the Business Administration Department in 1983. With the establishment of the Marketing Department in

1985, so many advertising courses were now introduced in the curricula.

The Nigerian Institute of Journalism, owned by the various media houses in Nigeria, is the only institution (although unsung) that offers courses purely in advertising. It stated its post-graduate Diploma Courses in Advertising in 1991, and APCON recognised it as a centre for the acquisition of academic knowledge in advertising NIJ was established in 1972.

Before the end of the decade of the sixties, Marketing courses were taught within programmes in Business Administration at the University of Lagos and Ahmadu Bello University, both founded in 1962. Starting with the end of the Civil War (1970) the period spanning the decade of the 1970s, up to early 80s and presently, there has been a sporadic growth of marketing and advertising education in Nigeria, in terms of institutions, programmes and enrolments. This is of course, the boom period in Nigeria Higher Education. Also, many private institutions and training centres, which includes the NIJ, ZUS Bureau Lagos, APCON Training Centres in Lagos, Abuja, Enugu and Kano, have mounted separate programmes in advertising, while others have included advertising within programmes in Marketing, Business Administration and Management.

The most important development that gave rise to the study of advertising, was the establishment of the APCON Decree 55 of 1988. The adoption in January 1988 by the National Council of Ministers of a Broad National Mass Communication Policy was a significant milestone in the birth of the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria. Various discussions which followed, articulated the relevance and leadership role of advertising in the nation's social, political and economic activities, as well as the need for recognition and regulation. The Advertising Practitioner Council of Nigeria (APCON) established by Decree 55 of 1988, was a logical outcome of the above and accords legislative recognition to advertising as a profession in Nigeria. Advertising was no longer a vocation and an all comers profession. But a unique profession just like medicine and law. The Council was inaugurated on November 14, 1989. APCON determines who the Advertising Practitioners in Nigeria are, and what standards of knowledge and skills are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered members of the

Current Trends in Advertising Education and Professional Practice (The Nigerian Angle) Problems and Prospects

Advertising Profession in Nigeria. Advertising has grown to greater height as it is recognised as a profession and not as a vocation.

APCON conducts examinations for Diplomates in Advertising which is done in 3 stages, i.e. parts 1–3. When the maiden edition of the APCON diploma examination was launched in 1993, little did APCON realise that the products of such a venture would come from the spectrum of a well bred advertising environment. The programme has witnessed a healthy upsurge since inception in June 1993. Eight students graduated in the first ceremony in 1995, and more than two hundred students have so far received the APCON Diploma. (Diplomates)

As from January 1, 2000, all persons working in advertising positions, but yet been registered by the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria were to be prosecuted on the strength of Decree 55 of 1988, as amended by Decree No. 93 of 1992, and in particular by part (IVO S. 16 of Decree 55 of 1988). It is a criminal offence punishable by law to practice advertising for gain in Nigeria without due registration by APCON. The Council also organises quarterly and annual lectures, seminars and conferences and CPD (Continuous Professional Development) programmes for all advertising practitioners, educators and students alike, both incentives in Lagos, Abuja and Enugu.

The Polytechnics, APCON and the Nigerian Institute of Journalism have been more active than the universities in pursuing advertising as an academic discipline. Of recent, the university of Nigeria in conjunction with APCON wants to establish a professorial chair, to aid the development of the advertising education.

Postgraduate programmes in Marketing and Advertising started slowly in Nigeria, but has witnessed a rapid growth. The University of Lagos, Ahmadu Bello University (1977-78) and the University of Nigeria (1978-79) were the earliest universities to offer the Master of Business Administration (MBA) Programme with specialisation in Marketing, Finance, Banking, Accounting, Human Resource Management, Personnel Management and General Management. The University of Port-Harcourt started its MBA programme in 1980/81, while the Rivers State University of Science and Technology followed suit in 1982/83. More recent, MBA programmes with

specialisation in Marketing have been mounted at the Ogun State University (1995), Edo University (1996), Delta Sate University (1996), and Enugu State University of Science and Technology (1993), and in many private and government universities.

It is necessary to mention the use of specialised and professional bodies as well as private consulting firms that offer short courses, seminars and workshops on a wide range of topics related to Advertising, Marketing and Management Education. These courses are designed to provide training; in basic concepts of Marketing/Sales, Advertising and its related fields. These includes the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria, The Nigerian Institute of Management founded in 1961, The Centre for Management Development (CMD) established in 1978. Notable Private Consultancy firms includes the Zuz Bureau in Lagos, Adcoms Limited, May Best Nigeria Limited, Ibadan and the International Management and Finance Institute, Uyo. These private institutes are making their marks in advertising education. The current establishment of the APCON Journal complete the cycle of the realization of the goal of Advertising being a profession.

OBJECTIVES OF ADVERTISING EDUCATION

For Advertising to Succeed in Nigeria, advertising education must have definite objectives so as to guide curriculum designers. It is a gladdening that one observes in the prospectus or programme description of the objectives for the Marketing programme from which the advertising programme emanates. Presently, no university or polytechnic runs a B.Sc., or ND/HND Programme in Advertising. But the objectives for the B.Sc. and HND programmes in Marketing in Nigerian universities and polytechnics includes among other things, giving the students sufficient knowledge in marketing and related subjects like advertising and to enable him/her secure employment or pursue higher studies. The objectives of the Advertising Education, although distinct from that of Marketing Education, derives its existence from the functions, objectives, and aims of APCON.

FUNCTIONS OF APCON

Section one of Decree 55 of 1988 which sets up APCON states that its functions should be as follows:

Current Trends in Advertising Education and Professional Practice (The Nigerian Angle) Problems and Prospects

- Determining who are advertising practitioners;
- Determining what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered as members of the advertising profession and reviewing those standards from time to time;
- Securing in accordance with the provisions of the decree, the establishment and maintenance of a register of practitioners and the publication from time to time of lists of those persons;
- Developing and improving advertising and increasing the efficiency of those engaged in it;
- Maintaining high standards in advertising by organising training for practitioners and prospective entrants;
- To regulate advertising through a formal code that would be adhered to by all members;
- To accord recognition to practitioners and agencies;
- Regulating and controlling the practices of advertising in all its aspects and ramifications;
- Conducting examinations in the profession and awarding certificates of diplomas to successful candidates and when appropriate and for such purpose, the council, shall prescribe fees to be paid in respect thereof, and lastly,
- Performing the other functions conferred on the council by the decree.

The organisational structure and membership cadre of APCON stipulates four grades of membership which are:

- Fellows
- Full Members
- Associate Members, and lastly
- Student Members

From the above functions of APCON, the *objectives of advertising education* should then be:

- to equip students and practitioners with the fundamental and advanced concepts in advertising;

- to promote advertising profession more effectively;
- to develop advertising as a field of studies with emphasis on local conditions;
- To promote a constant development of advertising education, learning and research in Nigeria.
- to train managers, educators/lecturers, students, practitioners, copywriters, visualizers, account executives, media planners and the like, on the concepts, theories and practicals of advertising, and for those who can develop on their own;
- to make advertising play its rightful role in the conscious social, political and economic development of Nigeria, and as an important aspect of marketing, management and business.

These objectives, aims and functions pose enormous challenges to our educational planners and curriculum designers in their quest to provide meaningful advertising education system for Nigeria.

Advertising Curricula in the Universities, Polytechnics and Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON).

Advertising Curricula as an Adjunct of Management and Marketing Studies

Since marketing education originated from management studies, and advertising education derived its life from Marketing and Mass Communication, efforts would be made to reveal the management, marketing and advertising curricula that are run at the undergraduate level. An insight into the management and marketing syllabus will provide the basis of how advertising education originated and was improved upon.

The universities run programmes that award the Bachelor's Degree (B.Sc.) in Management, Business Administration or Marketing after three or four years depending on the qualification of the student on matriculation; while the polytechnics and colleges of technology prepare students for a two year National Diploma (ND) in marketing, which may be followed by another two years of study for the Higher National Diploma. The minimum admission requirements into the university programme and for the APCON Diploma examinations are five credits in SSCE

Current Trends in Advertising Education and Professional Practice (The Nigerian Angle) Problems and Prospects

or GCE or WASC or NECO in two sittings including English language and Mathematics, while the polytechnics require four credits with specific credits in Mathematics and English language.

APCON entry requirements require an OND, HND, or Degree in any discipline from a recognised tertiary institution. Exemptions are granted to Graduates of the Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Education, who are considered for exemption from the part one courses.

The post graduate diploma course in Advertising as run by the Nigerian Institute of Journalism admits HND/B.Sc. graduates in any discipline from a recognised tertiary institution. Such a graduate must have a flair for advertising.

Minimum guide syllabus for the ND and HND programmes in Marketing and Mass Communication are prescribed by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) which appoints expert panels from the polytechnics to draw them up. There is also in addition to the minimum qualification, a one year gap between the ND and HND, during which the candidate is expected to seek relevant employment to gain practical experience. The universities on their own part show some diversity in their B.Sc. programmes as the National Universities Commission (NUC) allows each university relative freedom to design its programmes.

The typical 2 years or 4 semesters programme in Marketing in the polytechnics and 4 years or 8 semesters in the university reveal the below course contents.

The courses for the HND programme in Marketing includes the followings:

- Behavioural and Social Sciences (e.g. Managerial Economics, Social Psychology, Behavioural Aspects of Marketing).
- General Studies Courses (e.g. Use of English, General Biology, and Natural Science).
- Quantitative Methods (e.g. Quantitative Studies in Business, Computer Appreciation, Statistics, and Research Methodology).
- Business Core Courses (e.g. in Advance Course, Accounting, Managerial Accounting, Entrepreneurship Development and Small Scale Business Management).

- Marketing Concentration Courses (e.g. Marketing Communication, Sales Management, Distribution Management and Logistics, Agricultural Marketing, Industrial Marketing, International Marketing, Marketing Planning and Control, Product Development and Management, Marketing Problems and Cases. In addition, the students have to do a supervised project work, and write a report.

The new NBTE syllabus specified that students should at the National Diploma level offer courses in Business Studies, which prepares them for successful career in Marketing, Purchasing and Supply, Personnel Management, Public Administration and Cooperative Studies.

The 8 semesters or 4 years programme in Marketing for the universities contain as many as 40 courses comprising 120 units of credit, spread over four years, namely:

- General Studies Courses (e.g. English, Science, Technology and Society).
- Behavioural and Social Sciences Courses (e.g. Micro Economics, Psychology, Macro Economics).
- Quantitative Methods (e.g. Business Mathematics, Business Statistics, Computer Programming).
- Business Core Courses (e.g. Principle Courses in Accounting, Management and Marketing)
- Marketing Concentration Courses (e.g. Marketing Management, Marketing Research, etc).

For the APCON Diploma in Advertising examination; candidates are expected to pass all the below subjects divided into a three part series.

Part I. Introduction to Mass Communication, Principles of Marketing, Social Psychology, Communication Skills, Quantitative Analysis.

Part II. Principles of Advertising, Advertising copy and Layout, Advertising Production Techniques, Advertising Law and Ethics, Research Methodology.

Part III. Media Management, Campaign Planning and Execution, Advertising Management Organisation, Integrated Marketing Communication.

Advertising Education and the Advertising Profession

A simple explanation of Profession indicates that it can be a calling or a vocation, especially one that involves some branch of learning or science. Usually, it provides a code of Ethics and Conduct to guide members in their practice. Assimilation of the requisite body of knowledge or education qualifies one to practice a profession, while the challenges and demands faced by the profession dictate the substance of such education. Thus, a reversible situation exists whereby the requisite education and professional practice constantly interact (Nwokoye 1989).

The question that requires an immediate answer from the Advertising Practitioners is “what role advertising education should play in the development of the advertising profession and vice-versa?”

It is pertinent to consider the issue on whether advertising can be a profession or vocation in Nigeria. This question arises from the available information that emanates from discussion among the advertising people as there appears that underlying assumption that if advertising would be a profession, then it should resemble professions in discipline like law, medicine, banking, accountancy and marketing as observed in Nigeria and in the UK (United Kingdom). It is not then surprising that the issue of who shall be a member is a very important one. For example, should the Oshodi/Yaba mobilise advertising canvassers be members of the advertising profession, since they presumably are practising advertising. This question was aptly answered by the APCON Decree 55 of 1988, which clearly stipulates who the advertising practitioners are, and the standard of knowledge and skill expected of anybody that wants to practice advertising in Nigeria. The decree stipulates that it is a criminal offence punishable by law to practice advertising for gain in Nigeria without due registration by APCON, and without receiving the necessary knowledge and skills. The APCON journal will be in the vanguard of promoting advertising research and scholarships in Nigeria.

Functions that Constitute the Practice of Advertising

For the purposes of enforcement, the practice of advertising is described as the performance of any one or group of the following functions:

- Conceptualizing of advertising copy;
- Conceptualizing of advertising visuals/ illustrations;
- Conceptualizing of advertising audio visual;
- Production of advertising copy;
- Design and production of advertising visuals and artwork;
- Design and production of advertising print work;
- Production of advertising audio visuals;
- Planning, organisation and execution of advertising programmes and campaigns;
- Research/evaluation of advertising programmes and campaigns;
- Monitoring of advertising programmes and campaigns;
- Booking/placement of advertisements in the media;
- Planning of layout, allocation of sites, and marketing and scheduling of advertisements/ commercials in the media;
- Seeking and obtaining agency and other commissions for media bookings;
- Planning, organisation and execution of advertising education programmes;
- Teaching of advertising courses at the tertiary level;
- General research into advertising philosophy and operations;
- Planning, organisation and execution of sales promotion programmes and campaigns;
- General management of advertising function;
- Formulation of corporate advertising policies and programmes;
- Superintending over corporate advertising policies and programmes;
- Registration of advertising practitioners (APCON)
- Vetting of advertisements;
- Regulation of advertising practice (APCON)
- Making presentations and obtaining contracts for advertising accounts, and any other functions as may be decided by APCON from time to time.

Having mentioned these functions, it is necessary to know those positions that may not be held unless one acquires the advertising education or registers with APCON.

Positions That May Not be Held without Registration with APCON

- Advertising Agencies
 - Chief Executive
 - Deputy Chief Executive
 - Executive Director
 - Associate Director/General Manager (Advertising Cadre)
 - Group Head
 - Manager
 - Assistant Manager
 - Executive
 - Trainee Executive
- Outdoor Agencies
 - Chief Executive
 - Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director
 - General Manager/Associate Director (Advertising Cadre)
 - Manager Group Head
 - Executive
 - Trainee Executive
- Federal and State Governments – Ministries, Parastatals, Agencies, Uniformed Forces, etc.
 - Advertising:- Information Officer Cadre (with specific advertising functions)
 - Graphic Arts:- Graphic Arts Officer Cadre (with advertising functions)
- Local Government

Persons of the officer cadre with specified advertising functions.
- Educational Institutions (Academic)

Assistant Lecture / Graduate Assistants / Instructors grade and above (specifically assigned to teach advertising courses)
- Public and Private Enterprises
 - Advertising/Marketing
 - Marketing/Brand Executive grade and above (with specific advertising functions)
 - Marketing Service Officer (with specific advertising functions).
 - Corporate Affairs

Corporate affairs personnel of the level of officer and above (with specific advertising functions).

- Media
 - Print (Newspaper, Magazines, Publishing, Houses and Printing shops)
 - Advertisement personnel of the rank of advertisement officer and above.
 - Graphic Arts Officer grade and above involved in the design and production of advertisement.
 - Electronic (radio, television, cable /satellite)
 - Commercial personnel of the rank of commercial officer and above.
 - Graphic Arts Officer grade and above (involved in the production of commercials).

With the establishment of APCON, advertising was now recognised as a profession, a monolithic profession as seen in Banking and Accountancy.

Relationship between the Advertising Education and the Advertising Practitioner's Council of Nigeria (APCON)

APCON established in 1988, has the problem of goal aspiration. APCON is an Association that is shaping itself like the closely knit groups in banking, accountancy (CIBN – Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria, and ICAN – the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria) and marketing as seen in the UK, Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM). These groups just like advertising place enormous banners to new comers in the form of entry qualifications. But advertising is slightly different from banking and accountancy, as it admits people as associates without examinations, holders of CAM Diploma, people with Degree or HND in Marketing, Mass Communication, Graphic Arts or Advertising, NIMN (National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria) and APCON Diplomas. APCON still never tries to attract members by trying to hold out to them a sheltered professional practice protected by banners created by the Association. It is adopting the successful examination practices of the British system and the highly successful American Professional Bodies, that does not conduct admission examination into any category of members, but concentrates its energies on providing services to its members. Some APCON services includes quality publications (quarterly journals, – APCON news,) advertising journals, news magazines, books,

Current Trends in Advertising Education and Professional Practice (The Nigerian Angle) Problems and Prospects

monographs, conference proceedings, studies and reports on a wide array of National Conferences, Seminars and Workshops, and other specialised services to members, group like copywriters, agency executives, educators, media planners and students alike.

The vision the Council have for APCON just like Nwokoye had for NIMARK (1989) is that it should be the apex professional organisation in advertising, which admits members from diverse groups, but should have a hard core membership made up of advertising educators and agency directors/executives that hold advertising positions in the industry. APCON should recruit more academics into its ranks and get them more involved in its activities.

What should be the relationship between advertising education and APCON? Advertising education should provide APCON with the people from whom to draw its membership and the volunteers who will carry out its essentially scholarly activities that will deliver benefits to the generality of members. APCON on the other hand through its activities especially publication and arranging of conferences, workshops and seminars reinforces advertising education by providing valuable educational materials as the latest ideas on research and theory development in the discipline. The APCON Advertising Journal is a desirable publication that will promote advertising education in Nigeria.

Problems, Prospects and Challenges

Advertising education as presently seen today faces some problems and challenges. Some of the noticeable problems are;

- Inadequate rapport, or in most cases non existing rapport between the industry practitioners and academics. (No synergy)
- Inability of the academics to relate theory to practical as seen in the industry.
- Insufficient number of qualified and well motivated lecturers/academics to teach advertising.
- Unavailability of advertising department in any tertiary institution thereby denying students the opportunity of studying advertising as a course in the undergraduate and post-graduate level.
- Unqualified and unregistered academicians teaching advertising related courses in the tertiary institutions.

- Scarcity of relevant textbooks, teaching materials and study aids on advertising and related courses.
- Poorly defined professional status for the academicians, creating morale problems among advertising practitioners.
- Lack of awareness on advertising professions/status and qualifications in the public sector.
- Inadequate provision of opportunities for practical experience for both lecturers and students alike.
- Lack of interest in advertising education in the tertiary institutions by industry practitioner.
- Limited employment opportunities for graduates.
- Ego building by the industry practitioners thereby denying themselves the opportunity of interacting with the academics.
- Lack of interest in advertising education tertiary institutions by the industry practitioners.
- Not availing the opportunity of acquiring practical advertising education, which will make them better lecturer.
- Non-availability of advertising journal.

Most of the above problems and more are not peculiar to advertising alone, but are also found in other academic disciplines as well.

The problems of scarcity of relevant textbooks and teaching materials is serious, because since recognition was granted to advertising and since the minor inception of advertising education in Nigeria, teachers, lecturers and academicians have relied so much on foreign textbooks and journals that are marginally relevant to our peculiar environment. Only few advertising textbooks for the Nigerian environment are in circulation, and other forthcoming books in various stages of preparation will definitely see the light of the day.

Nwokoye's postulation in marketing education in Nigeria (1989) is relevant to the Advertising education, "The Nigerian environment currently does not favour writing and publishing. Our general life style is too distracting for serious writing. Printing materials are in short supply and cannot deliver high quality work. What is printed abroad cannot be imported in sufficient quantities because of lack of foreign exchange. Book piracy is thriving and the perpetrators get

Current Trends in Advertising Education and Professional Practice (The Nigerian Angle) Problems and Prospects

away lightly with the current astronomical cost of foreign exchange driving of the prices of imported books and printing materials, we are at the point where lecturers and students can no longer afford to buy books even when they are available.”

In spite of these problems, our educators/academicians should rise to the challenges and write more relevant textbooks, while our students should patronise books produced locally. The journey of a thousand mile, starts with a footstep.

Attention is also focussed on the problem of inadequate advertising lecturers, among whom a small number hold terminal qualifications in marketing, mass communication or advertising in the whole of Nigeria, we can as of now not boast of a single professor in advertising, it has accommodated lecturers and teachers whose terminal qualifications are in areas other than advertising (e.g. marketing, graphic arts and mass communication) while these people make useful contributions there are problems which according to Elliot (1986) include a weakening of the overall teaching effect due to confusion over what constitutes appropriate advertising subject matter.

Given the brain drain, the drift of Nigerian experts to foreign and even African countries, the current economic recession and the attendant harsh living conditions in Nigeria, the prospects of attracting or even retaining qualified Nigerian doctoral degree holders from abroad are very bleak. There is also that fact that the Nigerian Universities and Polytechnics cannot easily mount undergraduate, post graduate, and doctoral programmes in advertising because of poor funding, poor staff and lack of qualified advertising lecturers. Initially, the professional status of advertising was a source of concern to practitioners. Presently, that worrying aspect has been corrected as members are graded according to the qualifications, contributions and experience in the advertising industry and are allowed to use some acronyms and symbols after their names (e.g. fellows-frpa, members-mrpa, and associates-arpa). But after all these one has to realise that advertising is a unique discipline. What it tends to lose in rigidity, it gains in flexibility and in affording the practitioner the opportunity for individual creativity in solving advertising, sales and marketing problems. (Ayozie, 2012). Practitioners will be able to attain all the

professional recognition and satisfaction, by belonging to the umbrella of Advertising Association (i.e. APCON).

Also, advertising education has failed to properly provide for students industrial attachment schemes. Most of them end up doing their attachment in other industries not related to advertising. Most agencies cannot employ the attachees because of financial reasons. It is still necessary to find creative ways to provide substitutes for direct employment for students in advertising agencies or in advertising related jobs, if government's funding for direct placement cannot be re-instated.

Advertising practitioners do not relate with the advertising educations. The empire building has prevented gross fertilization of ideas. Books and articles written by the academicians are neither read or patronized by the practitioners.

Just as the accumulation of unsold commodities threatens the survival of the business of the advertiser and the marketer, the spirally number of unemployed advertising related graduates threatens the very basis of advertising education. There is need to take a critical look at the educational process from the admission of students through the curricula provisions and actual implementation to eventual graduation to see where lapses may exist. APCON and the tertiary institutions should attract the best students who are genuinely interested in studying advertising. The curricula must be responsive to needs and requirements of prospective employers of these graduates. APCON can also assist the graduates in securing a good job by establishing referral service and counselling unit to advice students on vacancies and on job hunting techniques. There should be a greater interaction between the academicians (lecturers) and the advertising practitioners. This will promote the growth of advertising education in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Advertising is a young thriving academic and professional discipline in Nigeria. Great strides are being made by APCON and by other agency executives in areas of programmes (APCON Diploma, APCON Seminars/Workshops, Bachelors, and Higher National Diploma in advertising related courses which must also be accredited by the APCON accreditation unit) students enrolment and staffing, much also needed to be done to consolidate the gains. In

the light of the above, we offer the following recommendations:

- Business schools, faculties and departments should adopt a long term view in recruiting staff to fill teaching positions, since ready-made candidates with terminal doctorates are in short supply. Bright Bachelor's degree or HND holders should be recruited as graduate assistance and higher instructors and later sent out on suitable in-service training arrangements to acquire higher degrees.
- The need to provide industrial working experience for advertising students is ever pressing. The following suggested alternatives to direct placement in industry should be considered.
 - Placing students on campus from where they commute to places or work, provided the institute is located in an industrial area to offer advertising places to students. Such students might visit the agencies on Fridays and Saturdays. This will eliminate accommodation problem for students, while reducing cost and enhancing efficiency for supervision by lecturers.
 - Supervised visits by all final year students to advertising agencies should be arranged. This will raise the awareness of the students in the advertising profession, and offer them the opportunity of interacting with the practitioners.
 - Supervised consultancy with advertising agencies and hot shops. Students can engage in free lance copywriting, canvassing for advertising space or tackle specific advertising problems. No consultancy fee is paid but the agency can provide out of pocket expenses and access to its facilities. Male and female students can equally engage in part-time modelling jobs.
- Closer interaction between the academicians and the practitioners, so that lecturers can relate theory to practice and be able to interact with the advertising practitioners.
- To further enhance advertising education and make it more relevant, opportunities should be increased for interaction between students and the teaching/staff lecturers with advertising agency practitioners by:
 - Exposing students and lecturers regularly to seminars, workshops, symposia and talks to be given by a top advertising executive from any leading advertising agency.
 - Arranging educational visits to agencies by students.
 - Working out exchange programme between lecturers and the agencies; whereby lecturers can spend short periods in the agencies and agency executives can be in residence at campus to give seminars.
- Government should assist in tackling the problem of scarcity and high prices of textbooks by:
 - Providing tax and other incentives to publishers and lecturers to stimulate the local production of books.
 - Reducing custom duties on imported textbooks and book production materials to the barest minimum. This will encourage academic research and writing.
 - Enacting stiffer penalties against book piracy.
 - Government should fund the institutions properly, and make available all tools, machines and gadgets will assist in the proper impacting of advertising education. Such things like television sets, video cassettes and film cameras must be provided.

REFERENCES

- [1] Advertising in Nigeria (Journal of AAPN, May/July 1984; Vol. 4, No. 2), Page 22 – 23.
- [2] Advertising in Nigeria (Journal of AAPN, Vol. 4, No. 2), Page 23.
- [3] Advertising Age, "World of Advertising", November 15, 1963, Page 10.
- [4] Akpala, A (1985), The Development of the Business School of the University of Nigeria in Ejiiofor, P.N. (Ed) Development of Management Education in Nigeria Lagos. Centre for Management Development and Nigerian Association of Schools of Management Education and Training, Page 231 – 240.
- [5] American Marketing Association (1969); AMA Board Approved Advertising Definition quoted by permission from Ralphs, S. Alexander (AMA Definitions)
- [6] APCON News (1997); A Quarterly Newsletter of the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria, Vol. 5, No. 1, Page 1 – 7, April, 1997

Current Trends in Advertising Education and Professional Practice (The Nigerian Angle) Problems and Prospects

- [7] APCON News (1997), A Quarterly Newsletter of the APCON, Vol. 5, No. 2, Page 2, December, 1997.
- [8] APCON News (1996), A Quarterly Newsletter of the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria, Vol. 4, No. 2, "Sanction Unregistered Practitioners", August, 1996.
- [9] Ayozie, D. O. (1993) A Dissertation on the Award of Post-Graduate Diploma in Advertising, Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ), Lagos.
- [10] Ayozie, D. O. (1993) Unpublished Seminar Paper, Advertising Education in Nigeria (NIJ), Lagos.
- [11] Ayozie, D. O. (2013) Principles of Advertising and Public Relations, Danayo Inc. Coy, Ilaro Nigeria.
- [12] Ayozie, D. O. (2006) Successful Advertising in Nigeria, Jombright Publishers, Lagos.
- [13] Ayozie, D. O. (2012) Ethics of Marketing Communication in Nigeria. The Nigerian Banker Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria, Lagos, Nigeria.
- [14] Courtland Boree and William F. Arens, Contemporary Advertising (Homewood Richard D. Irwin Inc. 1982) Page 14.
- [15] David L. Maliekson and John W. Nason (1977) How to write the kind that works (New York: Charles Scriber's Sons, Page XVII.
- [16] Dohudge Chris (1996) Advertising in Nigeria. APCON news 1998, Advertising in Nigeria Perspective (1985) APCON News, Lagos Nigeria
- [17] Elliot, C. (1986) "Non Business Doctorates are Diluting Marketing Education. Marketing Educator Vol. 5, No. 1, Winter Chicago, American Association March 1, Page 1.
- [18] Jefkins Frank (1998) Public Relations Practice, Butterworth Heinemann Middlesex, UK.
- [19] Lesper, G. Telser (1974): Advertising are Consumer, University Press, N. Y., Page 49.
- [20] Michael L. Ray (1982): Advertising and Communication Management, Prince Hall Inc., USA, Page 17.
- [21] Moemeke, I. S. (1982): Commercial Broadcasting in Nigeria – Its History and Development in Advertising in Nigeria, Vol. 2, No. 3, Page 23.
- [22] Nwokoye, N. G. (1989): Marketing Education in Nigeria, Marketing Journal, Vol. 2, No. 5, January – March 1985, Page 13 – 23.
- [23] (1987a) – Marketing Education During Economic Recession. A Survey of Marketing Managers, Marketing Journal, Vol.1, No.3, Nigerian Marketing Association, April – June 15 – 17, 14.
- [24] Okegbo, C. (1990): Advertising and Public Relations Communications Research Projects in Association with the Department of Mass Communication, UNN.
- [25] Osunbiyi, B. (1991): Essentials of Modern Advertising Jice Communications, Lagos, Nigeria.
- [26] Onah, J. O. and Ani, E. O. (1979): Marketing Education and Training in Nigeria, in Oha J. O. (Ed. Marketing in Nigeria, London, Cassel), Page 205 – 223.
- [27] Ogilvy David (1975) in Okigbo C. (1990) Advertising and Public Relations Communications Research Projects in Association with Department of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN).

Citation: Ayozie Daniel Ogechukwu. "Current Trends in Advertising Education and Professional Practice (The Nigerian Angle) Problems and Prospects". *Journal of Advertising and Public Relations*, 2(1), 2019, pp. 1-12

Copyright: © 2019 Ayozie Daniel Ogechukwu. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.