

**ANALYSING VISUAL CULTURE IN SELECTED
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH ADVERTISEMENTS IN NIGERIA:
A CASE STUDY**

by

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PENTECOSTAL CHURCH ADVERTISEMENTS IN NIGERIA:
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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor
of Technology: Language Practice, Department of Media, Language and
Communication, Faculty of Arts and Design, Durban University of
Technology

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DECLARATION

I, **Grace Temiloluwa AGBEDE** hereby declare that the thesis entitled "*Analysing visual culture in selected Pentecostal church advertisements in Nigeria: A case study*" is my own work and has never been submitted for any other degree at any other institution. I further declare that all the sources cited have been duly acknowledged.

Signature

Date

ABSTRACT

Using a multimodal framework, I analyse and appraise discursive and visual elements used in billboard and poster advertisements by Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. Pentecostalism is one of the most rapidly growing movements in Nigeria with approximately 40 million adherents. It is also amongst the most radical denominations which divorces followers from the cultural and spiritual ties which bind them to African societies. Some scholars believe that the phenomenal growth of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria poses a challenge to mainline churches in the country. This is why it is important for academic studies to be undertaken to investigate this movement's strategies of disseminating the gospel.

The study employs a qualitative case-study approach to examine the language (written and visual) of church advertisements in Nigeria. Since Christianity is a belief system based on Biblical teachings, this study also investigates how the Christian belief system manifests itself in the language of advertising. Purposive sampling was employed, and data were collected from posters and billboards. The linguistic and visual elements of the selected data were analysed in relation to the cultural context of church advertising in an attempt to determine the role of such sociocultural influences on communication.

The study shows that Pentecostal churches employ different strategies to convey their messages to target audiences. These include the use of extensive visual multimodal techniques; brevity (fewer words and more visuals); prophet-centrism; problem-solving as attraction; Biblical allusion; use of sociolinguistic features; the exclusion of women as advertisers; and the use of computer language.

Importantly, as a new contribution to knowledge, the study proposes an Afrocentric model for analysing visual culture in church advertising – a model which is a first of its kind. The Bible and Jesus Christ, as focal points

for Christian belief, constitute the foundation of church advertising. Other strategies for advertising derive from this foundation, although each advertisement differs depending on how each church and/or man of God interprets specific Biblical teachings.

DEDICATION

- I dedicate this work to Almighty God from whom only all knowledge flows.
- A special dedication also goes to my parents whose words of encouragement kept me going.
- To my siblings, Tope, Tayo and Layo, thank you for being my most supportive cheerleaders.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

MDA	:	Multimodal Discourse Analysis
TV	:	Television
CDA	:	Critical Discourse Analysis
RCCG	:	Redeemed Christian Church of God
MFM	:	Mountain of Fire and Miracles
CAC	:	Christ Apostolic Church
ICT	:	Information and Communication Technology

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background for the study, which includes the mission of the project, the methodology, as well as the theoretical positions underlining the study.

Concomitantly, academic sources which have contributed to the tenets of this research are discussed and located within the parameters of the study. The chapter further presents the aims and objectives, statement of problem, and research questions pertaining to the study. The significance of the study is also discussed. The chapter proceeds by discussing an overview of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria.

1.1 Background to the Study

The study adopts a multimodal framework to analyse visual elements in Pentecostal church advertisements in Nigeria. It analyses how linguistics and visual elements influence meaning in selected advertisements with a specific focus on billboards and posters in Nigeria.

Many studies have examined the relationship between visuality, discourse and advertising, but the researcher is not aware of any studies which focus specifically on church advertising in Nigeria. Multimodality is a social semiotic approach to visual communications which provides a toolkit for the analysis of advertisements, magazine pages, covers, images, and photographs, amongst others (Machin 2007).

In studies which are closely related to Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA), scholars of visual culture such as Mitchell (2011) argue that the way we see/visualise the world is, in many ways, influenced by our social environment, while at the same time our social world has an impact on the things we see and the way in which we see them. This assertion implies that communities have particular visual cultures (ways of seeing) which shape (and are shaped by) the socio-cultural milieu of such communities.

The notion of visual culture therefore presupposes a connection between ways of seeing (visuality) and culture. Thus, this study is predicated on the assumption that the advent of modern technologies has brought about a visual turn wherein communication has become predominantly visual as opposed to text-oriented. As such, communication and/or advertising media now resort to embedding meaning in visuals rather than in text.

Visual culture deals with meaning negotiation, which is one of the foci of multimodality. While visuality is an important component of advertising in the contemporary world, culture is also an important part of both language and advertising. Hence, a multimodal approach becomes crucial as it focuses on the realisation of meaning from more than one semiotic code.

Freedman (2015: 28) stipulates that “many of the images viewers encounter today have the power to change people’s minds”. This is to say that the culture of seeing has taken a strong hold in modern society. Hence, it is important to conduct academic research on visual representations. The importance of this in advertising is that most advertisements blend language, visual images, and other communicative elements, and it is in

this regard that the study undertakes a multimodal analysis of Pentecostal church advertisements.

The justification for this study is thus that research has paid little attention to the intertwined relationship between society, visual culture and advertising. This study is therefore an attempt to examine the intersection between visuality, language and society.

Anyasor (2018) states that church advertising plays a central role in changing the attitudes of target consumers and has positively impacted church growth in terms of membership size and finances. Anyasor (2018) further intimates that churches build their images through mass media channels such as television/cable television access, word-of-mouth and newspapers.

Over the last 20 years, Nigeria has seen a significant growth in both new and existing churches, particularly those of a charismatic Pentecostal orientation. Most of these churches preach messages that resonate with the needs of their congregations (both material and spiritual), which probably explains their popularity in recent years.

Pentecostal churches often profess that their mandate is to win souls for the kingdom of God; as such most of them have a strong emphasis on soul winning, with a bias towards quantity (numbers) as opposed to quality. Asamoah-Gyadu (2005) defines Pentecostalism as that stream of Christianity which emphasises personal salvation in Christ as a transformative experience brought about by the Holy Spirit.

Unlike traditional churches which emphasise transformation of the inner man, charismatic churches target both material and spiritual prosperity. Asamoah-Gyadu (2005) further argues that pneumatic phenomena, such as healing and prophesy, continue to be evidenced in Pentecostal church services.

Hence, their preaching tends to focus on the gospel of prosperity, giving and receiving, as well as instant miracles. Nigerian Pentecostal churches such as TB Joshua's Synagogue Church of all Nations have attracted believers and admirers from all over the world because of their focus on human health and welfare.

In fact, the tragic collapse of one of TB Joshua's church buildings in Lagos (September 2014) saw many casualties from different countries across the world, including South Africa. Pentecostal churches in Nigeria are often led by charismatic men of God who command respect and adoration from their followers. However, the rapid growth of these churches is not only hinged on individual charisma and the preaching of contextually relevant messages but also creative advertising which draws upon both the strengths of the churches and the needs of target audiences.

In contemporary society, visuals have become so ubiquitous that some scholars, notably Mitchell (2011) and Mirzoeff (1998), have pronounced the advent of a pictorial turn to replace what structuralist thinkers refer to as a linguistic turn. Language, as a means of communication, is used differently by different people, and for different purposes. The same can be said about visuals. Advertising is a form of communication which relies on a social context to develop culturally-relevant advertisements.

Karimova (2014: 2) states that advertising can be “considered as an art/act of persuasion and subtle manipulation – as it involves the usage of several linguistic and non-linguistic devices to attract consumers”. The importance of language, verbal or nonverbal, in advertising can thus not be overemphasised. The visual aspect of advertising is important because advertisements are meant to be consumed visually. Mitchell (2011) recognises the power and efficacy of visual images not only as tools of manipulation, but also as autonomous sources of meaning.

This research focuses on visual advertisements by Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. While visuals influence the way in which we see our world, our world (society) also influences the things we see. Omotoye (2007) notes that over the years, Christianity has been embraced by many people. As a result, churches have recently started advertising their services through different media channels. In fact, some can be argued to have a good blend of African tradition combined with their interpretation of Christianity.

For example, Omotoye (2007: 335) states that “The Aladura Churches combined the two fundamental elements of Christianity and African culture, in a way that advertised their Christian intentions without undermining their African credentials”. This makes a relevant case for why visual culture has become prominent in advertising and thus worthy of academic research. There is, of course, a presupposition that advertisements are created to suit a particular culture.

The linguistic and visual elements of the selected data were analysed in relation to the cultural context of church advertising in an attempt to

underpin sociocultural influences in communication. Most of the available studies on advertising have focused on textual messages in advertising; however, this study is different because it focuses on visuals, particularly the way in which they have become an integral part of advertising communication.

While the tendency in previous scholarship has been to see visuals as playing a complementary and supportive role in advertising, this study argues that in the contemporary “hypervisual” world, the image not only complements, but also replaces the text. Therefore, this study contributes to new knowledge by developing a framework which recognises the primacy of visuals and visual communication in advertising.

Akanbi and Beyers (2017), in a study on Nigerian Pentecostal churches, note that these churches play an important role in motivating and influencing the socio-political and economic life of people within communities. They go further to argue that religion exerts a cultural influence so deep that it has, in effect, become a defining factor of the world’s major civilisations.

They also submit that religion, and “Pentecostalism” in particular, influence society by placing emphasis on health and wealth as well as nation building. Akanbi and Beyers’ (2017) argue that in promoting their religious stances, Nigerian Pentecostal Churches embrace different communicative channels, such as flyers, magazines, novels, newspapers, radio and television to convince Nigerians of their theological and scriptural power.

The study employs a qualitative case-study approach to examine the language (written and visual) of church advertisements in Nigeria. Since Christianity is a religious belief system, this study also investigates how this belief system manifests in the language of advertising. Purposive sampling was employed, and data were collected from posters and billboards.

In this study, I attempt a multi-modal analysis of advertisements from a perspective which recognises that they are situated within a cultural context, and that each culture has a way of seeing and visually representing the world. Barrett (2003: 12) notes that a knowledge of the society in which we live and how it functions has its own rewards.

Since we now live in a world of visuals, we may no longer interpret visuals without taking cognisance of the society which produces them. Hence, the study of church advertisements would benefit from a theoretical perspective which recognises the overlapping relationship between multimodality and visual culture, since multimodality encompasses multiple means of communication.

Machin and Mayr (2012: 6) also argue that a “linguist might be able to provide a thorough and revealing analysis of the language used in an advertisement, but much of the meaning in this advertisement might be communicated by visual features”.

Unlike most studies which have examined the language of advertising from a linguistic perspective, this study is broader in perspective, as it investigates the interplay between visibility, language and advertising (visibility, vision and appearance) within a specific social/cultural context.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The study aims to conduct an appraisal of visual culture in Pentecostal church advertisements using the multimodality theoretical approach. To achieve this aim, the objectives pursued in this study are to:

- i. Examine how multimodality manifests in visual features of advertising;
- ii. Explore the influence of (visual) culture on church advertising; and
- iii. Create an Afrocentric model of visual culture in church advertising.

1.3 Statement of Problem

With the emergence of new technologies, societies are gradually influenced and shaped by visual culture, which makes it necessary to examine how visual culture intersects with advertising messages. Duncum (2015a) also acknowledges a shift in contemporary cultural life, which is increasingly visual.

Duncum (2015b: 252), however, further observes that studies are yet to fully prove that visual culture involves more than the perceptual system of sight and more than visual images as a communicative mode, but as a way of seeing which is influenced by society. Thus, the overarching problem this study seeks to investigate is the relationship between visual culture (i.e. culture as it is represented visually) and language in advertising.

The study is premised on the assumption that advertisements are located within cultures, and in order to understand them one must not only understand the language of advertising but also the milieu which produces

advertisements. In this study, the researcher analyses Nigerian Pentecostal church advertisements while also focusing on the multimodal factors related to the production of such advertisements.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What are the multimodal features of visual culture in advertising?
- ii. How does the visual culture of selected communities in Nigeria influence church advertising?
- iii. In what way is Nigerian Pentecostal church advertising different from traditional Eurocentric church advertising?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Firstly, there is a relationship between advertising and the patronage or acceptability of a product, service, organisation or idea. Thus, such a product, service, organisation, idea will be better patronised or accepted if its advertising is effective. The study examines the intercourse between multimodality and visual culture in advertising.

There are many approaches to advertising, but this study focuses on the visuality of the language of advertising. Although audio advertising (for example via radio or word of mouth) has its advantages which differ from country to country, visual advertisements have some indices which make them more effective, especially in a hyper-visual world.

This study considered these indices in the light of selected advertisements. The study also contributes new ideas to the existing literature on multimodality and visual culture. Current studies on visual culture depend

on Eurocentric frameworks which are generally applicable to the West. In this research, I work towards creating an Afrocentric model of the intercourse between visuality, language and advertising in African countries, with a focus on Nigeria.

1.6 Pentecostalism in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective

Christianity in Nigeria dates to the fifteenth century when Portuguese missionaries attempted to Christianise the people of Benin and Warri (Ogunrinade and Ogbole 2013: 122). Although, Christianity did not appeal so much to Nigerians at the time, Nigerians have so far accepted the religion that it is now one of the most popular in Nigeria. Just as there are many churches in Nigeria, there are also many followers.

Since Pentecostalism is the focus of this study, I discuss some of its characteristics and teachings within the Nigerian context which, in turn, serve as a background to forthcoming chapters. Authors have contributed to the domain of Pentecostalism, mainly from a theological perspective. Warner (2012) posits that Pentecostalism is one of the most rapidly growing movements in Nigeria, with approximately 40 million adherents; it is also amongst the most radical denominations in divorcing followers from the cultural ties which bind them to their communities.

There is a phenomenal growth in Pentecostal churches in Nigeria with the argument that the rapid development of such churches has now created a challenge for mainline churches in the country. Diara and Onah (2014: 395) also admit that the bid to survive the landslide progress made by the Pentecostal churches at the expense of the membership of mainline churches in Nigeria has left most mainline churches with seemingly no

alternative but to imitate those factors which have enhanced the exceptional growth of the Pentecostal churches.

Diara and Onah (2014) identify that there have been different terminologies used to describe Pentecostal churches over the years, such as schismatic movements, break-away groups, and separatist churches, amongst others. These descriptions are hinged on the fact that these “sects have split away from or sprung up in relative independence of the older mission churches”, (Uzoho 2000: 21) often attracting not only the young but also adult adherents (Oniya 2002).

Oniya further explains that the establishment of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria is a rapid process, many of which are “mushroom churches” founded on selfish motives of material gain or as a result of conflicts/disagreements on vital issues of doctrine or conflicting individual perceptions.

Pentecostal churches are in most cases the outcome of separation of groups of members from the orthodox or mainline churches, such as the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches.

Insinuations have been made that Pentecostal churches in Nigeria became prominent after Nigerian independence in 1960, as there are no records of a Pentecostal church existing before then. Diara and Onah (2014: 396) put it succinctly:

...the political independence encouraged religious independence in the country, giving rise to a situation whereby the strong tie of membership of the mainline churches was loosened due to their loose

attitude to Bible reading as opposed to the Roman Catholic Church which restricted Bible reading to the priests. Consequently, some Christians began to see themselves more as individual Christians than as part of the corporate body, the church. Hence, the beginning of new independent Christian groups with evangelical and Pentecostal persuasions, most of which turn around and become churches later.

Put differently, the origin of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria can be traced to a rift which occurred in the missionary churches in the nineteenth century when Africans felt that they were being side-lined. With time and this rift serving as a background, many Pentecostal churches sprang up. Some of the earlier prophets of these churches were Moses Tunolase Orimolade of Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Joseph Ayodele Babalola of Christ Apostolic Church, and Samuel B. J. Oshoffa of Celestial Church of Christ (Owoeye 2006). Nowadays, many Pentecostal churches are seen everywhere, and they believe strongly in the use of prayer and faith for healing.

Gabriel (2015: 67) argues that the offshoot of these churches is essential as they are a great source of inspiration to Christians and have a great impact on the spread of the gospel. Gabriel makes a strong case for the Pentecostal churches in that most of them are familiar with the plight of Nigerians and are at home with the cultural setting of the people. Today, Pentecostals are known for amazing testimonies of wondrous works of God; their messages on prosperity tend to give hope and succour to a vast number of toiling Nigerians (Rotimi, Nwadiakor and Ngwucha 2016).

1.7 Organisation of Thesis

Chapter One: Introduction

This is the introductory part of the research, which contains the aim of study, background to the study, problem statement and research questions.

Chapter Two: Multimodality and Visual Culture – The Relevance and Interface

This chapter presents a critical discussion on the conceptual inclinations which guide this study, namely multimodality and visual culture.

Chapter Three: Complexities of Advertising – A Review of Literature

This chapter presents a review of literature relevant to the study, mainly from the perspective of advertising. Advertising is discussed in general and narrowed down to Pentecostal advertising.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

This chapter deals with the research design, method, data collection, data analysis and sampling strategy.

Chapter Four: Presentation of Data and Analysis

The fourth chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of selected church advertisements.

Chapter Five: Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings of the study, and recommendations for future research of a similar nature and some concluding points are noted.

1.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have created a backdrop for this project. A short explanation of the intentions of the study was examined. The objectives, research questions, statement of the problem, and significance of the study were discussed. The conceptual inclinations were also introduced and foregrounded within the objectives of the study.

Importantly, the concept of Pentecostalism is given a historical perspective, particularly from the Nigerian context. In the next chapter, I extensively discuss the conceptual inclinations of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

MULTIMODALITY AND VISUAL CULTURE: THE RELEVANCE AND INTERFACE

2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter presented a general introduction to this work. This chapter discusses multimodal discourse analysis in detail with relation to the notion of visual culture and its relevance in advertising. Scholarly works on multimodality and visual culture are explored and discussed. I attempt a clear distinction of the two concepts in an integrated manner with the intention of solidifying the two theories within the scope of advertising. Following separate discussions on multimodality and visual culture, I combine the two concepts by discussing their influence and impact on advertising and *vice versa*.

2.1 Multimodal Discourse Analysis: A Discussion

This section discusses the role of Multimodal Discourse Analysis as a conceptual framework in this study. The first section explains discourse analysis (DA) as the foundation for MDA. Consequently, a brief history of MDA follows and then a discussion of MDA from scholarly perspectives in the discipline. I also explain key concepts in MDA before presenting the theoretical framework, which is based on Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) visual framework.

2.1.1 Discourse Analysis

According to Brown and Yule (1983), language serves two purposes, which are interactional and transactional. On one hand, language performs an

interactional purpose when it is used to create, maintain or cement social relationships. This usually takes place in non-institutional settings where discourse participants are free to use language to share information or ideas without any inhibition.

On the other hand, language performs a transactional purpose when it is used to transact business, usually in an institutionalised setting. Power relations, institutional rules and other formal regulations which guide conversation are usually regulated by the communication that takes place in such settings. Therefore, discourse participants are bound to abide by the rules regulating the use of language amongst members of an institution.

Brown and Yule (1983: 1) define discourse analysis as “the analysis of language in use”. This shows that discourse analysis focuses on how language users deploy linguistic elements to fulfil communicative purposes. By implication, discourse analysis deals with the use of language to perform daily interactions or transactions.

Similar to the definition above, discourse analysis has been referred to as “an attempt to study the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversation exchanges or written texts” (Stubbs 1983: 1). Reflecting on Stubbs’ definition, discourse analysis not only covers both spoken and written texts, but also studies how language is organised.

In the organisation of these linguistic resources, elements are woven together based on regulated norms and not haphazardly. Therefore, language must be systematically arranged before it performs its function of

meaning conveyance effectively. It is only when this is done that language will perform either an interactional or transactional purpose.

In their own opinion, Jaworski and Coupland (2001) refer to discourse analysis as a discipline which describes and interprets meaning, making and understanding meaning through the critical analysis of ideology and access to meaning systems and discourse networks. This definition suggests that whatever people say or write often has embedded ideological stances, which must be understood by the listener or reader before meaning negotiation is complete. In addition, this definition tends towards critical discourse analysis because of its focus on the ideology embedded in whatever the language users say or write.

Apart from the above, discourse analysis deals with how language users make sense of what is read from texts or contained in discourses, how they understand what speakers or writers mean, how they understand and differentiate connected discourse from jumbled or incoherent utterance, and how they successfully participate in conversations at different points (Brown and Yule 1983).

This definition opines that discourse analysis deals with coherence in the use of language to achieve a particular purpose. The definition is similar to the ones given earlier. Based on all these definitions, discourse analysis rests on how conversations are presented, understood and interpreted between or among language users. Therefore, the more language users understand it, the better they will be able to communicate within society.

Brown and Yule (1983: 8) also opine that discourse analysis is not restricted to a particular approach because it operates at an intersection of disciplines. In other words, it has borrowed leaves from other fields of study like pragmatics, syntax, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics. In view of this exposition, discourse is tagged as a dependent discipline.

Martin (2001: 35) believes the goal of discourse analysis is to “build a model that places texts in their social contexts and looks comprehensively at the resources which both integrate and situate them”. Consequently, discourse analysis does not only consider the coherence in the presentation of utterances to produce meaning, but also situates texts in their social contexts.

Situating texts in their various social contexts determines what the speakers or writers mean by the texts and what meaning the listeners or readers will give to the texts. Without an understanding of the meanings of the texts, it will be difficult to assume that such texts would be useful.

2.1.2. From Discourse Analysis to Multimodal Discourse Analysis: A Historical Perspective

The word “discourse” originates from the Latin word “*discursus*” which means running to and from (Rezvan, Azizmohammadi, and Nayebi 2014). However, scholars prefer the French usage – *discours* – which has been argued to deal more with language use. Blommaert (2005) explains that discourse “comprises all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural and historical patterns and developments of use”. Cameron and Panovic (2014: 3) view discourse as language in use – it is a form of social practice in which language plays a central role.

Discourse Analysis has however been found to be ineffective in dealing with several meaning-making modes. Van Han (2014: 156) argues “Discourse Analysis (DA) does not put much emphasis on speaker’s intention and on the relationship across the utterances from diverse meaning-making environments.” This weakness has contributed to new conceptual ideologies such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA). While CDA focuses on issues of power/powerlessness in discourse, MDA is a social semiotic approach to visual communications, which provides a tool kit for the analysis of visual compositions such as advertisements, magazine pages and covers, and photographs (Machin 2007).

Given the nature of this study, I adopted the MDA approach as it connects more with issues of visual communications considering (Machin 2007). Multimodal discourse analysis, simply referred to as multimodality, is a theory of communication or linguistic analysis which originates in social semiotics. Multimodality is easier to understand when read together with semiotics. According to Chandler (1994: 8), “semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as ‘signs’ in everyday speech, but of anything which ‘stands for’ something else”. This definition indicates that semiotics goes beyond mere signs but covers whatever members of a speech community can use amongst themselves as a means of meaning conveyance and interpretation.

According to Mwelwa (2015: 27), multimodal discourse analysis “focuses on how meaning is made through the use of multiple modes of communication as opposed to just language”. Considering this definition in the light of Chandler’s (1994) definition of semiotics, it is clear that multimodality is a social semiotic system. In addition to this, multimodality

is also a combination of different modes coming together to enhance meaning generation and attribution amongst members of a speech community.

Semiotic resources have been defined as the “actions and artifacts used in communication. As such, the verbal, visual and sound semiotics that constitute the blend are then read and analysed as text” (Mwelwa, 2015: 27). The blend here vividly brings in the idea of multimodality, as there are different aspects or approaches combined.

Considering the development of multimodality, Perniss, Ozyurek and Morgan (2015: 3) opine that “more recently, attention has shifted to an interest in understanding the extent to which affordances of the visual modality may give rise to similar representations by signers and gesturers”. This indicates that instead of using verbal language alone, members of different speech communities now use signs.

I should note that such signs are not used or developed to replace verbal language but are developed to accompany verbal language. It is in the analysis and/or study of these nonverbal accompaniments that multimodality takes strong hold.

The concept of multimodality was developed as an extension to discourse analysis. For instance, Hodge and Kress (1998) have extended studies from language to other semiotic systems (or modes). They extend and adapt social semiotics across a range of modes, leading to multimodality. In their study, they affirm that different modes other than language can be

adapted for communication. When these modes are used, they may complement, replace, reiterate and/or reinforce verbal communication.

Apart from Hodge and Kress (1998), Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) have also contributed to the development of multimodality. They have done this by conceiving what has come to be known of as visual grammar or visual metafunction. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) have extended the Hallidayan concept of language metafunctions to generate what has been called visual metafunction (Mwelwa, 2015).

“Multimodality has taken ideas from linguistics that are theoretically transportable to other modes, such as turn taking, coherence, composition, and it has explored the currency of these in relation to the particularities of other modes” (Jewitt 2013: 252). Snyder (2010: 1) maintains that multimodal discourse analysis is the study of the “intersection and interdependence of various modalities of communication within a given context”. For O’Halloran (2012: 1), multimodal discourse analysis extends the study of language to the study of language in combination with other resources, such as images, colours, scientific symbolism, gestures, action, music and sound.

Considering the entry point of multimodality from the perspective of turn taking, coherence, composition and the likes, it is clear that multimodality is an offshoot of discourse analysis. This explains why it has been tagged multimodal discourse analysis. Accordingly, multimodality deals with how visual and verbal texts are used to project certain ideologies between a source and a destination in a communicative situation.

Being socially occurring modes, multimodality deals with how visual choices are made by language users, how such choices are used in communicating meaning and how the recipients of the modes interpret the encoded meanings. Apart from this, the effects of the chosen mode also go a long way in affecting how meaning is shared.

According to Jewitt (2013: 250), “multimodality is an interdisciplinary approach drawn from social semiotics that understands communication and representation as more than language and attends systematically to the social interpretation of a range of forms of making meaning”. This implies that multimodality does not focus attention on a single mode of linguistic analysis, but on a combination of different modes.

Multimodality collects and analyses data which have visual, aural, verbal, and other forms of qualities as means of meaning generation and attribution. This means that it combines different methods to bring out qualities that lie beyond the verbal or linguistic level.

Cheng and Liu (2014) note that multimodality creates a paradigm shift in the way linguists use linguistic resources or tools for analysis. As such, multimodality “embodies various resources or modes (including language, image, music, gesture and architecture) which are on the strength of sensory modalities (such as visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic)...the key focus is on the equal stress of both linguistic (verbal) and non-linguistic (visual, aural and other) semiotic resources” (Cheng and Liu, 2014: 193).

The quotation above has some implications. The first is the fact that an analyst does not focus on the use of a single mode for their analysis. So,

different modes must be used. The second implication is that the modes are assessed on the strength of sensory modalities. Hence, the analyst must conduct a proper blend of the various modes. The third implication is that equal attention must be paid to both linguistic and non-linguistic resources before it can be said that someone is conducting a multimodal discourse analysis.

Multimodality believes that language or any other meaning-making mode is regulated by socially acceptable conventions instead of a particular set of rules. This implies that culturally and mutually shared opinions and conventions determine communication. Consequently, meaning conveyance is not based on whether society has passed certain rules, but on the fact that members of a speech community have consistently been using certain codes to communicate with one another.

Apart from the points above, a multimodal discourse analyst cannot restrict themselves to the use of a single theory. This is because such a theory will not be able to cater for all the different modalities contained in the chosen or selected text. Hence, the analysis will not be adequate or comprehensive enough to justify the use of multimodality.

According to Jewitt (2013: 251), there are three “interconnected theoretical assumptions that underpin multimodality”. The first assumption is that although language is often generally taken to be the most significant mode of communication, both speech and writing are also parts of a multimodal ensemble.

Accordingly, speech, writing and other modes are important in multimodality. According to Norris (2004), multimodality goes beyond the notion that language always plays the central role in interaction. Instead, all other modes, such as visual and aural, contribute immensely to meaning making. Their importance in meaning negotiation between the source and the target can thus not be overemphasised.

The second assumption central to multimodality and identified by Jewitt (2013: 251) is that “all modes have, like language, been shaped through their cultural, historical and social uses to realise social functions as required by different communities”. This indicates that in the way that language operates and performs its functions based on its acceptability by members of a speech community, all modes in multimodality operate in a similar way.

Thus, historical and social uses of multimodality determine its acceptability and functions. Besides this, use by either the entire speech community or a section thereof establish the modes or functions of multimodality applicable. In addition, each mode has a specific meaning potential, effectiveness or semiotic resources, and this depends on how they are used.

The third assumption central to multimodality deals with the fact “that people orchestrate meaning through their selection and configuration of modes. Thus, the interaction between modes is significant for meaning making” (Jewitt 2013: 251). When people communicate, different modes are combined to pass messages across; hence, the selection and configuration of modes determines meaning selection and understanding.

Despite the fact that selection of mode is often done intentionally, there are times where it may be done unintentionally. Whether the selection is intentional or not, it has great impact on meaning conveyance. On the one hand, when the selection as well as configuration of mode is appropriate, it leads to effective communication. On the other hand, meaning negotiation may be easily hampered when the selection as well as configuration of modes is inappropriate.

Noteworthy also is that multimodality cuts across several other areas of linguistic analysis. For instance, it is related to pragmatics if one considers the idea of the multimodal communicative act. According to van Leeuwen (2005: 121), a multimodal communicative act is an act “whose illocutionary force comes about through the fusion of all the component semiotic modes: dress, grooming, facial expression, gaze, gesture”.

This implies that the multimodal communicative act does a thorough blend of different communicative modes. However, all the modes are mostly visual in nature. This, however, does not imply that audio cannot accompany the modes. van Leeuwen (2005: 122) asserts that “the linguistic features of speech acts combine with other, non-linguistic and contextual features to create multimodal communicative acts”.

Some questions have been considered pertinent to the analysis of multimodality. Answers to the said questions help in social semiotic multimodal analysis of whatever text a linguist embarks upon. The questions are as follows: Which modes are at work here? What is their relative functional load? What is the motivated association of a given form

to a given meaning? Whose interests does it reveal? What identity features are projected on the text's author and addressees? Who is given power/freedom? (e.g., readers/addressees, in designing their own reading path, or the author?) And what does this all indicate in terms of social relations, values and ideologies? (van Leeuwen 2005: 122).

The use of a certain colour and colour palette or a font type, like the selection of different modalities in images (e.g. as photo-realistic or abstract) also carry certain meanings which are socially shaped and vary across cultures. That is, the use of all modal resources is principled and modal resources have meaning potentials associated with the history of their past uses (Adami 2016: 25).

The first question deals with identifying the modes that are at work in a particular communicative context. The modes at work will determine the meaning. The next question deals with the relative functional load of the modes. The functional load of the modes, although relative, also determines their meaning. Another question looks at the association between the selected mode and the meaning it generates.

The question of whose interests the modes reveal, as well as the projected identity of both encoder and decoder, should also be answered. Apart from the questions explained above, other pertinent questions must also be addressed before multimodal analysis can be successfully performed.

2.1.3 Key concepts in Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Jewitt (2013) has identified some key concepts in multimodality. The concepts are: mode; semiotic resource; materiality; modal affordance;

multimodal ensembles; and meaning functions. These concepts will be discussed briefly here. While some of the discussion here will be based on Jewitt (2013), parts will be taken from other scholars.

Mode: To start with, mode can be perceived as a set of socially and culturally shaped resources for making meaning. This shows that each socio-cultural environment has particular resources which are used in meaning making.

Thus, anybody who does not understand a socio-cultural milieu will not be able to function appropriately in such a place because the person will not be able to generate or interpret the meaning-bearing resources needed for communication.

Semiotic resources: To van Leeuwen (2008: 149), “semiotic resources are for representing social roles and identities in different contexts”. This implies that certain social roles are represented by certain traits or items. It may represent timing of social practice, the nature of social practice and any other aspect which the social practices of a group of people deals with.

Being socially bound, semiotic resources have to be learned and understood by language users in order to be able to use language effectively in any speech community.

Materiality: This deals with the way modes are accepted as the works of social agents who shape material or physical resources into semiotic resources. What happens is that certain elements are accepted by the speech community as modes or resources for making meaning. The

moment such elements are accepted, they can be used to convey meaning.

Materiality is important because it has great significance for meaning conveyance. For instance, sounds can be used to project meaning in the same way words can be used to project meaning. However, sounds must be appropriately understood in their peculiarity before they will be able to effectively convey the intended meaning.

Modal affordance: This has been referred to as the combination of all possible actions latent within an environment. According to Bezemer *et al.* (2012: 3), modal affordances have been referred to as “potentials for communication”.

A language user chooses a particular resource for communication based on the potential of the resource to pass along their intended meaning to the target audience. When both the encoder and the decoder understand the chosen resource properly, it will aid effective communication between them.

Multimodal ensembles: According to Bezemer *et al.* (2012: 3), “multimodal ensembles deal with how communication is made possible through a combination of different modes like drawings, gazes, gestures, images, postures, as well as any other meaning-bearing nonverbal means”. “Representations or interactions that consist of more than one mode can be referred to as a multimodal ensemble” (Jewitt 2013: 254-255).

Thus, multimodal ensembles are the way different modes are employed for effective communication. For instance, children's books are written in such a way that pictures go along with words or letters. Both pictures and letters are complementary because they aid understanding and retention of the ideas expressed. While the child learns the words, the pictures are used to prompt the words.

Meaning functions: This deals with the way meanings are generated and attributed with the use of the identified metafunctions. Looking at the metafunctions from the perspective of systemic functional grammar, there are ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions. All three of these metafunctions can be woven together in a particular utterance because language operates in a dynamic way.

Similar to language metafunctions, visual metafunctions also deal with how different functions are combined in visual communication. All of these metafunctions can also be found in a single item of visual material, such as the church advertisements which this research intends to study.

2.1.4 Challenges of Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Although nothing has advantages without disadvantages, a linguistic theory should be adopted when its advantages outweigh its disadvantages. As dynamic and multifaceted as multimodality is, it still does not come without some shortcomings. For instance, it has been argued that multimodality can sometimes "seem rather impressionistic in its analysis. How do you know that this gesture means this, or this image means that?" (Jewitt 2013: 263).

This shows that what someone perceives as a communicative mode may not be perceived as such by somebody else. Apart from this, there is a high possibility of misinformation and misinterpretation, both of which adversely affect communication. Misinformation can occur when an encoder uses a wrong mode to pass across a message which will hamper communication.

In a similar manner, misinterpretation can also occur when an encoder gives a wrong interpretation to a particular mode used by an encoder. Therefore, both the encoder and the decoder must possess mutual contextual belief before they can use multimodal resources for effective communication.

Another challenge which multimodality has is that some scholars have argued that it is a form of “linguistic imperialism” which imports and imposes linguistic terms on everything all in the name of employing different modes for communication. This is because multimodality does not have personal and specific linguistic tools of its own in the real sense. Rather, it has borrowed extensively from other subfields of language studies, especially social semiotics and Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics.

Multimodality is also plagued by challenge of likely lop-sidedness. This is possible because in the process of conducting multimodal analysis, a researcher may ignore some important linguistic theories, probably because they are difficult to understand, and focus on other linguistic theories because they are easy to understand. Hence, the analysis may be subjective. It is for these reasons that this study adopts some notions of visual culture to assist in compensating for the obvious shortcomings of MDA. Thus, a discussion on visual culture follows.

2.2 Explaining Visual Culture

In recent years, the idea of visual culture has gained currency in different fields across the humanities. The popularity of visual culture is probably due to the view that the world has become arguably more visually-oriented than it was in the past. This does not however mean that all that needs to be said, heard, known or researched about visual culture has been done. The field has kept on expanding as different researchers and scholars see it from dissimilar perspectives based on individual preference, interest, scope, and so forth.

This study argues the case that the notion of visual culture can be appropriated to interrogate multimodal features of visuals within society. Since visual culture deals with the way culture is conveyed visually, while multimodality deals with multiples modes of discourse within a given context, studying the two together can bring out valuable insights, especially with relation to how the linguistic and visual work together in communication.

Jenks (1995), in his explanation of visual culture, states that:

What we see, and the manner in which we come to see it, is not simply part of a natural ability. It is rather intimately linked with the ways that our society has, over time, arranged its forms of knowledge, its strategies of power and its systems of desire... There is only a social not a formal relation between vision and truth.

In addition to Jenks' assertion, Mitchell (2002: 167) opines that "vision is (as we say) a cultural construction, that it is learned and cultivated, not simply given by nature". These two assertions indicate that there is a social relation between vision and truth, i.e. their reality. They also indicate that visual culture can benefit from discursive resources which are already available within a society.

Elkins (2003) identifies visual culture as an academic discipline in the cultural studies movement which started in England during the late 1950s. The term visual culture "was used – perhaps for the first time...in Michael Baxandall's *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy*" (Elkins 2003: 2).

Many scholars locate the emergence of visual culture in the development of visual technologies, the history of pictorial art, and the emerging recognition of the priority of the visual as the primary of the senses (Elkins 2003). As such, the idea of visual culture cannot be divorced from the development of technology as it now contributes to determining meaning conveyance and meaning interpretation. This assertion is based on the view that sight is the most important of the human senses.

Davis (2011: 7) submits that according to visual-culture studies, it is true *prima facie* that vision has a cultural history. "Visual culture does not depend on pictures but on this modern tendency to picture or visualize existence. This visualizing makes the modern period radically different from the ancient and medieval world in which the world was understood as a book" (Mirzoeff 1998: 6).

Two ideas concerning visual culture emerge from Mirzoeff's submission. Firstly, visual culture does not only deal with images but also human visual experiences of existence. The second idea which requires attention is the difference between the twenty-first century and the ancient and medieval worlds. While the latter understood the world as text, the former understands it as pictures. In the ancient and medieval period people often prided themselves on the number of books they had read or written.

Yet the modern world is inundated with visual-oriented technologies such as the Internet, television, cinema, and so forth, which invite us to see rather than to read. The twenty-first century man does not only read but also view texts and images sent and received through devices which are referred to as visual media.

Rogoff (1998: 14) states that "visual culture opens up an entire world of intertextuality in which images, sounds and spatial delineations are read on to and through one another". The idea of visual culture deals with intertextuality. Intertextuality, according to Mey (2009: 293) refers to "the way one text is connected with others" which in essence resonates effectively with multimodality which is concerned with multiple conversational modes.

This means that a particular text will be best understood when it is read in relation to other texts with which it is connected. In the context of this study, this also implies that an advertisement does not have meaning if it is removed from the context in which it is situated. Any attempt to disconnect a text from other texts will either lead to total breakdown of meaning or absolute misunderstanding of the text.

The notion of visual culture does not deal strictly with images or texts operating independently but with a combination of images, sounds, and spatial delineations. This implies that texts from different media can be read together as texts which speak to each other. Layers of meanings could be derived from, and subjective responses given to, each item one encounters. These responses are, of course, dependent on the overall condition of the recipient of the message.

Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati (2015: 1) refer to “visuality as the field of individual and social signifying practices”. This implies that the idea of visual culture cannot be taken to mean only an individual’s perception or a societal way of signification but a combination of both. Without a meeting point between both individual and social signification, it would be difficult to discuss the idea of visual culture. The term “visual culture” “could be taken to refer to all those items of culture whose visual appearance is an important feature of their being or their purpose” (Jenks 1995: 16).

Although images are not all that matter in visual culture, they are equally important. Rogoff (1998: 14) argues that visual culture “encompasses a great deal more than the study of images, of even the most open-ended and cross-disciplinary study of images”. This submission, however, does not suggest that images are not part of visual culture. Various images and what they stand for can be used as connective modes to indirectly intersect with what such images represent (Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati 2015).

Apart from the foregoing, scholars have discovered that the concept of visual culture is not universal. As a result of the different emphases placed

on different norms by different human societies, it is not possible for every culture or every group of people to have the same perception about the same issue. As submitted by Morgan (2012: 31), “the study of visual culture seeks to understand how people put their worlds together by practices of seeing and how they keep them in working order”.

This implies that particular groups of people put their world in a specific order depending on the way they see or perceive their world. This discussion shows that the concerns of multimodality and visual culture overlap. Visuality (the way we see things and the things we see) is located in a culture inasmuch as visual modes are located, and are thus meaningful, in a specific cultural context. Both language and sight are mediums for navigating the world which depend on one’s understanding of a social/cultural milieu.

According to Smith (1995), the most important aspect of the senses is sight, which is often activated by empiricism in order to determine action or knowledge. Based on what he refers to as empiricism, Smith suggests that visual culture has to do with the highly esteemed position of sight above other human senses. Thus, there must be a proper alignment of what is seen or understood through sight, as vision is not only limited to the eyeball or physical seeing but also extends to include imagination. We often say “I see” when we mean “I understand”.

Following Smith’s (1995) idea, Dames (2013: 521) opines that there is a need to detach a literary work from the author so as to achieve as much critical objectivity as possible. The rationale behind detaching the author from the work is to make the work as objective as possible, as the author’s

involvement can easily lead to subjectivity. In the case of a topical study, there is a need to analyse and discuss advertisements not solely on the basis of the advertiser but also from the perspective of the analyst. Dames refers to this as “formalism”, not as a social theory but as a linguistic concept.

According to Mey (2009: 17), for instance, linguistic formalism is focused on “the investigation into the formal regularities of language and mechanical analytic procedures”. Thus, it is an aspect of formalism which studies the way language functions and how language is used in society. What the analyst does, from the formalist’s perspective, is to consider thoroughly the formal standard of using language in a particular speech community or how a particular language is used generally.

Schaefer’s (2006) position on visual culture is normative where he argues that norms focus on established standard of behaviour in a particular culture. As such, he argues that visual culture deals with the communication of certain norms through visual culture. His opinion relies on the notion that there is a close relationship between visibility and norms. Therefore, norms can be taught, shared, acquired, rejected or even contested visually. According to Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati (2015: 2) for instance, “images are situated in networks of dynamic and unstable relationships among individuals and groups in which norms are communicated, solidified, but also contested”.

2.2.1 The Family of Images

Mitchell (1984) identifies the family of images as consisting of five different types of images. These are graphic, optical, perceptual, mental and verbal

images. Before discussing each, I reproduce the family tree of images as theorised by Mitchell (1984: 505):

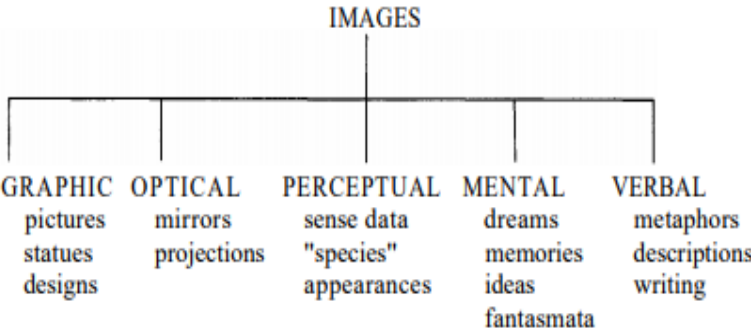


Figure 1: Family Tree of Images

Though Mitchell proposes five families of image, in cases of thorough academic and theoretical analysis, these image types are often interwoven. Consequently, it is difficult to separate between graphic image and optical image or between mental image and verbal image. The difficulty lies in the fact that all human senses work together and not independently.

As such, of importance to the analyst in this study are only three families of image: perceptual, mental and verbal. The perceptual aspect suggests that the message or information can be transferred through any of the senses, especially sight. The mental aspect insinuates the representation of the physical world in a person's mind. Thus, the way a person's mind works determines what constitutes that person's mental image. For verbal images, this refers to the pictures created by particular words or expressions when they are uttered or heard by individuals.

Mitchell's idea of the image family is appropriate to this study for two reasons. Firstly, mental imagery has developed into "picture theory" of

meaning, which deals with how pictures are presented and interpreted Mitchell (1984: 508). Secondly, perceptual imagery is important as the analyst needs to understand the images based on particular perceptions. Thirdly, image types are not hidden and private. Rather, they are open to the public. They are socially generated and construed to convey meaning.

This point is expatiated on by Mitchell (1984: 520) who says that “knowledge is better understood as a matter of social practices, disputes, and agreements, and not as the property of some particular mode of natural or unmediated representation”. The points mentioned here are applicable to advertising which is an integral part of this research. Although words are often found in advertisements, many images also accompany the words. As such, images are as important as words in advertising.

2.2.2 Ideology in Visual Culture

Davis (2005: 164) affirms that the concept of ideology is significant in the study and interpretation of visual culture. It is safe to opine that there is a specific ideology behind every item used in visual culture. Similarly, each advertisement, being an inseparable part of visual culture, conveys a particular ideology. Whether the targets of advertisements are aware of this or not, there is an ideology which the advertiser wants to communicate to them. The advertiser also wants them to imbibe the ideology completely.

Considering the importance of ideology to discourse studies in general, and visual culture in particular, Hall (1982) reiterates that the primary function of discourse is ideology. In a similar vein, Alaghbary, Alazzany and Al-Nakeeb (2015: 6) assert that “since language is both a system of communication and representation, in ordinary practice and use, it is

necessary for the concept of ideology to be central to the critical analytical studies”.

Thus, hardly can there be any critical analytical study without the issue of ideology coming up either directly or indirectly. This assertion foregrounds the importance of ideology in exploring visual culture. This becomes more striking if one considers Davis’ (2005) stance that anything related to visual culture, especially in advertisement, projects a specific ideology, which is usually behind the scenes.

In every society, influential members (e.g. opinion leaders) use ideology to shape the mindset of people. This explains why Davis (2005: 166) confirms that “dominant ideas are expressed and transmitted via ‘meaning-making bodies’ a raft of diverse institutions that, in our era, would include the mass media of newspapers, television, radio and cinema”.

This reality becomes more relevant to this research when one considers that the mass media mentioned by Davis are the dominant means of disseminating advertisements to the public in this era; institutions are thus also important as transmitters of ideologies to consumers. The next subsection examines the role of institutions in disseminating and promoting ideologies through visual culture.

2.2.3 Institutional Affiliations and Visual Culture

Anderson (2005: 229) identifies the importance of institutional affiliations to visual culture by observing that there are different institutions with different ideologies projected through visual culture. He posits that the whole world passes through the culture of industry and this relates, especially in this

twenty-first century, to the “new media and entertainment industries such as film, radio and television” which “highlight the role of institutions in shaping understanding and experience of visual culture”.

The function of these institutions is to shape people’s understanding and experience of visual culture. Therefore, one can assert that such institutions provide frameworks for understanding and interpreting visual culture. It has been opined that “institutions of visual culture have the potential to stimulate, educate and entertain the public by giving them access to the objects and images of visual culture and to new ideas that contest existing conceptions of society and culture” (Anderson 2005: 230). Therefore, institutions play vital roles in gate-keeping visual culture ideas and concepts.

Another significant point about institutional affiliations in visual culture is that they also stimulate the public. Hence, institutions can use advertising to stimulate both existing and prospective consumers to either consume more or start consuming their goods or services. These institutions not only educate the public on certain cultural issues but also determine what should be presented to the public in the areas of visual culture.

While Anderson does not include institutions such as churches and other religious organisations in his list of institutions of visual culture, there is no doubt that the church has become an important institution of visual culture. Churches are no longer only identified by their sets of beliefs and codes of behaviour but also by a wide range of visual paraphernalia.

2.2.4 Culture, Language and Norm: A Basic Aspect of the Visual

Just as the phrase “visual culture” implies, the idea of visual culture cannot be divorced from culture itself, and there are both universal and specific perspectives to culture. Cultural universals are those aspects which cut across different boundaries, irrespective of the cultural affiliations of the people practicing them.

Schaefer (2006: 55) describes culture as “the totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects, and behaviour”. It covers both the physical and the psychological lives of the group of people involved in terms of ideas, values and customs, as well as how these are projected, guarded and maintained within a society. It also includes people and how they make use of cultural artefacts and natural resources in their surroundings.

Language can be perceived as an abstract system of word meanings and symbols for all aspects of culture. Osisanwo (2003: 160) defines language as “human vocal noise or the arbitrary graphic representation of the noise, used systematically by members of a speech community for the purpose of communication”.

Language consists of both verbal and nonverbal aspects. There is no aspect of culture that is not reflected in language. Linguists have identified some design-features of language. One of the features that distinguish human language from other means of communication is its tremendous productivity.

In another respect, norms deal with the established standards of behaviour in a particular culture (Schaefer 2006). A society uses norms to encourage and enforce what it sees as appropriate while discouraging what it considers inappropriate.

The foregoing (i.e. culture, language, and norms) are integral elements of visual culture. Visual culture is easier to appreciate alongside these elements. The researcher is also aware that these elements are integral to any comprehensive analysis performed on church advertising.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed MDA and visual culture in the context of church advertising. It presented a brief history of discourse analysis, multimodality, as well as key concepts in MDA, followed by a presentation of Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) visual framework. The chapter has reviewed existing studies on visual culture. It presented a discussion of visual culture, the family of images, and ideology in visual culture. Also discussed were institutional affiliations and how they influence visual culture.

In the chapter, visual culture has been identified to be in consonance with multimodality owing to their similar ideological stances. One such similarity is a focus on visuals, and the other is a focus on context. One can therefore surmise that when the two concepts are correctly appropriated, they could be a formidable force when used in the analysis of advertising.

The next chapter reviews relevant literature on advertising in general and church advertising in particular. The chapter importantly links the discussions on multimodality and visual culture to advertising.

CHAPTER THREE

PENTECOSTALISM AND THE COMPLEXITIES OF ADVERTISING: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the theoretical standpoint for the study, namely multimodality and visual culture. This chapter reviews relevant literature on advertising in general and church advertising in particular. Scholarly works on advertising are reviewed in a funnel approach where advertising is viewed as an entity on its own. In discussing church advertising, the different academic approaches to the study of advertising are also examined. Pentecostal church advertising is also examined before a review of Pentecostal advertising in Nigeria is carried out. To conclude the discussion, I deliberate on how multimodality and visual culture relate to advertising.

3.1 Advertising: A Holistic Perspective

Abiodun (2011: 7) asserts that “the practice of advertising is as old as man”. Advertising has been in existence for almost as long as humanity. This is because it deals mainly with how to convince somebody of an idea, buy goods or use services, or do something which the speaker wants them to. In modern times, advertising has taken different forms, and the mass media has given it much boost by swiftly delivering advertising to large and heterogeneous audiences.

According to Meenakshi (1998: 24), advertising dates back to “some three thousand years ago when papyrus sheets were used in Thebes in Egypt

for announcing the reward for return of runaway slaves. The first advertisement was somewhat in the form of stencilled inscriptions which were found on earthen bricks prepared by the Babylonians about three thousand years before Christ”.

Scholars believe that advertising originated in Egypt in the form of writings on bricks to attract the attention of passers-by. Advertising originated as an outdoor concept amongst the Egyptians, meant to draw the attention of passers-by to certain information which was considered appropriate for public consumption.

Two schools of thought have been identified to explain the origin of advertising. These two schools consist of the creatives and the pragmatists. According to Tungate (2007: 48), “the creatives believe that art inspires consumers to buy; while the pragmatists sell based on facts”.

The creative school of thought believes in creativity as a means of inspiring consumers to buy a product or service. This school of thought focuses on how to be creative so as to gain as much acceptability as possible from the consumer. The pragmatic school of thought is of the opinion that facts and figures about a particular product or service help in the push of products or services to consumers.

Therefore, members of the pragmatic school spend more time conducting research about their products or services in order to convince consumers to buy them. Pragmatists give practical explanations about the advantages of their goods or services to their customers. They may also spend time

performing research into competitors' products and services with the aim of bringing out their shortcomings.

According to Agbede and Makombe (2016), "advertising can be literally perceived as bringing a product (or service) to the attention of potential and current customers". This definition hinges on the fact that a customer cannot consume a product which is unknown to them. In a similar vein, Sandage, Fruburger and Rotzol (1997) concede that advertising is the market instrument which advertisers use to influence the behaviour of consumers at the point of purchase.

On another hand, Endong (2015: 2) avows that advertising can be "considered as an art/act of persuasion and subtle manipulation – as it entails mobilising a wide range of linguistic and non-linguistic resources to entice consumers to go for a particular product or service". This shows that advertising must be carefully done so that it fulfils its purpose of enticing consumers.

More importantly, language is essential in advertising. This fact is buttressed by Goddard (1998) who opines that advertising is "a system of language whereby daily, readers have fleeting conversation with the writers of countless texts...Advertising is a way of securing one's brand, but the success of advertising is linked to the language used in the advertisement". In addition, Endong (2015: 2) says that language plays a very important function in advertising. This explains why advertisers cannot afford to be careless in their choice of words.

Advertising is a two-way communication process which involves the advertiser and the consumer of a product. Thus, if the advertisement is effective; the consumer purchases the product or service. On the other hand, the product or service may suffer non-patronage if the advertisement is not effective.

A major way of ensuring the effectiveness of advertisement is to choose appropriate words, phrases and other visual materials which can “entice” consumers. Kannan and Tyagi (2013) also make this point clear by asserting that for an advertisement to have impact on the customer – the visual content and design as well as the use of language needs to be well balanced.

Based on multimodal discourse analysis and visual grammar, Guo and Feng (2017: 59) investigated 2014 Brazil World Cup advertisements. They argue that advertising is closely related to sounds, colours, picture animations and other symbols, as such proving that different modes within advertisements depend on each other and have an interdependent relationship. More importantly, these relationships have different roles in different contexts.

An important contribution is made by Guo and Feng (2017) by examining these advertisements used for the World Cup. Given that the tournament was meant to be consumed by the whole world, the advertisements used for such a purpose should communicate to the whole world based on different contexts and cultures. Commendably, they reconcile that advertising requires different modes of communication to actualise effective results.

Olowu and Akinkurolere (2015: 168) also support that:

in every imaginable public space, visuals are presented for viewer's consumption. The young and old alike are bombarded by a cacophony of imagery in traditional print, books, magazines and newspapers, through totalizing mass media formats and inside the expanding e-work of the internet.

Olowu and Akinkurolere support the earlier assertion that advertising employs different modes to attract an audience. In their study of malaria advertisements, Olowu and Akinkurolere (2015) emphasise the vitality of visual elements as important devices in advertising.

They reveal the deployment of various visual resources, such as colours, gaze, posture, and so forth in engraving the ideas of the advertisers into the consciousness of readers/viewers and convincing them of the potency and efficacy of the product being advertised. They establish the potential of visual images to convey meaning beyond verbal language in any human society.

Advertising performs many functions, but the most important of its functions is psychological, as this creates a positive attitude in the minds of a target audience about the object of advertising. Thus, Duboviciene and Skorupa (2014: 70), assert that advertising "shapes the society's attitude to several various issues, influences people's thinking and behaviour".

Similar to the above, Cook (2001) fleshes out that the function of advertisements is to inform, persuade, remind, influence and perhaps

change opinions, emotions and attitudes. By implication, advertisements do not just sell products, they also attempt to change society and influence people's perceptions through visuals and language used to attract attention.

Duboviciene and Skorupa (2014) point out the following functions of advertising: "to promote the awareness of the brand, to inform, persuade and promote other marketing attempts, as well as inspire to act". Considering these functions, there are several factors which are important if advertising is to be effective. Awareness of a brand is an essential element that precedes acceptability. If a brand is not known, there is no way it will be accepted by the public.

Secondly, information about the brand makes consumers aware of what the product is all about, what its advantages are, where it can be found, and how much it costs; this can make them aspire to patronise the producer. Thirdly the advertiser needs to persuade the target audience or consumers to acquire the product.

One of the communicative modes in which language is grossly charged and loaded with hidden meanings is advertising, since the audience usually relies on both linguistic and non-linguistic factors to arrive at conclusions which might addictively "hook" them to the consumption of goods and services, even those they do not essentially need.

Lastly, there must be inspiration to act. If the first three motives are achieved and the last one is not, the product may remain on the shelf instead of in the hands of consumers. The moment these four functions are

effectively performed, the producer can gain an appreciable share of the market, thereby increasing their financial bottom line.

According to Proctor and Kitchen (2002), there are many instances in which advertising is used to support other elements of the marketing mix, but that in most instances, the product and brand are key points in advertising activities. Thus, the marketing mix gains a lot from advertising. Advertising gives the marketing mix a proper constitution of what it is necessary for consumers to know. Secondly, it stimulates consumers to accept a product or service.

Advertising possesses the capacity to position goods, a service, a company and any other item of interest in the minds of consumers. It is positive positioning which propels consumers to obtain the service or item. In addition, advertising also has the capacity to target goods, a service, a company and any other item of interest to the consumers.

According to the Chartered Institute of Marketing (2015), advertising objectives should reflect seven things. These contribute to the overall development of whatever product is advertised. The first is that advertising promotes products, organisations and services. This means that through advertising, a particular product, organisation or service is promoted to and becomes known by the public.

The second is that advertising stimulates demand for products; i.e. it makes people have a desire to consume the advertised product or service. Thirdly,

advertising increases sales growth. This is made possible by the first two points of promoting the product and stimulating demand for it.

Fourthly, advertising educates the market using brand and product awareness. The point here is that where consumers are not aware of a product or service, they can never consume them. But when advertising creates awareness for products and services, members of the public will be keen to consume them. The fifth is that advertising increases the use of products and services (market development). It is when this occurs that producers will be able to make more profit.

The sixth role that advertising perform is that it refreshes and reinforces market penetration. This makes it possible for people to consume the advertised product or service more than once, or repeatedly. Finally, advertising reduces fluctuations in sales performance. Thus, it creates steady sales, which in turn leads to steady production and steady profit-making.

The review on advertising above indicates that advertising does not just present a product or a service to customers but performs various strategic functions in the overall interest of the product and the company producing the product. For instance, it does not only promote the product but also stimulates demand for the product. It is also instrumental in the attainment of steady growth in the sales of a product or service.

Advertising helps by enhancing a product, an organisation or a service. This is done by positively projecting the image of an organisation or

emphasising positive features about a product. After projecting a positive image of an organisation, advertising also stimulates demand for products. Since consumers now see products from a positive vantage, it becomes easier for them to demand them.

This, in turn, leads to an increase in the sales of products or services. The market or consumers are also educated by advertising. Advertising helps to remind consumers about the products or services and maintain stability in their consumption. Although it is not every time a product is advertised that it gains all the advantages of advertising, the product still obtains many of the advantages.

Considering the nature of advertising, brevity is often the key word. Because there is limited time and space to run an advertisement, it is important for the advertiser to keep the message straightforward, short and simple. Besides the limitation of time and space, the customers would not enjoy being bored by a long advertisement as a long advertisement goes against the ethics of advertisement and does not stand a good chance of being effective.

Based on the dynamic nature of advertising and contemporary trends in the field, there is now the notion of Integrated Marketing Communication, a marketing concept which ensures that all forms of communication and messages are carefully linked together (Pawar 2014: 11). The idea of Integrated Marketing Communication also shows how important communication is in advertising.

This is because there is a direct link between advertising and marketing, since advertising is one of the major ways of achieving the marketability of goods and services. The use of effective communication to achieve the aim of an organisation cannot be overemphasised. This logic can, in fact, be located within advertisements emanating from Pentecostal churches.

3.1.1 Approaches to Advertising Discourse

Scholars have contributed significantly to studies in advertising. As such, the discourse of advertising has witnessed different approaches by different authors from different disciplinary perspectives. Here, I reproduce Hu and Luo's (2016: 158) different approaches to advertising discourse:

In the field of advertising study, traditional analysis focused on the lexical, grammatical, stylistic, rhetorical features of language and its social functions (Leech, 1966; Williamson, 1978; Huang, 2001; Zhang, 2007). Leech (1966) is the pioneer in advertising research, he investigates personal, imperative, passive voice and other linguistic features in language.

Barthes (1977) and Williamson (1978) are the representatives of scholars who analyse advertising discourse from the semiotic perspective, Barthes introduced the relationship between images and information in advertisements, and Williamson thinks that advertisement analysis is not only a process of coding and decoding (Han, 2011). Vestergaard and Schroder (1985) explain the social motivation in advertising discourse from the pragmatic perspective.

Geis (1982) studies television commercial advertisements with conversation implication and cooperative principles and found that advertising language is persuasive and spreading. Cook (2001) discusses the interactive function of text, music, picture and participants in advertising. Huang (2001) makes use of systemic functional grammar to study advertising discourse.

Albeit these works are pioneers, recent scholars have also examined advertising from diverse linguistic domains. For example, Akinbode (2012), from a sociolinguistics perspective, opines that the main motive of advertisements is to achieve a link between the sender and the receiver, and in so doing the language must be well designed to appeal to man's emotions. He suggests that the language must be correct, and the vocabulary must be appropriate to the consumer it is hoped to influence.

Advertising language must be translated into the consumer's language. In other words, the language must be constructed in a way which suits the category or class of target audience in terms of its style, language use and so on. He submits that in advertising, words and phrases or sentences are carefully selected to perform specific functions (Akinbode 2012).

For the current study, Akinbode's position that the effectiveness of an advertisement depends much on its audience in terms of social background is essential. Advertising follows socio-cultural norms of communicative appropriateness (Dada 2013) and it is important for advertising to consider the socio-cultural milieu in communicating its messages.

From a semantic view, Emodi (2011: 325) contends that the nub of an advertisement has the act of persuasion embedded in it. She discusses the connotative meaning of words, adjectives, coined words, mis-spelt words, repetition, the metaphoric use of words, punning, non-existent words and ambiguous statements and concludes that the consumer being influenced by an advertisement depends largely on the wise language use of the advertiser.

Noor *et al.* (2015: 7) buttress that the language of advertising is composed in a manner which will make the language remain in the minds of its viewers. Hence, advertisers should apply imagination, originality and freshness.

Several other authors have employed alternative linguistic approaches. In a pragmatic analysis, Acheoah (2012: 4) stresses that advertisers rely on mutual contextual beliefs, world knowledge, and presuppositions to advertise products effectively. Akpan, Akpan and Obukoadata (2013), from a semiotic perspective, support the dominance of symbolic values in advertisements, saying that symbols in advertisements communicate as much meaning as texts do as there is even more denotative, connotative and contextual meanings invested in signs and symbols than in text.

Karsita and Apriana (2015: 1), from a syntactic approach, assert the five kinds of phrases mostly used in advertisements, namely: verbal, nominal, prepositional, adverbial and adjectival; Yu (2013) in a morphological study discovers the application of language derivation techniques making advertisers deliberately deviate from the usual expression of language to catch the attention of viewers.

Using critical discourse analysis (CDA), Tahmasbi and Kalkhajeh (2013) expose the social and power abuse embedded in advertisements to persuade and manipulate viewers; and finally, in a stylistic study, Nnamdi-Eruchalu (2015) recognises the benefits of figurative expressions in advertisements in that they tend to beautify language and make it appealing and evocative while also serving emphatic purposes and creating emotional effects.

What is evident from the short sample of selected approaches enumerated above is that advertising employs many distinctive styles to attract viewers. This is more obvious as scholars have attempted to demystify advertisements from different linguistic perspectives whose strengths and focuses are widely at odds.

Given that the major focus of this research is to examine advertising in Nigerian Pentecostal churches, the following section reviews literature on Pentecostalism and church advertising.

3.2 Exploring Pentecostalism

The word 'Pentecostalism' is derived from the noun word 'Pentecost' which is used in two different connotations: First, it is an event observed by the Jews as the feast of the week. Hence, in Judaism, it is the feast of the week (a prominent feast in the calendar of ancient Israel, celebrating the giving of the law on Sinai). Secondly, for Christians, it commemorates the day of descent of the Holy Spirit upon the early apostles as described in the book of Acts of the Apostles 2:1-21 (Udok and Odunuga 2016: 52).

This work aligns with the second explanation of the word “Pentecostalism”, as identified by Udok and Odunuga (2016). For this study, Pentecostalism signifies a Christian movement that derives its power from the Holy Spirit. According to Asamoah-Gyadu (2005), Pentecostalism is a stream of Christianity which emphasises personal salvation in Christ as a transformative experience brought about by the Holy Spirit. The area of Pentecostalism has witnessed enormous academic contributions from diverse scholars.

One such scholar is Dube (2018) who refers to Pentecostalism as “spiritual parenting”. Dube considers Pentecostal leaders as spiritual parents who assume the role of mentors and guardians, thereby usurping the role biological parents. He likens this perspective to the analogous modern-day idea of adoption, the difference being that the spiritual parent is not legal and permanent. Though the Pentecostal spiritual parent shares no blood relation with the “children”, Dube argues that they are often regarded as more important than biological parents. This position cements the popularity of Pentecostalism in today’s world.

In another study which focuses on the importance of music in Pentecostalism, Udok and Odunuga (2016) posit that music and Pentecostalism are inseparable and music plays a vital role in the relationship between man and God. For Christians, music forms one of the fundamental elements in church liturgy and worship. They submit that contemporary Christian music is one of the musical genres which developed out of the Pentecostal movement.

This is akin to Abraham's (2015) view that music is a key medium through which Pentecostalism has grown. Pentecostal worship music circulates in physical and digital formats through formal and informal networks laying down the cultural and theological infrastructure for new churches and new individual experiences. Udok and Odunuga (2016: 60) further assert that the Pentecostal movement, with its principles and ideology in the work of the Holy Spirit, has prompted the development of different musical styles, such as gospel music, Christian pop, gospel rock, and Christian punk, especially amongst youths.

3.3 Advertising and Pentecostalism: A Global Perspective

Since Moore (1994) affirms that religious services operate in a greatly competitive environment where religion has become a product, Devlin *et al.* (1996) note that the core product of church marketing is salvation. Appah and George (2017) observe that churches are increasingly using marketing concepts, consciously or unconsciously, in their promotion efforts. Appiah, Dwomoh and Asare-Kyire (2013) further affirm that modern marketing has provided churches with considerable means with which church programmes and activities are made public.

There have been considerable attempts to define church marketing by different authors. For Kotler and Armstrong (2010), church marketing involves the adoption of commercial marketing principles, concepts, theories and instruments in designing appropriate programmes which have the capacity to influence the behaviour of people and improve their social wellbeing for societal development.

Devlin *et al.* (1996: 26) observe church marketing as the analysis, planning, implementation and control of carefully formulated programmes for achieving the organisation's mission and objectives in the hope of fulfilling the biblical mandate to evangelise. Thus, because religion is seen in the same light as commercial products, religious services are adjusted to the demands of consumers, who are the believers (Moore 1994).

Kuzma, Kuzma and Kuzma (2009) intimate that church management in recent times has seen tremendous application of marketing principles, theories and frameworks. These extensive marketing strategies employed by churches are in fact spearheaded by Pentecostal churches, as affirmed by Adebayo (2015), who indicates that churches, and most especially the Pentecostal ones, have developed the intention of becoming mega-churches as well as global brands and so have adopted elaborate marketing strategies, frameworks and tools.

Appah and George (2017: 103) explain that there is an increasing influx of marketing philosophies and principles into churches every day due to the pressing need for raising resources. They define church marketing as the application of social marketing principles by which individuals and groups, through the word of God, are converted and as well as goods and services provided to these converts in order to help strengthen their faith for it to remain in Jesus Christ.

Of all the definitions, Appah and George's definition is favoured in this study. Appah and George (2017) argue that the word of God and biblical principles guide church marketing. In the previous definitions, the authors

have been significantly silent on what informs social marketing as they have generally defined the concepts in an evasive way.

Appah and George (2017) explain that in church advertising, churches package the word of God to meet the needs of the people in fulfilling the church's mission. As such, preaching or word evangelism should put the audience at the centre and meet their needs.

It is important to note that religious advertisements not only persuade the reader/viewer into Christianity, but also convince the audience to visit a particular church, attend a particular church programme or use a particular Christian service. Hence, in this section, I present a review of selected literature on church advertising.

Conrad (2008) proves that churches enjoy a great deal of promotion through modern marketing instruments. He argues that without good marketing, churches would have difficulty promoting their services to the people. As such, marketing is a vital component of church growth and promotion and an effective way of fulfilling church objectives.

Conrad encourages marketing in churches as it serves a great purpose for the church. Appah and George (2017) also task church leaders and pastors with developing marketing models which are effective in ensuring the spread of the gospel as well as the programmes and activities of the church.

Adebayo (2015) states that it is critical that churches conduct thorough research to discover the needs and wants of customers (churchgoers) in

order to promote services which meet the increasing needs and wants of church followers. Since the purpose of marketing is to satisfy the needs of the customer with the right services (Adebayo 2015), it becomes important for church advertisers to consider the needs of their target audience in producing church advertisements.

Adebayo (2015) establishes a strong link between church practice and marketing activities based on the argument that the attachment between people and religion is as strong as that which exists between people and brands. He examines how marketing principles are transferred into the church to fulfil its social values. Adebayo stipulates that marketing components now form a part of church programme planning, directing and implementation.

In a study on how promotion marketing strategies influence the growth of churches in Zimbabwe, Dhlwayo (2013) argues that there is now a shift in the focus of non-profit making organisations to this, of which the church is no exception. His position is that churches have employed the business approaches of a management which prioritises marketing.

Hoyle (2002) concurs that promotional strategies have become part of church growth agenda underpinned by several outreach posters. Hoyle's submission is in fact relevant to the topical study. Posters and billboards as promotional materials have been employed widely by Nigerian churches as a means of simultaneously reaching a wide audience. As such, this study focuses on posters and billboards produced by churches for promotional reasons.

Dhliwayo (2013) investigates the effects of promotional strategies such as advertisement, personal selling, face-to-face church service selling, invitation of friends and relatives, and miracle and communion services in relation to how they contribute to the growth of Pentecostal churches. Dhliwayo recognises the effectiveness of marketing instruments for the growth of Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe. Siegel and Scrimshaw (2002) confirm the efficacy of marketing strategies in selling a product.

Once churches realise that there is drawcard to entice as many members as possible to partake in their church activities, they rely on such advantage to attract more members. For instance, that the target audience enjoys vigils and worship sessions may imply that churches include more of such in their marketing strategies. This informs Siegel and Scrimshaw's (2002) assertion that one major reason members attend church is to benefit from the worship activities of the church such as sharing the word of God, intercessory prayers, vigils and individual prayers. For Siegel and Scrimshaw, these worship activities contribute to spiritual satisfaction through a mutual relationship leading to the growth of the church.

He submits that promotional strategies have had a significant impact on church growth which thus lead him to the conclusion that church leaders, pastors and service coordinators need to further promote their skills and become more marketing oriented in order to apply such principles and tools in meeting the increasing needs of the church and individual members of congregations.

Belch and Belch (2005) recognise the potency of outdoor advertisements with the use of posters, billboards and banners which they confirm play significant roles in selling and exposing the opportunities of the church to

the outside world. They insinuate that such billboards or posters are often located where people are allowed easy access to them and where there is a significant amount of traffic.

In KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, Jefkins (1995) says that churches have adopted posters, billboards and banners as a means of reaching out to people on the road. Jefkins notes that the marketing materials are placed around high traffic areas of the town, as well as areas of strong pass ways, in order to expose church programmes to the people. Since my study focuses on billboards and posters, these scholars' studies share an affinity with mine.

Scholars have also examined other marketing materials used by churches. According Belch and Belch (2005), the use of platform, transit and terminal posters have become a common means of church marketing strategy and have a strong message exposure and impact on people. They identify these forms of advertisements as including pasting on cars, transport buses, washrooms and other areas where people are found as a means of bringing church programmes and activities closer to these people. They posit that the more frequently exposed an audience is to the materials, the more the message remains in their minds.

Krepapa, Berthon, Webb and Pitt (2003) observe that personal selling is also a popular marketing strategy by churches. With personal selling, churches now adopt the practice where people are trained purposely for face-to-face presentation and one-on-one teaching with the sole aim of converting people to their churches. This is a more proactive attempt by

churches to adopt customer-defined market orientation in order to convince people about the need for them to attend their churches.

On a different note, Kotler (2002) identifies the use of greeters and ushers as marketing strategies. His impression is that greeters and ushers are created to warmly make customers comfortable in buying or purchasing a product. For Kotler, this strategy provides a suitable environment that welcome customers and provide them with proper directions which make them feel at home.

He argues that an essential factor of marketing management is providing customers with the required attention and helping them to feel comfortable. To him, this is a confident way of winning customers to become committed and loyal to the marketer. As such, the objective of this strategy is to help members feel at home and become committed and loyal to the organisation.

Togarasei (2015) states that churches have moved on to modern media technologies for the sake of advertising, such as cellular telephones, the Internet, street billboards and street-light advertisements, satellite broadcasting, and so forth. Togarasei cautions that this has seemingly led to “the commoditization and consequent trivialization of Christianity” which he likens to the advertisements of Coca-Cola (Togarasei 2012: 271). Czeglédy (2008: 306) also establishes that advertisements of Pentecostal churches in the form of posters and billboards have become sophisticated “in a way that is both reminiscent of and equivalent in standard to corporate/commercial artwork”.

In analysing how visuals have reshaped Pentecostalism in New Zealand, Flett (2013) argues that visuals currently play a significant role within large Pentecostal church organisations. Flett (2013) observes that visuals have proved effective as a means of promoting a congregation's public profile and attracting new members. For him, Pentecostal churches believe that the message of the church and Jesus Christ should be packaged in a relevant and contemporary way. He argues that Pentecostal churches embrace new visual methods in their bid to be contemporary and relevant. Flett surmises that visual media can play an important role in Pentecostal discipleship, both in forming congregants, as well as forming a congregation's identity.

While this section has examined Pentecostalism and advertising from a general global perspective, the following section focuses on Pentecostal advertising within the Nigerian context.

3.4 Advertising and Pentecostalism: A Nigerian Appraisal

Having considered Pentecostal advertising in general, it is important to discuss it in relation to church advertising in Nigeria. This becomes expedient because there are many forms of advertisements, and each serves a specific purpose. The types of advertisement identified in this study focus on marketing church activities. Hence, there are bound to be some differences in terms of how the advertisers seek to convey their messages to audiences.

Pentecostal advertising in Nigeria is a form of urban aesthetics (Ukah 2008), which is a form of public communication to create positive ideas and images of religious entrepreneurs (Anderson 2005). Pentecostal

advertising constructs a public profile for pastors whose images literally adorn every corner of every street. This, Ukah refers to as self-promotion which he considers highly important in Pentecostalism. Ukah believes that the objective of Pentecostal advertising is manipulating, exploiting and controlling an audience in subtle but seductive ways.

One of the practices of Pentecostalism which has captured the popular imagination is the production of Christian video films. Thus, the strength of Pentecostal marketing is woven around the use of Christian video films. Ukah sees video films as popular narratives laden with strong rhetoric with the aim of changing consumer tastes and behaviour. In this case, the consumers are not only Christians, but also the general public.

Nwakwegu (2016: 54) notes that religion and its services have been seen as products, and as such church services and programmes need to be marketed; hence Christian advertisements are an accepted form of marketing. The rise of church advertising in Nigeria has been attributed to the lack of regulations by the Nigerian government as individual religious leaders or organisations can freely design their messages and approach media organisations to disseminate them (Ukah 2008: 126). For this shortcoming, there is huge exuberance and innovation (sometimes bordering on excess) in religious advertising styles and content across Nigeria.

Although there are regulations regarding televising “miracles” and “healing”, there are still no regulations which guide advertisements in the print media such as newspapers, news magazines, church tabloids,

billboards, church signs, posters, and so forth (Ukah 2008). By implication, churches advertise as freely as possible in print.

In describing what he refers to as “Roadside Pentecostalism”, Ukah (2008: 125) writes:

Over the last decade the urban centers of Nigeria have been transformed into sacred galleries, giving rise to what I call ‘roadside Pentecostalism,’ that is, the signage produced by independent Christian Pentecostalist churches that is displayed on urban roads, streets, and driveways. These signs take form as billboards; posters displayed on pedestrian bridges, utility poles, and walls of buildings; banners that straddle roads; and signboards.

Ukah posits that Nigeria has become a country with too many Pentecostal establishments, while Anderson (2005) confirms that nowhere is the Pentecostal state of affairs more visible than in Lagos, which he refers to as “arguably the most Pentecostal city in the world”. In recent years, Nigeria has developed a reputation as a tabernacle of the world, as people from across Africa and beyond visit the country for prayers and miraculous healings. One such popular pastor who attracts people’s attention is Prophet TB Joshua whose ministry promises healing and deliverance.

Magbadelo (2004) observes that Pentecostalism has become a booming trademark of a Christian evangelistic crusade in Nigeria. The messages of healing, miracles and prosperity have often received wider acceptance amongst the populace. As such, Pentecostal churches in the country have

continued to feast on the psychology of the masses who genuinely are desirous of relief from their sordid existential realities.

Kitause (2015: 10) observes that prosperity preaching is the major preoccupation of the Pentecostals, which focuses on challenging endemic poverty in Nigeria. The gospel emphasises spiritual and economic empowerment programmes which engender social, economic and spiritual transformation within Nigerian society.

As people seek treatment and healing through orthodox medicine in different parts of the world, they also seek alternative means of receiving healing. Due to this quest for alternative means of healing, churches, especially Pentecostal churches, offer faith healing as an alternative to both traditional and Western medicine. Ukah (2008) suggests that Pentecostal leaders rely on the hardship situation in Nigeria to present “divine” promises to people. He identifies “miracles” as a critical selling point of Pentecostal advertising. For him, miracles come in different shades according to the spiritual gifts claimed by individual pastors. He identifies diverse ways by which pastors present their specialisation, including healing, prosperity, and deliverance from demonic possession.

For Kuponu (2015: 75), the power of “evangelisation” in Pentecostal outreaches has often hinged on the demonstrative effect of miracles claimed by some of their leaders and founders, and they continue to have wider impact because of the contextualisation of their emphasis and the appropriation of traditional elements.

Omotoye (2007) argues that the Aladura Churches combine the two fundamental elements of Christianity and African culture in a way that advertises their Christian intentions without undermining their African credentials. The fact that churches have incorporated elements of traditional healing into Christianity makes it easy for traditional healing to be re-adopted in Nigeria.

For instance, prophecy or vision is an inherent practice in most Nigerian cultures which existed long before the advent of Christianity. Thus, both traditional medicine and church advertisements are now popular and observable in nearly every city in Nigeria. However, church advertisements are much more pervasive than traditional medicine advertisements.

Ukah (2008) emphasises some features which are relevant and valued by African people, such as prophecy, healing, prayer, vision, dream and the use of sacred objects. Based on this approach, it is not difficult for the churches to advertise exploits such as miracles, healing and prophecy. Rotimi, Nwadiolor and Ngwucha (2016: 10) argue that:

the growth of Pentecostalism in Nigeria owes a lot to the rising spate of poverty and squalor in the country. When individuals began to seek spiritual solutions for their physical problems, Pentecostal churches with their prosperity messages logically appeared as anchor point.

This is perhaps the utmost reason for the commercialisation of church services. Advertising presents an organisation's service or product as the best product that people should prefer. Since churches are to serve as saviours, it is logical that the services offered by churches need to be

exaggerated to suit the requirements of the people. Nwanganga (2017) also recognises that church commercialisation as a phenomenon in Nigerian Christendom has made the institution referred to as the church deviate from its original tenets; i.e. the pursuit of materialism and mundane pleasures instead of sacredness, purity, and holiness.

Given the various socio-economic challenges in Nigeria, and since Pentecostal churches tend to present themselves as receiving help directly from the Holy Spirit to overcome life challenges, they readily became bastions of hope for a vast number of Nigerians who have had to struggle for existence in the ailing Nigerian economy (Rotimi, Nwadiolor and Ngwucha 2016: 10). Karl Marx's (2000) assertion readily comes to mind that religion is the opium of the masses. His statement implies that religion primarily works as solace for the toiling masses, in that it promises things often beyond practical obtainability (Rotimi, Nwadiolor and Ngwucha 2016).

In a similar vein, Kitause (2015: 284) intimates that the Pentecostal idea of healing covers spiritual and the physical deliverance from demonic attack and healing from poverty. As such, Kitause observes that under the hard-economic pressures of capitalism, Pentecostal churches seem to offer a pragmatic gospel which addresses the practical needs of the citizenry and this accounts for millions of people who believe the prosperity gospel.

Most Pentecostal churches, especially those in Nigeria, have commercialised church services. Many of these churches will need to publish more advertisements to remain relevant or obtain more patronage like any other profit-making company or organisation. This point is

reinforced by Nwanganga (2017) who asserts thus: “further scenarios that depict commercialization of religion can be illustrated fully when adherents of the Christian faith pay for the supposedly religious services rendered to them by ‘men and women of God’”. The expression “men and women of God” is placed in inverted commas to show that these individuals are not acting in conformity with God’s instructions or standards.

Magbadelo (2004: 23) questions whether Pentecostal churches are exploiting or edifying the masses. He notes that the adoption of business-like principles in which the dividends are ploughed back into the business has led to the meteoric expansion of many Pentecostal churches in Nigeria.

He cites the example of churches such as the Living Faith Church, Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Deeper-Life Bible Church, Apostolic Faith, Mountain of Fire and Miracles (MFM) and Latter Rain Assembly which are now venturing into purely business operations, such as the establishment of universities, secondary and primary schools, medical centres, banks and conference centres with the intent of generating additional resources. One would also incidentally argue that such ventures are also means of advertising these churches, as they tend to gain more popularity through these operations.

Church commercialisation is an indication of manipulation on the part of church leaders. Although preachers of the prosperity gospel often support their messages with scripture, prosperity preaching has taken on a completely different dimension in Nigeria. According to Ogunkunle (2006), the selling of doves during the feast of Passover around the temple (now church) in the Bible is a commercial act.

Ukah (2008) also intimates that in Nigerian churches, congregations are often construed as being “clients” or “consumers”. In fact, Rotimi, Nwadiolor and Ngwucha (2016) mention that some Pentecostal clergymen manipulate their congregations into contributing money for church and personal projects, basing their arguments on the fact that “givers never lack”.

In the current Nigerian situation, worshippers make payments to the supposed servants of God to receive the favour of God. This scenario is worsened by political office seekers who pay the men and women of God large sums of money so that they can secure desired public offices. All these contribute to the commercialisation of the church.

In this regard, Rotimi, Nwadiolor and Ngwucha (2016) argue that prosperity messages do not add value for the hearers; rather they enrich the pockets of preachers who travel in private jets and live in big mansions. Kuponu (2015: 75) also argues that Pentecostalism in Nigeria has increasingly taken on entrepreneurial shape influenced by modern business and money management practices and strategies with an emphasis on promotion, success, breakthroughs and miracles, and members have constantly applauded this with regular attendance of such designated programmes.

They caution however that there are copious testimonies of how God has supernaturally transformed despairing people into wealthy men, and even though this claim may not stand up to rigorous scientific tests it is nonetheless indisputable that prosperity messages excite and motivate hearers into doing something about their unpleasant conditions.

In a society confronted with economic recession, lack of social justice, corruption and other vices (Akanbi 2017), the church has proven to be largely inseparable from the society as a platform for overcoming these obstacles.

Nwakwegu (2016) argues that Christian advertising as a specific domain draws largely from Christian ideological assumptions and communicates certain overt and covert messages. Nwakwegu comments that an audience's background knowledge and assumptions are crucial factors in the interpretation of church advertisements.

Nwakwegu observes that Christian advertisements and their target audiences share common values which usually form the background upon which they both interact upon the platform of the language of advertising. He maintains that advertisers appeal to audiences through offering some benefits, mostly abstract, for which they cannot be held responsible if not fulfilled.

In another consideration, Ukah (2008: 129) discovers that over the last two decades an important introduction to the Pentecostal advertisement repertoire has been the inclusion of a photograph of a male church leader's spouse. To Ukah, this was unknown in the 1970s and 1980s. However, since women have also played significant roles in the formation and growth of Pentecostalism in Nigeria, they have now also been incorporated into church advertising.

Ukah however observes that although women are frequently seen, they are less heard, since church authority is usually concentrated in the hands of men. Women nevertheless take charge of subtle roles behind the scenes.

Ukah further argues that, in principle, the wife of a pastor is accorded as much respect as the pastor and in some cases is even more important than the assistant overseers.

Ukah cites the example of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) where the wife of the pastor is more important and powerful than the Assistant General Overseers. A similar situation obtains in The Winners' Chapel where the wife of the founder is the second-in-command (as Executive Secretary of the church), while the husband doubles as Executive President and Chief Executive Officer.

Ukah (2008) considers advertising through posters and billboards as a means for Pentecostal leaders to legitimise their would-be successors as "charismatic", "qualified", and as "ordained" by God in the case of the sudden death of the pastor. In an attempt to keep the leadership of the church in the family and not extended to strangers, pastors have begun to make their wives as popular as themselves.

Since the leaders of churches are rarely challenged, they can often "do and undo". Burgess (2008: 187) notes that in most Pentecostal churches in Nigeria the opinion of the General Overseer or pastor is rarely challenged publicly, presumably in recognition of their status and role as power brokers. This is reflected in the choruses of "amens and hallelujahs" which follow their declarations from the platform during church services and conferences.

This was the case for Archbishop Professor Benson Idahosa, the founder of Church of God Mission International in Benin City, who died suddenly in

1998, where his widow was ordained as Bishop. Bertrand and Schoar (2006) establish that individual churches are portrayed as “family firms” grounded in family control and nepotism, while simultaneously promoting “strong family values” as a desirable quality for organisational leadership.

Kuponu (2015: 76) commends the use of Internet facilities by Nigerian Pentecostal churches in their advertisements. Since we live in an increasingly “wired” world due to advancements in communication technology, the Internet has now become a part of modern-day life and thus a veritable tool in the hands of the Pentecostal churches.

Nowadays, Pentecostal churches consider the Internet as a medium for Christian outreach as churches now have websites. Kuponu notes that Pentecostals maintain extensive global networks and have great appeal for the upwardly mobile youth. The use of the Internet is inclined towards increased followings, visibility, exposure, influence and public presence.

3.5 Interplay between Multimodality, Visual Culture and Advertising

Baykal (2016) notes that advertising discourse frequently uses multimodal strategies. Apart from the link between visual culture and multimodality discussed in the previous chapter, there is also a nexus between multimodality, visual culture and advertising. The nexus is hinged on the fact that advertising is not only visual in nature, but also depends on visuality. Besides this fact, what is seen or observed is often dependent on social and cultural issues as enunciated below. Acheoah (2012) argues that messages of advertising should be situated within social and psychological contexts.

Suffice it to note that there is a close affinity amongst multimodality, visual culture and advertising. Multimodality is a communication practice that involves diverse modes, such as the textual, aural, linguistic, spatial, and visual resources employed in formulating messages. On the other hand, the central object of study in visual culture is preoccupied with the way people see and visually represent things within a culture or society. This implies that both multimodality and visual culture are located, and therefore meaningful, within a social context.

Rampléy (2005: 138) notes that “advertising by its nature is a strategic form of visual communication, of which its audience has also become all too aware”. For this reason, I strongly contend that images confront viewers or audiences on a virtually daily basis.

With regard to the above, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 115) pontificate that:

images are produced in the context of real social institutions, in order to play a very real role in social life-in order to do certain things to or for their readers, and in order to communicate attitudes towards aspects of social life and towards people who participate in them, whether authors and readers are consciously aware of them or not.

Advertising, like visual culture and multimodality, draws from socially acceptable norms and practices which are known and understood by the audience. The implication of this is that an advertisement is meant to be “seen” (both literally and metaphorically), but the way it is seen and

interpreted is constrained by social and cultural factors. Viewers/readers analyse Pentecostal advertisements based on their own socio-cultural experiences.

This explains Rotimi, Nwadiakor and Ngwucha's (2016) position that Pentecostalism adapts itself to the local indigenous societies of most people and is apparently growing amidst the poor and marginalised people of Nigeria, providing communal support in situations of social disintegration, and existing as a true "Church of the poor" which seeks both spiritual and physical empowerment.

Fuery (2003: 33) argues that "examples of how the visual is invested with cultural narrative can be found through advertisements". Advertisements are usually underpinned by a contextual narrative which makes them relevant to target audiences. Any attempt by the advertiser or the advertising agency to depart from this contextual narrative might easily lead to misunderstanding of the advertisement.

Another important connection between visual culture and advertising is the extent to which both are located within institutions and culturally accepted norms. As mentioned earlier, "institutions of visual culture have the potential to stimulate, educate and entertain the public by giving them access to the objects and images of visual culture" (Mirzoeff 1998). Thus, visual culture institutions determine the visual content which the public consumes. Just as institutions determine what visual readers consume, so advertisers and advertising agencies also determine what buyers or consumers will desire.

MacDonald (2005: 57) describes advertising companies as “hidden persuaders who use psychology as a means of stimulating the consumer into desiring and buying whatever the advertiser wishes them to”. As such, advertisements are usually located in a particular context which is different from other contexts of communication.

Since multimodality considers contextual issues or factors in its analysis and has a particular context which is different from other contexts of communication, this means that advertising is part of what multimodality deals with. To Baldry and Thibault (2006: 31), multimodality is concerned with the influence of mode on meaning within a given context, focusing on the co-occurrence interaction between multiple semiotic systems. The fact that multimodality studies the properties of discourse in relation to contextual issues means that advertising, multimodality and visual culture have a meeting point.

The meeting point of the three is on the contextual level. Jewitt and Oyama (2001: 134), drawing largely from Kress and Van Leeuwen, opine that “multimodal analysis of visual communication involves the description of semiotic resources, what can be said and done with images (and other visual means of communication) and how the things people say and do with images can be interpreted”. Hence, as cultural creations, images often portray cultural values.

While multimodality is preoccupied with those properties of discourse which require reference to contextual factors in their explanation, it is evident that the preoccupations of multimodality, visual culture and advertising overlap

in such a way that a more nuanced understanding of one requires a clear understanding of the others.

Periasamy (2014) suggests that a multimodal approach takes into account multiple modes of meaning, including the visual, linguistic, audio, gestural and technical modes employed for meaning construction. As such, the approach is created not through the isolated analysis of one mode, but through the analysis of “all other modes simultaneously present and operating within a communicative context” (Kress *et al.* 2001: 43).

This informs Iedema's (2003: 58) position that the trend towards a multimodal appreciation of meaning making centres around two issues: first, the decentring of language as favoured meaning making; and second, the revisiting and blurring of traditional boundaries between the roles allocated to language, image, page layout and document design. Lister and Wells (2001: 62) also note that with the late twentieth century's explosion of imaging and visualising technologies (digitisation, satellite imaging, new forms of medical imaging, virtual reality, etc.), it is suggested that everyday life has become “visual culture”.

Díaz and Martín (2016: 100) state that “there are three fundamental causes for which advertising uses art: for inspiration, to simplify the understanding of the message and/or to differentiate itself giving added value to the product”. The word “art” in this context simply means visual art. Thus, the visual image in advertising inspires the target audience of the advertisement, aids in understanding of the message by the target audience and differentiates the product or any other object of advertisement from similar ones.

In addition to the above, Díaz and Martín add that “advertisers need to find images in order to be inspired to create their advertisements, and therefore, transfers of art into daily life via advertising are constant” (Díaz and Martín 2016: 100). This explains the reason why visual culture is of utmost importance in advertising. Messaris and Abraham (2001: 125) state more succinctly that “visual image may have the capacity of conveying messages that would meet with greater resistance if put in words, but which are received more readily in visual form”.

Olowu and Akinkurolere (2015: 171) argue that the intensity of emotion within images adds rhetorical richness to texts, resulting in added power within the overall meaning of the text. Hence, advertisers make generous use of images to capture an audience’s attention while at the same time struggling to minimise the use of words. Thus, I posit that while advertisements often have a verbal repertoire, images are their centre of attraction as these carry more messages.

Although visual images are created either on screens or in print media, such images are created with words in an audio mode of communication. Thus, it is certain that images are created to make an advertisement effective, irrespective of the mode of communication chosen by the advertiser. Judging by this explanation, Cartwright and Sturken (2001) express that modern society is often characterised as an image-saturated one with an intense image flow. Indeed, visual components are often more influential than words.

Based on the above clarifications, the interplay between multimodality, visual culture and advertising presents a better position for understanding

the concepts from different perspectives. The underlying assumption in this study is that approaching a subject matter from different perspectives will open up new insights. In this discussion, I submit that the idea of culture cannot be divorced from visual images as the images are often influenced by immediate society, as indeed are the advertisements produced.

In the advertising industry, for instance, a particular brand or product is often associated with specific images. The moment these images are perceived by someone in a given context and culture, the person quickly responds by projecting an indirect connection between the image and what the image stands for. Looking at the Nigerian context, for instance, every church has a symbol associated with it. When church members see these symbols, they quickly identify what they mean and reconnect in their affiliation with the church.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a review of literature related to advertising from a general perspective. I have examined advertising from a global worldview, reviewing works from pioneer, seminal and contemporary authors. Advertising has been discovered to be a topical issue, as scholars have examined its concepts from different disciplinary perspectives.

I have also discussed Pentecostal church advertising from a general perspective, which then led to a specific discussion on Pentecostal advertising from a Nigerian point of view. Scholars have identified that advertising is a hydra-headed phenomenon capable of being studied from several domains.

Importantly in church advertising, research has revealed diverse perspectives through which scholars have conceived such studies. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodological stance for this research.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided a review of literature relevant to advertising from different angles. In this chapter, I present detailed information on the research methodology employed for this study. The chapter examines the motivation, approach and major stages involved in the undertaking of this research.

The chapter presents the research design and methods, target population and sampling, data collection instrument, method of analysis and limitations for the study.

4.1 Research Design and Method

Having a clear research design is important in academic studies. The research design serves as the foundation for the research. In a metaphoric sense, the building is as strong as its foundation. The same analogy can be applied to research, where the research design provides technical support for all aspects of the research. The research design controls the progress and advancement of the research endeavour.

According to Durrheim (2004: 29), research design is a strategic framework for action which serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of a research strategy. In a similar definition, MacMillan and Schumacher (2001: 166) define it as a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the

research question(s). For Flick (2014), a research design is a plan for collecting and analysing evidence which will make it possible for the researcher to answer the research questions correctly.

In Flick's study, certain components are important for research design. These components include the theoretical framework, goals of the study, concrete questions, the selection procedures and the study's methodological procedures. It is thus evident that research design is a formula employed with the aim of obtaining valuable answers to research questions. The design includes an outline of what activities the researcher should be performing from beginning to end.

Thus, one could refer to research design as a research strategy. Rahi (2017) sees it as a process of collecting and interpreting data with clear objectives, while Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2012) view it as a general plan which includes how to answer the research question set by the researcher.

These positions show a research design ensures that the research contributes findings which are reliable, credible and trustworthy. It is within the above context that this chapter presents the methodological strategies employed for this research.

The study adopted a qualitative approach because it focuses on a large number of cases and examines complex patterns of interactions between variables, particularly because the research is done in a natural setting (O'Cathain *et al.* 2015).

Rahi (2017: 2) defines the qualitative approach as a method used to collect in-depth details on a particular topic. In Rahi's view, the idea that a qualitative method assumes that a single person represents group feelings and emotions is important to interpret, and this cannot be done using a quantitative method.

Authors such as Creswell (2003) explain that this approach is used when the researcher wants to observe or interpret an environment with the intention of obtaining a detailed understanding of it. Flick (2014) notes that qualitative research allows the researcher to operationalise theoretical relations, measure and quantify phenomena and create research designs which allow for the generalisation of findings.

In this study, the theoretical relations were operationalised through a critical analysis of visual texts from different theoretical standpoints, thus making it possible to see overlaps between multimodality and visual culture. The qualitative method allows research to examine the visual elements in collected data with the intention of contributing to studies on visual culture.

Since this study focuses on visual culture, it shares many tenets with the principles of semiotics. While it is impossible to study a whole population, the qualitative approach is appropriate for this study because it allows for generalisation of findings.

Yin (1994) posits that there are five key qualitative research strategies in the social sciences, namely: experiment; surveys; archival analysis; histories; and case studies. For this study, a qualitative case study design was preferred with a specific focus on church advertisements.

Flick (2014) believes that the aim of case studies is the precise description of a case. Hyett, Kenny and Dickson-Swift (2014: 2) see the case study design as an investigation and analysis of a single or collective case intended to capture the complexity of the object of study. They further note that in qualitative case study research, naturalistic, holistic, ethnographic, phenomenological and biographic research methods are drawn together, thus resulting in deep connections to the core values and intentions of the case. Crowe *et al.* (2011: 4) maintain that a case study can be used to explain, describe or explore events or phenomena in the everyday contexts in which they occur.

In another contribution, Yin (2013) sees the scope and process of the case study research as empirical because they stress the importance of context for the case. This perhaps informs Stake's (1995) explanation that case study design maintains a focus on what is studied (the case) rather than how it is studied (the method). The case study focuses on "the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case and coming to understand its activity within important circumstances".

Merriam (2009: 40) describes a case study as the depth description and analysis of a bounded system. These contributions point to the fact that the case study focuses on a particular case and that the process should be interpretive and descriptive. Flyvbjerg (2011: 103) contends that a case study design captures the key requisites in the context of research. Hence, it is "an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment".

In this regard, I intend to examine the multimodal features of advertising in church advertisements. The focus is on both the language and the social milieu of advertising.

4.2 Target Population and Sampling

A target population in research is concerned with a general populace where the findings of a study are generalisable. The target population of an investigation is thus the whole set of units from which the research data are to be used to draw results. In other words, the group of people to whom we want our research results to apply.

Eldredge, Edward and Kroth (2014: 5) note that “a population refers to the limits within which the research findings are applicable”. Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010) define the target population as “...an entire group about which some information is required to be ascertained”.

Greenland (2005) defines target population as the population about which information is wanted, or the totality of elements that are under discussion and about which information is desired. In this regard, Nigerian Christian society forms the target population for this study. Moreover, there was a need to sample a part of the population in order to conduct accurate research.

As such, this study particularly targeted church advertisements in Nigeria. It is important to mention that one researcher cannot study an entire population in an academic study. In this sense, one needs to select a sample, which is often a sizeable representation of the entire set of elements selected, using a strategic procedure from which the researcher

hopes to gain generalisable knowledge about an entire population (Altinay and Paraskevas 2008).

For Alvi (2016: 12), “a sample can be defined as a group of relatively smaller numbers of people selected from a population for investigation purposes”. He further states that a sample is considered representative when the characteristics of elements selected are similar to that of the entire target population. Hence, whilst Nigerian society is the population, the samples are the Pentecostal churches.

For this study, purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique, is favoured. In this technique, the researcher selects units to be sampled based on their knowledge and professional judgment (Altinay and Paraskevas 2008). Alvi (2016) contends that in purposive sampling, the selection of the sample is made on the basis of the subjective judgment of the investigator.

In other words, the researcher selects data that they think will best provide necessary answers to research questions. In purposive sampling, the sample is approached with a specific purpose in mind and the criteria for the elements to be included are already predefined.

Hence, I did not include all available materials, but available materials based on defined criteria. Data were purposely collected to find suitable information for the study. As such, data which are rich in visual and multimodal content form a strong part of this study. Billboard and poster advertisements were purposely selected for analysis to find relevant data for this research. Purposive sampling relevant as it allows the researcher

to select and deal with the actual data useful for the research process. The billboards and posters were selected from across the south-western region of Nigeria.

The south-western region is only one of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. Lagos, which is the most popular city in South-Western Nigeria, has witnessed the emergence of many commercial activities over the years. Various Nigerian citizens have come from their different environments to settle in Lagos with the intention of exploring its commercial opportunities. This situation has thus seen churches take a strong hold in this populous city.

It is within this context that data from Lagos constituted a large part of collected data, although data from other parts of the South-Western region such as Osogbo, Ibadan Abeokuta, and Ondo were also gathered. Data on church advertisements were collected from popular Nigerian churches, amongst which are: The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Foursquare Gospel Church, Deeper Christian Life Ministry and the Christ Apostolic Church.

In the process of data collection, the researcher visited certain south-western states (Lagos, Oyo, Osun, Ekiti, Ondo and Ogun) in Nigeria. South-western Nigeria is predominantly occupied by Yorubas. It is also worth noting that the majority of the popular churches in Nigeria have Yorubas as their general overseers. Amongst such pastors are Prophet T. B. Joshua, Bishop D. O. Oyedepo, Pastor W. F. Kumuyi and Pastor E. A. Adeboye. Given this logic, one is bound to find church popularity associated with south-western Nigeria.

As such, data were easily obtainable in the states. The researcher observed that churches spend much to erect eye-catching advertisements which aim to draw people to them. From their advertisements, it is easy to decode the values of the churches concerned.

4.3 Research Instruments and Collection Procedure

This research draws its data from documentary and archival sources on churches in Nigeria. The researcher travelled across six different states in the south-western region of Nigeria. In many cases, advertisements were duplicated across the different states. Perhaps the headquarters of different churches had produced the advertising materials and distributed them to local branches.

The researcher travelled to the various cities with a driver who was familiar with them. The driver was instrumental in getting the researcher to different areas, given his wide geographical experience of south-western Nigeria. The advertisements were gathered from selected posters and billboards pasted on church buildings, streets lights and other places. In this study, the last ten years formed the time-period for data collection because church advertising has become more popular in recent years (Adefolaju 2011).

Documentary sources play important roles in social sciences research. McCulloch (2004) explains that documentary sources have the potential to create a better understanding of modern societies by utilising documents and analysing texts from the past and present, considering sources ranging from personal archives to online documents and including books, reports, official documents and printed media.

Mogalakwe (2006: 221) equally argues that documentary sources are produced with a purpose and presented in a certain way or style, and to this extent, the researcher must be fully aware of the origins, purpose and the original audience for the documents.

While advertisements from posters and billboards are considered documentary sources, how they are communicated becomes important for this study. Since my study deals with ways of seeing, and given Mogalakwe's stance on the study of documentary sources, I am interested in the purposes of advertisements, and how they are constructed to attract the attention of an audience.

4.4 Method of Analysis

According to Flick (2013: 5), "qualitative data analysis is the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it".

Flick also argues that:

meaning-making can refer to subjective or social meanings. Qualitative data analysis also is applied to discover and describe issues in the field or structures and processes in routines and practices. Often, qualitative data analysis combines approaches of a rough analysis of the material (overviews, condensation, summaries) with approaches of a detailed analysis (elaboration of categories, hermeneutic interpretations or identified structures). The final aim is

often to arrive at generalizable statements by comparing various materials or various texts or several cases.

From Flick's position, data analysis in qualitative research entails interpreting and describing variables or similarities and differences in the available data. The data were gathered from south-western Nigeria focusing solely on posters and billboards advertisements for churches. My analysis focused on both the textual and visual elements of the advertisements. The data were thematically analysed using the tenets of multimodality as discussed in Chapter 2 whilst also drawing inspiration from the discussion on visual culture presented in Chapter 3.

Castleberry and Nolan (2018: 809-815) outline four steps for carrying out a thematic analysis namely: compiling; disassembling; reassembling; and interpreting. To compile involves collating the data into a useable form by making them consistent and organised so as to dissect and discover their individual components.

To disassemble requires creating meaningful groupings, in what they refer to as coding, which is defined as "the process by which raw data are gradually converted into usable data through the identification of themes, concepts, or ideas that have some connection with each other" (Sutton and Austin 2014: 438). In other words, identifying similarities and differences within the data.

For Castleberry and Nolan (2018: 809-815), the activity of coding involves identifying interesting features of the data systematically across the entire data set and occurs at multiple levels. Codes can take the form of

descriptive labels which directly describe the text. The coding stage answers questions such as: What is happening in the text? Who are the actors and what are their roles? When is it happening (preceding event, during event, reaction to event, etc.)? Where is it happening? What are the explicit and implicit reasons why it is happening? How is it happening (process or strategy)?

Castleberry and Nolan (2018: 809-815) note that the reassembling stage includes mapping out the codes into context with each other to create themes which capture something important about the data in relation to the research question and represent some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.

Finally, the interpreting stage involves the researcher making analytical conclusions from the data presented as themes. Castleberry and Nolan (2018: 809-815) argue that the interpretation stage occurs during the stages of compiling, disassembling and reassembling and does not necessarily have to be sequential as the stages of thematic analysis have been listed. The next chapter discusses more vividly how the researcher classified the data into different themes in terms of the stages discussed above.

4.5 Limitations

Academic studies are often not devoid of obvious limitations, particularly because there is a need to reveal gaps for future studies. As other studies have limitations, this study also has limitations. One such limitation is the lack of enough materials, especially in the area of visual culture. Hence,

the materials referred to have been largely pioneer and seminal works whilst locating more recent literature in the field has proved challenging.

The primary limitation was that the research only employed a qualitative research method which posed a great difficulty in the generalisability of findings. Incorporating quantitative or mixed-method approaches could have enriched the study. However, since the study focused on the discursive representation of churches through advertisements, the qualitative method was deemed the most appropriate.

The researcher was unable to collect every possible data produced from all Nigerian churches, especially since the study focused specifically on south-western Nigeria. Given the population and size of Nigeria, it would be considered too challenging to collect all possible data from all Nigerian churches.

Furthermore, the research considered advertisements from only churches and neglected data from traditional-practitioners and Islamic institutions which are the two other popular religions in Nigeria. However, this would have been cumbersome and outside the scope of this research. Moreover, aspects of visual culture, especially in relation to multimodality and church advertising in Nigeria are still in their infancy, and in fact across the world. As such, this study found it challenging to obtain abundant relevant literature.

Future studies could compare advertisements from Christian churches and Islamic institutions. Despite these obvious limitations, the researcher

managed to collect and investigate abundant data for this research in order to achieve the aims of the study, as well as answer the research questions.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the rudiments of research design and methodology in relation to the objectives of the study. Furthermore, I have discussed research methodology components such as sampling, target population and data collection procedure based on their relevance to the current study. As it is impossible for research to be devoid of shortcomings, I have also explored the observed limitations of the study.

In the next chapter, I present and analyse the collected data.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of selected data on church advertisements in Nigeria. The data consists of thirteen data sets or advertisements. Each datum represents a sample advertisement by a particular Nigerian church.

In the analysis, I identified and analysed features of multimodality and visual culture, relying mainly on the earlier discussions of multimodality and visual culture presented in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively. Each identified feature was applied to all the samples in order to identify patterns in Nigerian Pentecostal church advertising.

Consequently, I identified nine (9) patterns across the selected data. Although not all features applied to all the data samples, most of the features were evident in most of the samples thus creating a general impression in terms of Pentecostal churches' advertising in Nigeria.

The data presented in this chapter does not necessarily exhaust all possible advertisements under each of the categories. However, I have employed specific advertisements which convey different meanings. Although some of the categories highlighted below overlap, I have presented them as such for the purposes of this analysis.

5.2 Analysis of Nigerian Pentecostal Church Advertisements

In this section, I analyse selected Pentecostal church advertisements using relevant literature. Data have been classified and codified through thematic analysis. The goal of thematic analysis is to identify themes, i.e., patterns in the data which are important or interesting and use these themes to address the research or state something about an issue by interpreting and making sense of it (Maguire and Delahunt 2017: 3353).

The data have been compiled, disassembled and reassembled into different themes using thematic analysis as discussed above. While the visuals in selected advertisements are analysed from the theoretical perspective of multimodality, there is no doubt that text also corroborates the images. The analysis not only focuses on visual tenets but also pays attention to the fact that text complements visual materials. It is thus interesting to analyse the interrelatedness of all meaning-making events.

The following themes/patterns emerged from the data:

- i. Prophet-centrism
- ii. Problem-solving as attraction
- iii. Biblical allusion
- iv. Accessibility
- v. Discursive strategies
- vi. Population of congregation
- vii. Thematization/Focus
- viii. Temporal and spatial components
- ix. Multimodality

1. Prophet-centrism

The notion of prophet-centrism underscores the importance of the man of God or prophet in any church advertisement. The man of God is at the centre and is often considered as God's representative by members of the church. Many churches consider the man of God as the centre of the affairs of the church. Ukah (2008) supports the position that Pentecostal advertising constructs a public profile for pastors whose images literally adorn every street corner.

In what Ukah (2008) refers to as self-promotion, which he considers highly important in Pentecostalism, he posits that Pentecostal advertising is manipulating, exploiting and controlling in subtle but seductive ways. In some scenarios, the man of God is the founder of the church, while in others the man of God has merely been ordained to be the pastor in what is admitted by Bonis (2015) as being...

...pastoral leadership set apart specifically by a body of believers as a leader or overseer to instruct, nurture, guide and direct the church and individuals in pursuit of God and in paths of ministry particularly suited to that group of believers.

Johnson (1995: 182-183) recognises the role of the pastor as primarily that of a theologian, preacher and shepherd. However, in today's churches, the role of pastor is much broader. The pastor is expected to be a therapist, head of the church, and a specialist in developing and growing the church.

Significantly, the man of God is the face of the church, with power and authority vested in them by virtue of their divine calling. It is unsurprising

that some members of a church may even ascribe the role of God to pastors judging by the miraculous activities they perform on behalf of congregations, as has been the case for many years in Nigerian churches, and more recently in South Africa.

According to Nwanganga (2017: 1), “spiritual calling/direct revelation from God through dreams and visions” and “a search for spiritual development in private mannerism” account for why there are many churches in Nigeria. These reasons also account for why the man of God is the centre of attraction. As such, people focus on these men of God because of the belief that they can bring healing and other spiritual benefits. This explains why prayer houses, miracle centres, and crusade meetings are heavily attended by people seeking for divine healing or divine intervention in their lives.

In datum 1, entitled *Baba Shiloh*, the man of God is the centre of attraction and first point of contact for those who wish to visit or become members of the church. For this reason, the man of God often stands out from the rest of the congregation. Owoeye (2006: 97) affirms that from the twentieth century to date, many Pentecostal pastors have arrogated to themselves powers or gifts to heal all sorts of diseases (Owoeye 2006: 97).

This advertisement presents the pastor in a large image with a multitude of people behind him. Since the pastor sits in the office of the prophet, which is often considered a holy office, he commands a lot of respect from the followers who look up to him not only for spiritual guidance but also for material blessings as he is seen as God-sent.

Datum 3 presents the man of God as an example of a good husband who works hand-in-hand with his wife. The image of a happy and fulfilled family is particularly attractive in a modern world where many marriages fail. This advertisement implies that the man of God is successful because he works together with his wife in his ministerial duties. The woman is a divine helper designated by God to help the man of God pursue his calling.

From another perspective, this may be observed to be in line with Ukah's (2008) observation that Pentecostal leaders are attempting to legitimise their would-be successors by advertising their wives alongside themselves as "charismatic", "qualified", and "ordained" by God.

The datum also presents pictures of other ministers, which could also signify corporate anointing, thus making it easier for people to receive their blessings from different aspects. In Christianity, ministers are authorised to perform functions, such as the teaching of beliefs; leading of services and providing spiritual guidance to the community.

The same can be said of datum 6. While the face of the man of God is clear, faces of the other ministers are somewhat obscure. This implies that they are not the main pastors of the church, although they have been invited to take part in the event due to their spiritual calling.

As observed from the datum, the ministers are presented alongside the pastor of the church. Since ministers are also ordained as pastors, this presents an even stronger belief in such churches spiritually where there are many pastors with different spiritual prowess beyond a church with just one pastor. As such, potential attendees are confident that the church has

enough capable hands who will, in turn, be able to attend to the worries of the people.

Just as in datum 6, his wife is closely associated with the man of God. This suggests that they have a similar vision, goal and objective for the church. The presence of a wife in many of the advertisements, just like this datum may also suggest that in Pentecostal churches, God's work has become a family business which has to be taken care of by every member of the family.

Ukah (2008) also cautions that where pastors have begun to make their wives as popular as themselves, this is an attempt to keep the leadership of the church in the family and not extend it to strangers. A point conceded by Bertrand and Schoar (2006) is that individual churches are portrayed as "family firms" grounded in family control and nepotism, while simultaneously promoting "strong family values" as a desirable quality for organisational leadership.

In datum 5, apart from the spiritual implication of the images, there is also a physical manifestation in the presentation of images. For instance, there is a picture of Jesus Christ at the top of the billboard and the picture of the man of God directly beneath it. The pictures of other ministers are placed in front of the man of God. From another perspective, the man of God wears priestly regalia which gives an impression that not only is he priestly in his words but is equally priestly in appearance.

This portrayal of the man of God resonates with prophet-centrism within Pentecostal churches which could easily imply that the pastor is God's

representative on earth, as he stands between the human and the divine. Magezi and Banda (2017: 1-2) also pontificate that pastors or prophets mediate their presence in the lives of their followers through anointed objects such as their personal pictures, anointing oil and armbands.

In datum 1, the pastor's name or popular appellation is *Baba Shiloh*. This is in fact a popular practice in Nigerian Pentecostal churches, meant to set the man of God apart from ordinary members of the church. "Baba" is a Yoruba word which signifies father. The word father is derived from the male parent. Since the role of the parent includes supporting and providing for children, it is assumed that the parent must be in charge of the child's development in all its ramifications.

Dube (2018) refers to this Pentecostal feature as "spiritual parenting". He considers Pentecostal leaders as spiritual parent who assume the roles of mentors and guardians, thereby assuming the role of traditional parents. Dube says that although Pentecostal spiritual parents share no blood relation with their "children", he argues that they are often regarded as more important than biological parents.

The same role has been indirectly transferred to pastors in that they are portrayed as parents to all church members, and by implication responsible for their growth and development. Put differently, pastors are the spiritual fathers of members of the church and thus responsible for all their spiritual needs and development. It is also worth noting that referring to someone as "Baba" in the Yoruba culture in Nigeria signifies a high degree of respect for such a person, except in cases where it is used as a form of solidarity amongst friends.

In datum 2, the titles “Prophet (Dr.)” accompany the pastor’s name. The abbreviated title does not indicate whether the bearer holds a doctorate in any discipline or whether he is a medical doctor or even just an honorary PhD. holder. In the medical field, a doctor is considered knowledgeable in terms of health-related issues. In the academic field, a doctoral degree is the highest academic qualification attainable and signifies that someone is considered knowledgeable in a field or discipline. Judging by these explanations, whoever is referred to as “Dr.” implies that they are a knowledgeable person.

In this regard, referring to the pastor as a “Dr.” implies that he is knowledgeable, both spiritually and otherwise. As such, that the pastor is referred to as a “prophet” and a “Dr.” implies that the viewer should note that the man of God is unique and probably hears from Godly sources based on his worldly wisdom and intellect. With the use of “Dr.”, one can also imagine that the advertisement may attract an educated audience, amongst which medical doctors and academics are included.

A consideration of the two titles preceding the preacher’s name suggests that one of the titles is considered more important than the other. The title prophet is more important to the man of God, and possibly to church members. Cazarin (2017: 471) also notes that the religious titles of preachers are often mentioned to imply a certain set of gifts, skills and expertise. In data 5 and 6, the pastors are also referred to as “prophet”, resonating with the notion that they are powerful and capable of spiritual awakening.

Magezi and Banda (2017: 1-2) argue that pastors or prophets, as they tend to refer to themselves either consciously or unconsciously, compete with Christ by their domineering role in Pentecostal churches. These authors argue that the mediatory role of Pentecostal prophets is riddled with competition against the mediatory role of Christ between God and humanity as it tends to usurp Christ's role within the church.

As such, pastors are no longer channels who lead people to depend only on Christ for their spiritual security. Prophets now present themselves as super-spiritual authorities who must be relied upon in addition to Christ. The pastors or prophets project themselves as uniquely anointed by God. Hence, they receive spiritual power and authority over other believers. In this sense, Kangwa (2016: 3) also claims that Africans are attracted to the performances of prophets and prophetesses in Pentecostal-charismatic churches where they are promised good health, prosperity, marriages and travelling opportunities to the UK or America.

The pastor is the leader while others follow. In some instances, such men of God are even more revered than God Himself. The title "prophet" suggests that people will be given visions or prophecies about their lives and the future through the anointed man of God. By implication, people are often likely to be unable to desist from prophet-centrism.

From a multimodal perspective, the man of God is also presented as much more significant than the congregation. The man of God is the centre of attention, the vision bearer and the point of contact. This portrayal of the man of God resonates with the idea of prophet-centrism propagated within

Pentecostal churches. God has called the man of God, and he stands in between the human and the divine.

It should, however, be cautioned that such obsession with the man of God could be read as idolatry. This is because people tend to focus more attention on the man of God than they focus on God Himself. This is evident in the way the members of the congregation look up to the man of God in datum 2.

The dressing of the man of God is also significant. The pastor is dressed formally, wearing a suit and a tie. Given that Christianity is a religion which emanates from the West, it is thus apparent that the leader of the church not only practices the teachings of the Bible, but also adopts Western mannerisms and dress code. The same can be about datum 2 where the dressing of the man of God is not completely official or formal. He wears a black suit and a white shirt with black dots. His dressing also follows the Western mode.

Contrary to other data, datum 8 takes a completely different turn. There is no picture of the man of God in this poster. However, other posters for the same church have the pastor's name. This datum does not provide the man of God's picture – Pastor E. A. Adeboye – perhaps because he is so popular that most people would identify him through his picture. Being the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), the name is a household name in Nigeria and even beyond.

From the above analysis, it is evident that pastors in most churches play the role of mediators between God and humankind. In most of the advertisements, there is no picture of Jesus Christ, while there are many pictures of pastors/prophets. Since advertising is about what appeals to the people, one can assume that a picture of Jesus Christ on church advertisements is not as appealing as pictures of pastors or prophets generally. McCauley (2012) also cautions that the tendency in descriptions of new Pentecostalism is, in fact, to distinguish units not by denomination or theological interpretation, but instead by the individual pastor or Pentecostal leader himself. This explains the hallmark of prophet-centrism.

The idea of prophet-centrism permeates church advertisements in Nigeria which is also evident in the samples discussed and substantiated above. Given the centrality of the man of God in most Pentecostal churches, some believers tend to “worship” the man of God instead of God himself. It is in fact based on how these pastors are portrayed in a prestigious manner which informs Marshall’s (2009) description that Pentecostal church leaders can be likened in Nigeria as being analogous to political big men.

2. Problem-solving as Attraction

According to Boyer (2014), there are four functions of a pastor’s office. The first is the predictive element; the second is the hortatory element in prophecy; the third is the possession of supernatural knowledge; while the final one is the power to perform miracles and wonders. To Boyer (2014: 5), Christ exercised all these functions of his prophetic office. It can thus be asserted that Jesus Christ, according to the Christian faith, is the highest prophet.

In recent times, pastors have predominantly concentrated on the last two functions. People often face challenges and look for ways to resolve these. Often, when people have problems, they focus more on finding a solution than on the authenticity of the person who brings the solution. This probably explains why charismatic pastors who claim to perform miracles have large numbers of followers.

Amanze (2013), in this regard, notes that prophecy and healing contribute to the success and growth of Pentecostal churches. Thus, healing miracles and prophecies which appear to be accurate seem to attract many people who believe that the pastor has supernatural powers bestowed upon him by God. Ukah (2008) further suggests that “miracles” are a critical selling point of Pentecostal advertising. For him, miracles come in different shades according to the various spiritual gifts claimed by individual pastors.

The idea of problem-solving as attraction deals with how the advertiser uses problem-solving as a strategy to make people respond to advertising; that is, to make them attend the programme. Most of the selected advertisements portray the church as a place where those who have problems find solutions through healing, deliverance and financial breakthrough. Generally, the different Pentecostal churches’ advertisements place strong emphasis on prophecy, the power of the Holy Spirit, the material prosperity of believers and healing miracles (Amanze 2013).

In datum one, for example, the use of the word “Shiloh” (a place of prayer in the Old Testament) gives credence to the advertisement. Anyone who understands the importance of this place could easily associate the church with the power to deal with difficult problems. Shilo is the place in the Bible

where Hannah, a barren woman, prayed to God until she eventually conceived and gave birth to Samuel, a famous prophet of the Old Testament. The name Shilo is associated with miraculous solutions to situations which may seem insurmountable. People who read this advertisement are likely to be enticed to believe that if they attended this prayer meeting, they will also receive answers to their problems.

The Biblical Hannah faced humiliation from co-wife, Peninah, who often reminded her of her barrenness. However, Hannah's vows and prayers at Shiloh changed her condition for the better. Shiloh symbolises a place where God answers prayers. Abasili (2015) affirms that Hannah's ordeal of childlessness was resolved by going to God in Shiloh, which is a good example of the positive role of faith in God. Thus, solving problems is an essential aspect of Pentecostalism. Hunt (2000) also concedes that virtually all Pentecostal groupings throughout the world have come to endorse the importance of the "healing ministry".

Datum 2 introduces its problem-solving objective with the phrase "it is possible". This implies that whatever problem the people have, there will be a solution to it. Consequently, everyone who needs a solution to a problem is encouraged to attend the programme. This is similar to datum 3 with the caption "THERE IS NO PROBLEM WITHOUT A SOLUTION." The caption suggests that every problem can be resolved by being part of the church.

In essence, guests are assured of solutions to their problems. Apart from this, the name of the programme, "SOLUTION NIGHT", implies that

problems will be solved during the programme. One of the features of contemporary Pentecostalism is certainty in the power of God. The advertisements exude confidence in God's unquestionable ability to solve problems. Kuponu (2015: 75) also notes that the power and influence of "evangelisation" in Pentecostal outreaches is often hinged on the demonstrative effect of miracles claimed by some church leaders and founders, which continue to have a wider impact because of the contextualisation of their emphasis and an appropriation of traditional elements.

Advertisements encourage potential attendees to cast away doubt and believe that "SOLUTION NIGHT" will solve their problems. In the same vein, related literature notes that people with problems are often drawn to the Pentecostal movement (Poloma 1989), as scholars have argued that healing and deliverance represent a manifestation of Pentecostal power (Belcher and Hall 2001: 68).

Since one of the major techniques of attraction in church advertisements in Nigeria is the "problem-solving as attraction" technique, there are some indices in datum 4 worth noting. For instance, the expression "Miracle Tabernacle: Home of Signs & Wonders" indicates that miracles happen in the lives of people who attend the church programme. In addition, the expression also indicates that there will be signs and wonders in the lives of those who attend the programme.

Datum 4 also invokes the power of Jesus Christ, the source of all powers claimed by Pentecostal churches. The image of Jesus presents him as proffering solutions to the problems of the man in the advertisement. Since

Jesus himself performed several miracles historically, consumers of such advertisements will perceive such a church programme as an avenue to obtain miraculous answers to their problems.

The growth of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria can also be attributed to miracle working. According to Diara and Onah (2014: 399), a healing miracle seems to be the strongest reason why people join new movements, and it is in fact one of the major sources for the success of Pentecostal ministries in contemporary society, especially in Nigeria.

Datum 7 is hydra-headed in its use of problem-solving as attraction. The caption for the programme thus reads: "4 DAYS POWER PACKED DECEMBER 2018 RETREAT". It is suggested that before a problem can be solved, one needs access to a power which is greater than that problem. From a religious point of view, the word "power" suggests efficacy and competence.

By implication, the retreat is more robust than every possible societal problem once may encounter. The fact that the retreat is power packed is an indication that the programme is powerfully prepared to combat all sorts of spiritual challenges.

Secondly, the latter part of the theme reads: "DELIVERANCE from SATANIC OPPRESSION & lot more". This expression speaks to healing processes which will be available during the programme. Diara and Onah (2014) stipulate that the practice of spiritual gifts and emphasis on the activities of the Holy Spirit, especially divine healing, are essential factors

which attract people to Pentecostal churches, since people are generally impressed by extraordinary things; e.g. healing and deliverance services.

At the same time, it has been discovered that church activities are now so commercialised that all events have to be heavily marketed. Nwakwegu (2016: 54) notes that religion and its services are now seen as products, and as such church services and programmes need to be marketed; hence Christian advertisements are an accepted form of marketing. Since churches are now perceived as organisations whose service or product should be portrayed as the best, it is logical that the services offered by churches need to be exaggerated to suit the requirements of the people.

For instance, most people believe that Satan is the cause of their problem, despite there being many self-imposed, society-imposed, profession-imposed, government-imposed, and so forth, problems in the world. In what Diara and Onah (2014) refer to as social factor, Pentecostal churches, in the form of pastoral care, contribute significantly to the social welfare of their members which is considered an exceptionally good feature of Pentecostalism.

The advertisement suggests that one's problem will be solved if one is delivered from Satan. The expression "lots more" suggests an open-ended promise of miracles. There will be deliverance from all kinds of problems. As such, attendees who are in one spiritual bondage or the other can decipher the spiritual meaning of deliverance as a journey to salvation from the advertisement and thus try all possible means to obtain solutions to their problems from the church event.

Spiritual problems are considered highly detrimental, and as such spiritual deliverance is required. Kangwa (2016) supports this assertion that deliverance is perceived as the freedom from spiritual powers which limit or hinder humans in their striving for wellbeing. In essence, if the root of a problem is spiritual, the solution should be equally spiritual.

Similarly, datum 8 addresses this theme from two perspectives. In the church logo, the dove represents the outpouring of the spirit of God, which churches believe is powerful enough to perform signs and wonders. The church logo reflects the concept of problem-solving as a point of attraction. This probably explains why the church employs the logo in all its marketing materials, such as signboards, flyers, posters, and so forth. In fact, the church often records miracles from many of its programmes through testimonies shared by believers on television and other media platforms.

The theme of the programme is also instrumental in the problem-solving strategy. The theme reads – “songs of victory”. Victory comes when someone has overcome a particular challenge. Thus, to sing songs of victory figuratively implies overcoming difficult circumstances. Since it is generally believed amongst Nigerians that life itself is a battle, singing songs of victory after a battle signifies victory. In addition, the victory can be extended to all areas of human endeavour.

The notion of problem-solving as a means of attracting people, followers or participants to church/Christian programmes cannot be overemphasised. This is because most people who attend church programmes do so primarily to solve or avoid problems. Datum 9 clearly illustrates this point.

First, the name of the ministry suggests problem-solving. The name is “GOD OF FIRE GLOBAL EVANGELICAL MINISTRY”. “GOD OF FIRE” suggest that God can use His fire to burn away all problems in people’s lives. In other words, when people make themselves available, God will solve their problems.

The theme of the crusade highlights problem-solving as a strategy that the church uses to attract followers. The theme is: “OH LORD, LET THY KINGDOM COME.” This theme suggests that when the kingdom of God comes, people will experience deliverance in all spheres of their lives. The biblical perception of this verse is that the kingdom of God does not have troubles or problems, and if it comes to the people all their problems will be solved.

There are also keywords presented in the advertisement, such as “Healing”, “Restoration”, “Deliverance”, “Breakthrough”, “Salvation” and “Word”. In this regard, Ukah (2008) also emphasises features which are relevant and valued by African people, such as prophecy, healing, prayer, visions, dreams and the use of sacred objects. These features often resonate with the conditions of the people. These items meet the expectations of a churchgoer who has been drawn back by several spiritual challenges.

The items border on problem-solving because each of them focuses on a particular advantage for the participants. Rotimi, Nwadiakor and Ngwucha (2016: 10) suppose that because Pentecostal churches tend to present themselves as receiving help directly from the Holy Spirit to overcome life challenges, they readily became a bastion of hope for a vast number of

Nigerians who have had to struggle for an existence in the ailing Nigerian economy.

Rotimi, Nwadiakor and Ngwucha (2016) also note that Pentecostalism adapts itself to the local indigenous societies of most people and is apparently “growing amidst the poor and the marginalized people of Nigeria, providing communal support in situations of social disintegration, and living as a true ‘Church of the poor’ seeking both spiritual and physical empowerment to free themselves through God’s power from oppression”.

The first item, for instance, promises healing to participants who attend the programme. Thus, those battling with one sickness or another will easily be attracted to the idea that they will receive healing. The next feature is restoration, which suggests that participants will regain anything that they have lost in the past. These show that the advertiser has used problem-solving as a means to attract people’s attention and ultimately lure them to the crusade.

Similarly, “The Flourishing Family Int’l Bible Church” in datum 10 portrays the church as a family which is free from problems. The idea of a flourishing family is particularly attractive in the context of challenges that the institution of marriage experiences around the world. The phrase “redeeming the woman”, targets women who may feel oppressed by their culture and society; women who want their voices to be heard in the domestic space and in society in general. Therefore, the phrase attracts women because they know that the programme will solve their “lack of redemption”.

In the same vein, the phrase “making the family life sweet” is intended to entice couples who may be experiencing challenges in their marriages. It assures them that the church has answers to their marital and family problems. Consciously, the advertiser is aware that many families in our world today are facing difficulties. Consequently, they try to appeal to people facing problems in their families to also seek spiritual help.

In a rather pragmatic manner, datum 11 does not speak directly to problem-solving. However, it suggests ways to unlock challenges. This is evident in the theme of the programme: “THE KEY OF DAVID.” A key opens door and provides alternatives. The implication is that the “KEY OF DAVID” will open whatever doors participants want it to open.

A key signifies control over one’s destiny. With a key, one can close and open doors. A key can close doors to all problems and open all doors to solutions. The affirmed Bible verse quoted in the advertisement reads thus: “What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open”. (NIV). This verse suggests that the ultimate solution to all human problems is God because he has the power to shut and open doors as he wishes.

Datum 12, which advertises the “The Lagos City Wide Crusade” also suggests problem-solving in its theme – “SUPERNATURAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE GOD OF WONDERS”. To start with, a supernatural encounter gives an experience beyond the natural. Anybody who has a supernatural encounter is likely to experience supernatural breakthroughs, success, blessings and other good things in life. The phrase “GOD OF WONDERS” goes a step further to qualify the kind of God that this church worships; he

is a God of wonders. Hence, attendees should expect experiences beyond the natural realm.

The word “crusade” also suggests problem-solving. A crusade is a kind of military expedition undertaken by Christians in the eleventh through thirteenth centuries to re-conquer the Levant from Muslims. From this perspective, a crusade is a spiritual battle to reclaim all God’s lost glory, blessings, and so forth. Thus, people will be positively disposed to attend the programme because of the blessings and other good things they will “reclaim from the devil”.

Finally, datum 13 advertises Calvary Bible Church with the theme “MY REDEEMER LIVES” which affirms the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. Hence, whatever problem the people take to the venue, the redeemer will solve. “My redeemer lives” is a Christian dictum which proclaims Jesus’ victory over death and the gift of eternal life which he extends to believers.

Drawing from the above analysis, it is evident that churches target different societal problems when addressing their audiences. It is common knowledge that life is full of challenges, and as such, churches exploit this situation to project themselves as the ultimate solution to all of humanity’s problems. Owoeye (2006: 109) stipulates that many of the Pentecostal healers lay emphasis on “salvation” or the transformation of human life from an unclean past and reconciliation with God. As such, healing, deliverance and prosperity for their members are regarded as “abundant life” which the gospel offers for Christians.

Owoeye (2006: 112) further states that many pastors believe that the "signs and wonders" at crusades and other places are a manifestation of God's presence at a gathering. In turn, miracle and healing are an essential part of the gospel. Diara and Onah (2014) also buttress that although the performing of miracles is only one aspect of the Pentecostal tradition, it is often the pivot of Pentecostal activity, especially amongst the "prophet healing" types.

In support of the healing capacity of Pentecostal churches, Owoeye (2006) maintains that although seeking solutions through religious means may appear impracticable to philosophers, scientists and other rational thinkers, within the context of Nigerian Pentecostal churches, seeking for solutions to individual problems, sociological dilemmas and political logjams from the church is indeed both practicable and feasible.

3. Biblical Allusions

Since Pentecostal church advertisements seek to attract people to church services or programmes, one cannot doubt the importance of having biblical references in church marketing materials. It is essential to demonstrate that the church activity or event is within the purview of the word of God as specified in the Bible. For Appah and George (2017), church advertising involves churches packaging the word of God, which is unadulterated, to meet the needs of the people in fulfilling the church's mission. As such, the preaching or word evangelism should put the audience at centre stage and present the word as was preached by Jesus to meet the needs of the audience. This is exactly the role of biblical allusion in church advertising.

Church advertisements often refer to events, incidences, and teachings in the Bible. Thus, biblical reference refers to the use of a particular Bible verse to support or complement what the advertiser seeks to communicate to the audience. Nwakwegu (2016) submits that Christian advertising as a specific domain draws largely from Christian ideological assumptions and communicates certain overt and covert messages. Nwakwegu comments that the audience's background knowledge and assumptions are crucial factors in the interpretation of church advertising messages.

In most instances, churches use Bible verses to support the activities of the church, such as crusades, prayer meetings and services. Scripture lends credence and gives advertisements more validity or authenticity. A point conceded by Amanze (2013) is that the success of prophets and pastors in many Pentecostal churches is based on their ability to select certain elements from the Bible which appeal to people and give them hope that their spiritual, social, economic and political needs will be fulfilled.

In the first datum, the name of the pastor is partially derived from the Bible. The biblical word in the advertisement which signals this reference is "Shilo". In the Bible, as discussed above, Shiloh was the place where the prophet Eli prayed for Hannah who had hitherto been barren. Shortly after the prophet's prayer, Hannah gave birth to a son, and later also had other children.

With respect to datum 2 there is a clear reference to a biblical verse, which is Luke 1:37. The verse reads thus: "For nothing is impossible with God" (New International Version). This Bible verse serves as the theme of the church's prayer gathering. However, the focus of the theme is slightly

different from the exact quotation in the Bible, as the quotation from the bible is longer and more detailed. In datum 7, the theme of the programme is “PREPARE TO MEET YOUR GOD” which has been retrieved from Amos 4:12 of the King James Version that reads: “Therefore, this will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel”.

The biblical reference resonates with the theme of datum 8, “SONGS OF VICTORY”, derived from the book of Psalms 95:2. The verse reads thus: “Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with *songs of praise*” {italics and bold form mine}. Although the word “victory” is not contained in this verse, the word is used as a replacement for the word “praise” found in the verse. Appah and George (2017) note that preaching or word evangelism should put the audience at centre stage and present the word as was preached by Jesus to meet the needs of the audience. This is exactly the role of biblical allusion in church advertising.

In datum 9, the advertiser alludes to Matthew 6:10, which in the advertisement reads: “OH LORD, LET THY KINGDOM COME”. The King James version of the verse reads thus: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”. The portion used is part of the Lord’s prayer commonly read and recited by Christians. Some believe that the prayer contains all things that a man may ever need in life.

Datum 10 is rich in biblical allusions. There are three biblical references in the data which are used to support the themes: “raising true worshippers”; “redeeming the woman”; and “making the family life sweet”. These themes

are derived from John 4:23-24, Exodus 3:7-10 and Genesis 1:26-28 respectively. The quotations situate these biblical verses in the context of the church's activities.

In datum 11, there are two references to two different Bible verses, namely Hebrews 13:8 and Revelation 3:7. The first one reads from the New International Version (NIV) thus: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever". Since Jesus is considered the "Messiah", it becomes pertinent that Jesus is significant in the everyday lives of the people of the church. At the same time, Jesus Christ remains the same for the church. Though the role players such as pastors and other ministers may change, Jesus will forever be present for the people.

The second verse, also from the New International Version (NIV), reads thus: "To the angel of the church in Philadelphia...who holds the key of David..." David is often considered a man after God's heart for many reasons, one of which was his ability to repent remorsefully once he realised he had sinned. His popularity with God is further evidenced in his victory over Goliath and his coronation in becoming a king, despite not being the first choice.

The biblical verses used give credence, authority, and authenticity to the advertisement. Considering the first verse, one can say that it is used because the Christian faith rests solely on the principles of Jesus Christ, his life and resurrection. Therefore, the advertiser uses it to buttress their idea that the church relies on the principles and teachings of Jesus Christ which, as a result, would inform the ways of the church. Nwakwegu (2016:

42) also points out that Christian advertising leans on the ideology of Christianity as the basis by which it communicates with its target audience.

In most instances where an advertisement makes a biblical allusion, the Bible verse supports the theme or focus of a church programme. This sequence implies that churches can use scripture to support anything which they wish to, which is somewhat problematic given that churches ought to use the Bible as their manual rather than a means to an end.

4. Accessibility

I discuss the concept of accessibility in terms of how the expected adherents connect with the man of God who also doubles as the church's marketing officer. The pastor is the point of connection between God and the church. The followers believe in his leadership and ability to connect them with God. The concept of accessibility in the advertisement is chain-like. Adherents who wish to communicate with God do so through the pastor who acts as a mediator between God and the rest of the congregation.

The advertisements provide different channels through which adherents or participants can reach the man of God. These include telephone, email and social media contact details. Churches use new media technologies, such as Facebook and Twitter, to reach large numbers of people simultaneously. Social media have become a popular phenomenon in marketing; it is therefore unsurprising that churches employ social media for marketing purposes. Togarasei (2015) also states that churches have moved on to modern media technologies for the sake of advertising such as cellular

phones, the Internet, street billboards and street-light advertisements, satellite broadcasting and so forth.

In datum 1 and datum 11, phone numbers and physical addresses are provided to ensure easy access to the church and the man of God. Datum 11, for instance, provides contact details and names of people that potential attendees can contact. The presentation of these details and the people's positions indicate that the intended attendees have a variety of people to contact for information purposes. For example, while Revd. Kalu is in charge of music; Deacon Sonubi is the head of the organising committee.

Datum 6, 8, 10 and 13 embrace digitisation in their advertisements. However, some Pentecostal churches have not yet embraced social media as a tool for marketing church activities. White, Tella and Ampofo (2016) make a strong case for the role of social media in Pentecostal churches in Ghana when they argue that the emergence of social media has changed the face of communication all over the world.

Accessibility/connectivity transcends mere presentation of address or phone number. Wise (2014: 26-27) also emphasises that social media use by individuals and organisations and its popularity make it imperative for the church to take advantage of this phenomenon to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In addition to address and phone numbers, datum 6 also provides a Facebook link. This strongly implies that the advertiser is fully aware of the role of social media in connecting with people. Datum 8 presents the actual weblink for the church, which is significant because all other contact details

of the church are already available on the website, including information about the advertised programme.

Datum 10 also provides three channels to contact the church, including Facebook. Datum 13 relies on three of the most popular social media platforms in Nigeria, namely: Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. Vosko (2011: 91) affirms that the primary purpose for using social media is to establish and maintain relationships, and to connect and stay connected with members of a congregation.

The advertiser expects adherents or participants to connect with the church mostly through social media or their website. Kuponu (2015: 76) also commends the use of internet facilities by Nigerian Pentecostal churches in their advertisements. He observes that because we live in an increasingly “wired” world through advancements in communications technology and the Internet, the Internet has now become a part of modern-day life and thus also a veritable tool in the hands of the Pentecostal churches.

According to Asamoah-Gyadu (2007: 232), the use of social media as a tool for evangelism could offer people the opportunity to be born again without being physically present at the location of a religious service. It is a tool for interaction and connection which opens doors and opportunities to engage with people who rarely, if ever, set foot in a church building.

The use of social media links and website implies that the advertiser is conscious of the importance of ICT in the twenty-first century. Churches which do not have ICT experts may hire such experts to run their ICT

channels or outlets. In addition to this, the presence of the Facebook link implies that the church is willing to connect with the youth, as most of today's youth are active on social media.

Kuponu (2015) further notes that Pentecostal churches consider the Internet as a medium for Christian outreach as Pentecostal churches now have websites in order to maintain extensive global networks, and have great appeal for the upwardly mobile youth. He opines that the use of the Internet is inclined towards increased following, visibility, exposure, influence and public presence.

This further shows that the churches subscribe to the latest trends in the globalised world. Social media's features of connectedness, interactivity and being community-driven have proven useful to churches and pastors. Online platforms, such as social media, supplement a user's involvement with their local church (Campbell and Calderon 2007: 267).

White, Tella and Ampofo (2016: 1) also argue that social media as a new phenomenon has become a tool used by many televangelists and pastors for mission purposes. Since pastors and churches are followed by people from different religious and societal backgrounds, it has offered pastors and their congregations the opportunity to form relationships with large numbers of people simultaneously.

5. Discursive Strategies

Churches use compelling language to attract people to their programmes. The use of compelling language to convince people about the need to attend a programme is an important characteristic of church advertising in

Nigeria. Although this is similar to the use of problem-solving as a means of attracting people, the use of compelling language is different because not every expression has the capacity to entice people.

In this instance, Nwakwegu (2016) observes that Christian advertisers and their target audiences share common values which usually form the background based upon which they both interact upon the platform of the language of advertising. He maintains that advertisers appeal to an audience through the offer of some benefits, mostly abstract, for which they cannot be held responsible if not fulfilled.

Nwankwegu *et al.* (2014) reveal that church advertising is filled with pragmatic strategies employed to persuade or manipulate audiences. In a similar vein, Nwankwegu (2016) sees Christian advertising as a specific domain, which draws largely from Christian ideological assumptions and communicates certain overt and covert messages based on its audiences' background knowledge and assumptions, which are crucial factors in the theoretically relevant interpretation of advertisement.

In datum 1, the advertiser uses code-switching as a strategy to appeal to their audience. Akindele and Adegbite (1999) refer to code-mixing as a situation where two or more codes (e.g. languages) are used in a conversation. This concept is possible because of contact linguistics. Given the historical contact between English and Nigerian languages, it is common for speakers to use both English and a Nigerian language in a single conversation.

The word “baba” in the phrase “Baba Shilo Prayer Mountain” is a Yoruba word which means father, while the word “Shilo” has a biblical origin. As discussed earlier under prophetization, the word “baba” implies a parent who is concerned with one’s development. The combination of these words implies that he is the father of Shiloh and as such spiritually powerful enough to make a positive impact based on the general understanding of Hannah’s ordeal at Shiloh. Baba Shiloh in this sense is able to make dreams come true, given their spiritual implication.

Another example of code-mixing can be found in the theme of the program, which is “Bobadake Night”. The word “bobadake” is a Yoruba word which means “If you keep quiet”. The implication of this expression is that participants at the programme should not keep quiet, because if they do, they will not receive their expected miracles. In other words, they must be explicit in describing their worries.

Similarly, in datum 2, the code-mixing idea is used in the expression “FAYEGBAMI PROPHETIC OUTREACH STORMS ILESA”. The word “FAYEGBAMI” is a Yoruba word which means “to permit me”, or by extension, freedom. This suggests that participants of the programme demand freedom from all kinds of bondage. The word “fayegbami” corroborates the theme of the programme – “It is possible”. This shows that it is possible for participants to do whatever they wish to from a spiritual perspective.

Datum 3 also has a feature of code-mixing. While the first part of the advertisement appears in English, the second part appears in Yoruba. The

entire expression reads: “SOLUTION NIGHT PRESENTS OLORUN ABANIMULE MADANI”. The Yoruba expression translates as “God who makes a covenant without wavering”. This expression captures the people’s minds and makes them realise that God is sovereign. Therefore, in His sovereignty, he keeps His covenant with men. This is likely to give attendees a sense of assurance that God will do whatever he says he will.

Advertisers tend to consider their immediate environment in their selection of discursive strategies. The use of English as a medium for advertising church activities makes the advertisements formal and inaccessible to the uneducated. On the other hand, using the Yoruba language makes the advertisement informal and accessible to many people, including those who are not educated.

The use of code-mixing helps to familiarise the audience with an advertisement. These advertisements target people living in a Yoruba environment. Jiang (2014) also explains that code-mixing is a unique and strategic communicative practice which bilinguals and multilinguals often use to demonstrate their multilingual identities and to enhance their communication.

I should quickly mention that some of the advertisements have no elements of code-mixing apparent. In datum 5, 6 and 7, the use of language does not appear with instances of code-mixing like we find in other data. This does not mean the advertiser is trying to relegate the Yoruba language to the background. However, it speaks to the dominance of the English language in Nigerian media and of it being the *lingua franca* of the country.

Datum 3 uses compelling language to convince people to attend its programme. To begin with the expression “THERE IS NO PROBLEM WITHOUT A SOLUTION”, in capitals for emphasis, indicates the use of language to attract people’s attention. The expressions “SOLUTION NIGHT” and “GOD & GOD ALONE” also indicate the use of language to convey statements of faith.

Chibueze, Ordu and Omoghie (2017: 76) affirm that key words are used in church advertisements not only as descriptive and emotive elements but also as phrases and simple sentences. The simplicity of the syntax makes it possible for the majority of the audience or passers-by to read and quickly interpret the themes presented.

In datum 4, the expression “Miracle Tabernacle: Home of Signs & Wonders” indicates that everybody who attends the programme will have the opportunity to enjoy one miracle or another. There is also an indication that the venue of the programme serves two purposes. The first is that it is a place of worship, a tabernacle. Secondly, the tabernacle is a place where congregants encounter the supernatural; i.e. “a house of signs and wonders”.

The language of church advertising can be characterised as “faith rhetoric”, particularly because of its certainty about issues which have no empirical evidence. All the various programmes advertised in this datum appeal to potential attendees through the use of forceful religious language. For instance, the first programme is a “liberation service”, which lures guests by promising them liberation from spiritual bondage. The advertisement

constructs potential guests as lacking something (freedom) that the church can provide.

The second programme is tagged a “Deliverance & Miracle Hour”, which is synonymous with the “liberation service”. It attracts participants by claiming to offer something which they need. It creates the impression that everyone is looking for deliverance from one difficulty or another. The last programme tagged “Miracle Night”, purports to be a night where every participant could receive a miracle.

The name of the church “Word of Power World Evangelical Ministry” attract potential congregants by promising power and claiming worldly influence. People usually want to be associated with organisations which have influence internationally. This probably explains why churches, including those which do not have an impact nationally, claim to have global influence.

As such, Kitage (2015) observes that under the hard economic pressures of capitalism, prosperity gospel seems to offer a pragmatic gospel which addresses the practical needs of the citizenry, and this accounts for why millions of people endear themselves with prosperity gospel. Kitage proceeds to intimate that the Pentecostal idea of healing covers the spiritual and the physical deliverance from demonic attack and healing from poverty.

In a similar vein, datum 6 promises fulfilment rather than solutions to problems. The theme “UNSTOPPABLE GLORY” affirms both the power of God whose power is unstoppable, and that of the church which operates

this power. Most people want to live a good problem-free life. The church taps into this need by promising breakthroughs; multiple blessings which manifest through ownership of the latest versions of nearly everything – from cars to cellular telephones, and from clothes to shoes. The theme “UNSTOPPABLE GLORY” does not promise anything specific although it raises expectation. Pentecostal churches often manipulate the human desire to live in abundance by promising limitless heavenly blessings.

The advertisements also use ICT language such as “@” instead of “at” and social media symbols for social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. This is probably an attempt to project the church as modern, dynamic and moving with the times. In datum 2, 3 and 13, amongst others, the use of ampersand (&) (datum 4 and 7) in the expressions “signs & wonders”, “Deliverance & Miracle Hour” and “salvation, message, healing & deliverance”.

In datum 9, the name of the church, “**GOD OF FIRE GLOBAL EVANGELICAL MINISTRY**”, is clear not only because of the way it is written in bold capital letters, but also because of its promise of power and global outreach. The name has some compelling features, such as the use of the word “fire”, which is believed to be potent enough to burn problems away. The second factor of interest is the use of the word “global” which creates the impression that the church has a global outlook. Fire is associated with power, which implies that the church has the power to deal with people’s problems. In addition, the word “global” implies that participants can enjoy fellowship in a church which has global influence.

Although most of the churches are based in specific localities in Nigeria, the rhetoric of having global influence is attractive to many people who wish to connect with the outside world. The tag of the programme, “7 DAYS MIGHTY CRUSADE”, is also worth examining. The advertisement refers to “7 days” instead of one week to give the impression that the period is shorter. In the contemporary world, most people are not attracted to lengthy church gatherings. The theme of the crusade and the feature mentioned earlier use compelling language to convince people to attend the crusade.

Datum 11 has rich discursive strategies. Firstly, the quotation “Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever” implies that Jesus’ power remains the same. Hence, he can still do the same miracles he did in the past through the church and the man of God. If the church truly relies on the power of Jesus, and his power exists forever, miracles and spiritual healings will continue to exist.

Compelling, often manipulative, language is also evident in sub-themes such as “Life changing seminars, interactive group discussions, leadership and accountability training, business empowerment/awareness, and impact of ICT in music”. These five themes address different areas of human endeavour. Hence, it is most likely that participants will be interested in at least one or two of these themes. Kannan and Tyagi (2013) argue that advertising is a mass persuasion activity.

The theme of datum 12, “SUPERNATURAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE GOD OF WONDERS” is quite compelling and convincing because anybody who hears or reads it will want to have this kind of encounter. The word “crusade” is also significant as it claims to reclaim lost glory, blessings, and

so forth, in somebody's life. The language is simple and straightforward. The use of this kind of language ensures that everybody understands the contents of the advertisement, irrespective of their educational status. In datum 13, the advertiser makes use of compelling language to pass their intended message to the audience.

The theme "MY REDEEMER LIVES" gives assurance to potential participants by invoking the immortality of Jesus Christ. If the redeemer lives, he can do all things in the lives of the invited attendees.

6. Population of the Congregation

Most Nigerian Pentecostal churches advertise by displaying multitudes of people in a church. The general assumption is that a church with many followers is more powerful than a church with few followers. There is also a misconception that big churches with large congregations have powerful pastors who can perform more miracles. People are often likely to prefer a church which already has many followers.

In datum 1, a huge congregation of joyful believers accompanies the pastor's image. Members of the church appear dedicated and committed to the man of God as demonstrated by their raising of hands and closing of eyes. In Christianity, closing eyes is a symbol of a submissive and focused soul. This is similar to datum 7 where church members are presented in worship mode. Although their faces are not clear, it is evident that they expect blessings and miracles from God based on their raised hands which symbolise faith and surrender. This resonates with Cazarin's (2017) view that worshippers are often portrayed as multitudes and also with a strong

focus on ecstatic states by images of people crying, praying with their eyes closed or with their hands and arms in imminent movement.

Datum 3 presents seven ministers who have been invited to the event. This suggests that the church has high patronage and is powerful. This is not far from the impression derived from datum 4. Although this particular datum does not have pictures of the church members or congregation, there is an implied congregation. The destitute man and the disciples of Jesus are part of the congregation.

Consequently, everybody who believes in Jesus or follows him and everybody who receives divine assistance is a member of the congregation. Datum 8 does not present images of the congregation either. One can assume that they rely more on the name of the church, which is one of the most populous churches in Nigeria, if not the most populous. Hence, the congregation is already evident in the status of the church.

In datum 5, the congregation is presented in a way which suggests that there are many members in the church. Although the images are not clear, there are silhouettes presented to demonstrate the congregation of the church. In datum 10, the high level of patronage is obvious. The first is the three circles that portray members of the congregation in different family stages, beginning with the “word” of God.

The second circle is entitled “worship”. In the background, a large congregation of worshippers is presented. The last circle entitled ‘prayer’ shows another large congregation in a prayer session. All of these images

prove that the church has a large number of followers. The advertiser communicates the message that miracles, healing, breakthroughs and divine manifestations attract many people to the church.

Datum 11 presents the congregation in two different ways. In the first instance, a congregation is presented behind the man of God. This gives the impression that the man of God is the leader of the congregation just as a shepherd leads their flock. The second presentation of the congregation is in one of the frames of the film-strip image. The first congregation is more populous than the second one. Both instances indicate that the church is large enough to accommodate people from all occupations.

Lastly, datum 12 takes a slight stylistic turn with no presentation of the congregation. Firstly, the programme targets the youth, especially university students. Therefore, it does not have any serious interest in the population of the church as a whole. Secondly, the church is already so popular that it does not need to attract people by displaying its congregation.

In addition to the foregoing, the congregation is not available in the datum because of the guest artist who is capable of drawing participants to the programme. Similarly, the partners of the programme also have their followers who can easily influence people to attend the event. In this regard, one can conclude that some advertisements do not use congregation as an advertising technique because it is a replaceable element.

7. Thematization or Focus

The role of effective and efficient themes cannot be overemphasised. In fact, the theme can be said to be the nucleus of any event as it suggests every related aspect of that event. In literature, for example, the theme connects the different components of a story with the characters, settings and events. Thus, the theme keeps the writer of a story on point. Where necessary, the theme becomes more explicit through the use of sub-themes that will in consequence build up to the main subject which is the primary theme.

The theme serves as the central focus of the programme and is one of the strategies for drawing people closer to the programme inasmuch as they are able to resonate with the theme. In church advertisements, just as the theme is important to the advertiser, so it is to the audience. Put differently, thematization is a technique used by church advertisers to focus the attention of intended participants on specific aspects of church programmes. Natarajan *et al.* (2018) postulate that thematization in advertising revolves around the idea that the theme of any advertisement plays a major role in influencing the purchase intention of consumers.

In datum 1, the theme is “Bobadake Night”. There are some important effects the theme can have on an audience. One, the invited attendees cannot afford to be silent on their burning issues as this would imply that they are not ready to face their challenges. Secondly, the programme is all-night because it is believed that keeping vigil has positive spiritual implications.

The advertiser has used this theme to focus the attention of the intended participants on the blessing they will receive during the programme. Kitause (2015) also affirms that Pentecostals believe in divine intervention in their situations; hence the reason for most of the prayer and vigils. It is their belief that these programmes target to settle and uproot any hitch to one's breakthrough in the months or years following.

The theme in datum 2 is "It is possible." Basically, the theme suggests that whatever the dimensions of the invited participants' desires are, they can be met. For instance, some people's desire will be for children. Others may desire financial breakthroughs, business opportunities, academic excellence, spouses or material things, to mention only a few. The impression created by the theme is that all of these things are possible. The only prerequisite for their possibility is attendance.

It is worth noting that the advertiser may have intentionally removed the word "not", which appears in the bible verse from which the theme is taken to avoid negative connotation. This may be because of the possible connotations of impossibility which the word "not" possesses. This is possibly done because the man of God and the programme are presented as valid sources of solutions to human problems, irrespective of the intensity of such problems. The different versions of the Biblical presentation employ negative markers such as "impossible" or "not possible" to explain Jesus' perspective that "what is impossible for people is possible for God".

The theme of datum 3 is also significant. Firstly, it helps possible attendees to focus attention on their expectations. It is a fact that nobody attends a

programme without any reason or expectations. Therefore, the theme “GOD & GOD ALONE” goes a long way to direct the attention of audiences towards God. Secondly, the presence of the theme indicates the mindset of the advertiser.

In this sense, I mean that the advertiser tries to project what is on their mind and the theme is expected to capture this in clear terms. Thirdly, besides the above mentioned, the theme also indicates that it is only when God is the centre of attention of participants that they will be able to obtain solutions to their problems.

The theme of datum 6 is “UNSTOPPABLE GLORY.” The theme suggests an important focus for the invited participants. To begin with, it suggests that everybody desires goodness, which metaphorically translates as glory. Hence, people are in search of glory. The second focus is that the programme gives assurance of this kind of glory. Thus, anybody who attends the programme is guaranteed glory which cannot be stopped by anything. This is because the man of God, who serves as an intermediary between God and man, will commit them unto God who can guarantee glory.

The theme of Datum 7 is paradoxical. The theme reads: “PREPARE TO MEET YOUR GOD.” Although the first sight of the theme may imply that the person should prepare for death, a second consideration implies preparation for blessing. This is because God will bless anybody who meets Him with a pure heart. This explains why the theme is displayed in white. The theme has been retrieved from a particular portion of the Bible.

The other verses of the chapter indicate that God wants people to repent from their sins so that they will be able to find peace with Him when they meet or return to Him.

The theme of datum 8 is "Songs of Victory" is also significant. The theme helps to focus the attention of participants on their expectations for the programme. Since it is believed that the theme is divinely derived because of the people's belief in the man of God, who is the chief host, the people believe that the theme comes from God. Thus, people will find it easy to focus on the theme and use it as a point of reference during the programme.

In datum 9, the theme is: "OH LORD, LET THY KINGDOM COME." This theme is significant in two ways. The first is that it is a biblical verse, and this gives the theme a kind of authentication. The second significant thing is that it implies that good things will come into the lives of programme participants. This is because Christians believe that good things come from heaven. Since the kingdom of God is in heaven, good things will come down when the kingdom comes, which implies that mighty miracles will happen at the crusade.

Datum 10 projects its themes more poignantly. The themes feature in order of importance. The most important theme comes first, followed by the less important down to the least important. The first is "Raising the True Worshipper", the second is "Redeeming the woman", and the last is "Making the Family Life Sweet". This hierarchical order of presentation is also evident in the features of the programme, namely, "Word", "Worship"

and “Prayer”. In essence, listening to the word of God and the worshipping of God come first, before prayer.

In datum 12, the theme is “SUPERNATURAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE GOD OF WONDERS”. According to the theme, every participant should look forward to having a supernatural encounter with a God who performs wonders. Accordingly, the participants will benefit from attending the programme. This datum shows little difference from other data in that the theme is not directly mentioned in the datum. This means that the word “theme” is not given. Therefore, readers use inference to capture the theme of the advertisement.

8. Spatial and Temporal Components

Church advertisements include details about the place; i.e. venue and time of their programmes. This is important because even if all other things are available to draw participants to the intended programme, and the venue is not included, the invited audience will still not be able to attend the programme. All these details serve as locating details for intended participants to be able to attend the programme.

Without all the details above, the work of the advertiser would have been incomplete because invited attendees would not be able to locate the venues for the programmes and if they cannot locate these venues, the advertisers’ work would have been in vain. The times vary from church to church.

9. Detailed Elements of Visual Culture and Multimodality

i. Posture or Facial Expression

Posture and facial expression speak volumes in advertisements. In the selected data, the pastor's posture and facial expression show how multiple modes of communication are essential in advertising. For example, Cazarin (2017) asserts that although posters show static illustrations, pastors' figures are often captured in movement, whilst talking or making a gesture; alternatively, this may indicate the idea of the seriousness, depth and sobriety of the pastor.

In datum 2, the pastor has a wide, welcoming smile on his face, which implies that the church is open to everyone who wants to worship God. It may also imply that the programme welcomes all who are looking for solutions to problems. If the pastor wears a frown, it may indicate that he does not welcome everybody, or he is selective of whom to welcome. The pastor's bold smile also suggests that God will solve whatever problems people bring to the programme. Therefore, the invited attendees will also smile, just as the pastor smiles continually. This is akin to datum 3 and 4 where the men and women of God in the advertisement are also all smiling.

In datum 6, just like the data above, the man of God gives a wide smile. Closely related however to the smile of the man of God is that of his wife which could suggest that they both complement each other in nearly everything they do. In datum 10, the pastor and the wife put on smiling faces. The smiles of the pastor and his wife also suggest a friendly invitation to all and sundry. Ukah (2008) observes that although women are frequently seen, they are less heard, since church authority is usually

concentrated in the hands of men. The women, however, take charge of subtle roles behind the scenes.

Datum 9 is fundamentally different from the others. Unlike most other data where the man of God beams a warm and welcoming smile, the pastor here wears a very stern face. A few things come to mind here as reasons for doing so. The first is that the message the man of God wants to deliver to his audience is very important.

The importance of the message thus does not allow room for smiles. The urgency of the message may also be the reason for the non-smiling facial expression of the man of God. This does not in any way mean that the man of God is not welcoming or selective in accommodating his congregation, but that he is more concerned about drawing spiritual power from the “God of fire” to consume people’s problems.

ii. Imagery

The role of imagery in the selected advertisements is also significant. For example, common imagery across the advertisements is the use of a logo which serves as an identifier for the church. Imagery, in general, plays a significant role in church advertising as will be exemplified below. Schmid (2012) contends that images play a central role in contemporary society not only in mediating meaning but also in their relevance to the construction of perceptions and beliefs. As such, the power of mental images in advertising cannot be underestimated.

Freedman (2015) argues that part of the power of imagery, especially photographic imagery, is its capacity to appear to represent the truth even

when carefully selected, framed, composed and manipulated. As such, the analysis of any particular image studied must be both broad and deep. Mitchell (2011) also writes about the power of images, in terms of how imagery is used and what sort of social impact it has – how we talk, how we think and how we view one another.

In datum 1, the advertisement suggests that the members of the church are in a prayer mode as demonstrated and highlighted above. Importantly, they look to the pastor, who represents their mountain, as they expect God to use him to have their desires fulfilled. In this advertisement and many others, the man of God is the boldest and is presented to be ahead of everyone, a representation which signifies his role as spiritual leader of the church.

The same is evident in datum 11 where the congregation is presented somewhere behind the man of God. This suggests that the man of God is in a position of leadership concerning the congregation members.

In datum 3, there are images of the man of God and his wife. These two images are much bigger than the others used. This suggests that the man of God and his wife are more important because they are the visionaries and the hosts. However, the picture of the man of God is also bolder and bigger than that of his wife. The implication of this is that there are different levels of importance attached to the people in the advertisement. Thus, even though the man of God and his wife are more important than the other ministers, the man of God is also more important than his wife.

However, in datum 10, the pictures of both the husband and wife look the same in terms of size. These differences are probably because of the different theological standpoints of different churches. Some churches believe that the man is the head of the family. Therefore, he is above his wife; while others believe that God created men and women as equals. Those churches which believe in the God-ordained superiority of the husband often portray the woman as a junior partner or helper in the ministry, while those who preach equality of the sexes portray men and women as co-workers in the ministry.

Datum 4 makes extensive use of imagery. Firstly, there is an image of Jesus. Behind him are two other people who are probably his disciples. The position of Jesus in relation to the “disciples” indicates that Jesus takes the lead while the disciples follow. As such, it is believed that Jesus does not only lead the twelve disciples whose accounts are given in the Bible, but also anybody who believes in him and follows him. Although only two disciples are captured, those two represent the entire body of disciples of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, there is the image of a destitute. While Jesus and his disciples are on their feet, the destitute man is sitting on the ground. The man is presented in a way which shows that he looks up to Jesus and his disciples for help. Thus, Jesus stretches forward his hand to assist the man. The outstretched hand of Jesus towards the man indicates that Jesus is always willing and ready to provide help, not only for the man in the picture but also for all of humankind. The man in the picture, that is the destitute, also represents humankind generally because every follower of Jesus needs divine help, and Jesus serves as the source of divine help for

Christians. Other imagery found in the advertisement is the use of hexagons.

The three hexagons represent the Trinity. The Christian faith believes in the concept of the Trinity. This concept describes that God exists in three forms, which are God the father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The biblical stance is that “God is the Father, the origin of everything. He is the Father of His Word (the Son) and the Holy Spirit proceeds from Him into the Son”. The doctrine of the Trinity claims that God exists in three persons, but the three of them share the same essence or being. As such, they do not act separately or independently, but in unison. However, the concept of trinity opines that each element performs a different role, but that the roles are complementary in nature.

Apart from the three hexagons representing the Trinity, each hexagon also contains a particular piece of information which the advertiser is trying to put across to the audience. Each hexagon contains the service day, without which those invited will not be able to understand the programme.

Similar to datum 4, datum 5 has interesting imageries. There is the image of Jesus Christ. Following the New Testament tradition, it has been affirmed that Jesus Christ has always been presented, among other things, as the gate one must pass through to attain redemption. Based on this assertion, the appearance of the image of Jesus Christ in the top left-hand corner of the advertisement indicates that Jesus opens the gate for the entire advertisement.

Apart from being the gate for the redemption of mankind, Jesus Christ also serves as the gate to all and everything man does, especially the man of God. The positioning of this image is also significant. Since it is in the top corner, this suggests that Jesus is the head of the church and the man of God is directly beneath him. Therefore, whatever the man of God does must first be approved by Jesus Christ since this man operates as God's servant. Messaris and Abraham (2001: 125) make a case for the use of visual images in advertising, as images have a capacity for conveying messages that would meet with greater resistance if put in words, but which are received more readily in visual form.

In the same datum, the man of God is presented with a microphone in his hands. This suggests that the man of God is the mouthpiece of the church on behalf of the Godhead. The microphone in his hands is a symbol of authority to speak to the congregation because the church is too large to be addressed without a public-address system.

The images of other ministers of God come next. There are six ministers in the datum apart from the man of God who serves as the advertiser and around whom all events of the church revolve. One of the ministers is a female who also holds a microphone. Thus, it is implied that God can equally use both males and females for the expansion of his kingdom here on earth.

Datum 8 addresses the role of multimodality convincingly. The advertiser makes use of images to project the sense that he wants the target public, that is the likely participants, to understand. First is the picture of someone I will refer to as a warrior who has probably just arrived from a battlefield. I

will refer to the man's mode of dress as typical Israeli attire because it is different from the normal or average Nigerian dressing style. The second visual element here is the picture of trumpeters who have come to celebrate the successful warrior.

All the trumpeters use their trumpets to sing the "songs of victory". While some trumpeters are located on the right-hand side of the warrior, others are located on his left-hand side. They all blow the trumpets as signs of singing the songs of victory. It should be added that the second set of images is derived from the theme of the programme. For instance, the image of a young man dressed like a warrior just returning from a battle creates a positive connotation. Returning from a battle is a sign of victory. Hence the returnee is in a celebratory mode. There are also images of trumpeters who have probably come to celebrate the arrival of the warrior from the battle. They are many, and they are positioned in a way that gives the impression that they surround the warrior.

With this, the theme has been captured pictorially. This is important, because it will help to reiterate the written message. Thus, those who do not understand the gravity of the theme in its written form will understand it pictorially and *vice versa*, thus demonstrating the ideals of multimodality. Cartwright and Sturken (2001) express that modern society is often characterised as an image-saturated one with an intense image flow, as visual components are often more influential than words.

In datum 10, there is an open Bible entitled "word" as a way of concretising the fact that scriptural reading and preaching by the man of God is an

important feature of the church service. The next is “worship” which suggests a worship and praise session which attracts God’s presence, favour, miracles and the salvation of the worshippers. Finally, is “prayer”. The activities are all presented in a circle-like structure. This suggests that prayers and intercessions are to be conducted so that people can present their intentions and petitions to God. In these circles, a fervent and devoted congregation is projected as praying and worshipping.

Siegel and Scrimshaw (2002) also assert that one major reason why members attend church is to benefit from the worship activities of the church, such as sharing the word of God, intercessory prayers, vigils and individual prayers. For Siegel and Scrimshaw, these worship activities contribute to spiritual satisfaction through a mutual relationship leading to the growth of churches.

Looking at the background of the circle in the datum, the advertisement uses visual imagery to foreground what their time in the church will look like. Yet another image consists of three circles. The first indicating a couple at the early stage of their union. The second indicates a prayer section going in a family of three persons. The last suggests that the fruits of the prayers have yielded a happy family because the father carries his daughter and the mother carries her son, all in a joyful manner.

The impact of the images in datum 10 resonates with Olowu and Akinkurolere’s (2015: 171) argument that the intensity of emotion within images adds rhetorical richness to texts, resulting in added power within their overall meaning. Hence, advertisers make generous use of images to

capture audiences' attention while at the same time struggling to minimise the use of words.

In datum 11, there is a film strip-like ladder, where each of the rungs of the ladder contains a particular picture. For instance, one rung contains the picture of fingers playing the keyboard. This signifies that the programme contain a lot of musical display. Another rung of the ladder contains the picture of church members worshiping God. All of these give the impression that the church is a combination of different things, such as the word of God or preaching, playing musical instruments, praising or worshiping God and several other related events or activities.

There is also the picture of a key in the advertisement. This corroborates the theme of the programme. The key represents the Key of David mentioned in the theme. In essence, participants of the programme should be ready to spiritually take a copy of the key during the programme.

Finally, datum 13 presents the image of choir members. The image has some qualities or characteristics which make it outstanding. In fact, the picture of the choir members stands out more prominently than that of the pastor and his wife. There are more than twenty-seven choir members captured by the picture, and it is evident that there are a few others who are not captured in the image.

Significantly, this implies that pastors or ministers are not the only relevant actors within the church; the choir group also plays an important role in church activities. Music is an essential quality of the Pentecostal

movement. Udok and Odunuga (2016: 60) further assert that the Pentecostal movement, with its principles and ideology on the work of the Holy Spirit, has prompted the development of different musical styles, such as gospel music, Christian pop, gospel rock and Christian punk, especially amongst the youth.

Udok and Odunuga (2016) recognise the importance of music to Pentecostalism. This is akin to Abraham's (2015) study that music is a key medium through which Pentecostalism has grown; Pentecostal worship music circulates in physical and digital formats through formal and informal networks, laying down the cultural and theological infrastructure for new churches and new individual experiences.

Udok and Odunuga (2016) stress that music and Pentecostalism are inseparable, since music plays a vital role in the relationship between man and God. For Christians, music forms one of the fundamental elements in church liturgy and it plays an integral part in worship services. They submit that contemporary Christian music is one of the musical genres which developed out of the Pentecostal movement.

As such, they concede that it is common for Pentecostal churches to include a full musical orchestra or band which musically motivates the entire congregation to worship God in an emotional act. They consider music as very important in that the music inspires the church to fuel emotion and also to trigger and demonstrate artistic excellence in order to heighten one's mood and spirit to receive God.

The way the advertiser arranges different images in the advertisement deserve attention. The pictures are on the left-hand side, while the words are on the right-hand side of the advertisement. Both the pictures and the words complement each other. This arrangement gives the impression that both words and pictures are separate. In other words, each serves as a mirror to the other.

iii. The Use of Font and Colour

The advertiser's choice of colour is significant to the message they wish to pass across to an audience. Although advertisers chose different colours for different purposes, they all combine to form and project one meaning.

Datum 2 has a rich use of diverse colour and font size. For instance, the word "powerful" is often bold and capitalised. It is bolder or bigger than all other words in the caption. Secondly, it is presented in a red colour. Since the colour red may signify passion, importance or potency, especially that of fire to burn something, it can be said that the "spiritual fire" that will be released during the programme will burn away all of the people's problems.

The font size used for the theme also serves the purpose of drawing people's attention. The theme reads thus: "it is possible." While all the words in the theme are printed in the same colour, the word "possible" is printed in a different size to suggest the positivity in the theme.

In datum 3, the colour combination and font size in the advertisement have many general implications. As such, Endong (2015: 2) suggests that advertising requires different modes of communication to actualise

effective results. For instance, the first item, which is “THERE IS NO PROBLEM WITHOUT A SOLUTION”, is printed in black. It is not as bold as the next item. This indicates that it is not as important as the second item. The second item is “SOLUTION NIGHT” presented in red to catch the readers’ attention. It is also much bolder than the first item.

These two strategies create importance and emphasis. The theme of the programme, “GOD & GOD ALONE”, is printed in white which is a recurring colour in all the advertisements. One might be quick to assert that this colour signifies the purity of God, while the text itself indicates the omnipotent nature of God. This informs Olowu and Akinkurolere’s (2015) emphasis that visual elements are vital devices in advertising.

They state that visual resources, such as colours, gaze, posture, and so forth, engrave the ideas of the advertisers into the consciousness of readers/viewers and convince them of the potency and efficacy of the product being advertised. They establish the potential of visual images to convey meaning beyond verbal language in any human society. Flett (2013) also observes that visuals have reshaped Pentecostalism and they currently play a significant role within large Pentecostal church organisations. Flett observes that visuals have proved effective as a means of promoting a congregation’s public profile as well as attracting new members.

In datum 6, the word “GLORY” is also presented in white. However, the letters “PABLE” in the word “UNSTOPPABLE”, also in the theme, are in red. This may simply be because the advertiser intends to focus the

attention of the audience on the letters, which look like a morpheme and sounds like “able”. Put differently, the letters convey a sense of one’s ability to utilise one’s glory.

According to Zammitto (2005: 5), the colour white has many connotations or meanings and emotions, which include: “light, purity, innocence, cleanness, cold” amongst others. Based on this assertion, the use of the colour white in some portions of this advertisement indicate purity, cleanness, and so forth. In most churches, the colour white is often associated with peace and angels.

In Datum 8, the colour red is used for the word “victory,” which is the most important word in the theme of the programme. The word is important because the preceding two words are pre-modifiers. The colour red, according to Zammitto (2005: 5) connotes weapons, aggressiveness, power, and so forth. In this datum, the colour red symbolises power. This means that the word “victory” will be achieved with a lot of power during the advertised programme.

In datum 9, the colour combination and font size in the advertisement are evident. Both colour and font size express emphasis. For instance, the first phrase in the advertisement reads thus: “**GOD OF FIRE**”. Capital letters and bold forms emphasise the idea. The phrase is in mixed yellow-red colours to resonate with the actual colours of fire. Thus, the advertiser uses these colours to symbolise the notion of fire which the advertisement seeks to project to the public.

5.3 Conclusion

Using the tenets of multimodality, with a strong undertone of visual culture with reference to how society influences texts, I have attempted an analysis of selected Pentecostal church advertisements while using relevant literature to support my claims. The selected data have been classified and codified thematically. The analysis focused largely, although not exclusively, on the different themes presented in the selected advertisements.

The chapter identified several themes in Nigerian Pentecostal church advertisements *viz-a-viz* their discursive roles. The identified themes are prophet-centrism, problem-solving as attraction, biblical allusion, population of a congregation, and multimodal elements, amongst others.

In the next chapter, I present the findings and recommendations of this study whilst making concluding statements about the researcher's positions from the study.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.0 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, I present findings based on the outcomes of the analysis presented in the previous chapter. The chapter begins with the presentation of the findings divided into subgroups, namely: use of visual multimodal techniques; brevity; prophet-centrism as authentication; problem-solving as attraction; biblical allusion; use of sociolinguistic features; and exclusion of women as advertisers. The chapter proceeds to present recommendations mainly for future researchers and studies. Finally, the chapter presents the concluding thoughts for the study.

In Chapter One, the study set out to conduct an appraisal of visual culture in Pentecostal church advertisements using the multimodality theoretical approach. To achieve the aim, I pledged to pursue the three objectives listed below:

- i. Examine how multimodality manifests in visual features of advertising;
- ii. Explore the influence of (visual) culture on church advertising; and
- iii. Create an Afrocentric model of visual culture in church advertising.

Thus, the findings are discussed *viz-a-viz* the highlighted objectives of the study. The findings relate specifically to the aforementioned objectives.

6.1 Research Findings

1. **Use of visual multimodal techniques:** This first finding is in keeping with the first objective of the study. The research work has demonstrated that visual multimodal techniques are important strategies used in church advertisements in Nigeria. In this regard, it can be surmised that there is no single advertisement which does not make extensive use of pictures or colour.

Apart from the fact that pictures speak volumes, the study also corroborates the notion that the world has drifted towards being a viewing culture as opposed to a reading culture. This implies that certain ideas are better expressed pictorially than verbally. For instance, different pictures are included in the advertisements. Such pictures include the pictures of the advertiser or man of God, Jesus Christ, church congregations, invited ministers, and guest artists. All of these affirm the effectiveness of visual resources in advertising.

In the same vein, it was found that the advertisers rely on colour choice and colour combinations. This is in line with the assertion by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 60) that rather than serving as signs, colours serve as signifiers, because colours signify certain ideals, and are a kind of resource used for different designs in a cohesive message. Kress and van Leeuwen's idea resonates clearly with the selected advertisements. Different colours are combined not only to serve as enticing features but also to communicate certain messages to the audience as explained in the analysis.

One can thus assert that advertisers make use of different colour combinations to project or signify certain ideas or concepts to the target audience. For instance, datum 1 makes extensive use of blue as the background for the billboard. The colour blue has positive connotations such as peace, calmness, piety, wisdom, introspection, infinitude, and emotional control (Zammitto 2005: 4). It also represents water and the sky, which are important to human existence.

Another finding related to the first objective and which also borders on the use of visual multimodal techniques is the use of varying types, sized and case types of fonts. To emphasise some portions or messages in advertisements, the advertisers often use different font types and font sizes in their church advertisements. Considering datum 8, for instance, the theme is presented in a different font size to all other elements in the advertisement.

The theme, which is “SONGS OF VICTORY”, is far larger than all other elements in the advertisement. Besides this, the last word of the theme is also much larger than the other ones. This implies that the last word is the most important, and that the advertiser is trying to focus the readers or viewers’ attention on the word. Besides the foregoing, the theme is written in upper cases. In datum 6 and 7, however, this technique is not employed. Given the recurrence of the technique in other data, the technique is a common feature of church advertising in Nigeria.

2. Influence of (visual) culture on church advertising: Closely related to the above-mentioned findings is the influence of visual culture on church advertising in the Nigerian context. This is related to the second objective of the research.

In this regard, it has been observed that visual culture influences church advertising in the Nigerian context in a few ways. For instance, Ekeh (2018: 57) opines that “pictures are not merely analogues to visual perception, but symbolic artefacts constructed from the conventions of a particular culture. Cultures provide people with ways of thinking – ways of seeing, hearing, and interpreting the world”.

Based on this affirmation, the picture of the man of God, the guest ministers, the church members or congregation, and so forth, all point to both church culture as well as Nigerian culture. The pictures have a way of expressing what the man of God is trying to make the expected attendees understand. Therefore, I can add that these pictures have a direct relationship with the cultural nuances of the advertiser or the environment, where men of God are not only considered sacred, but also important to the ideals of the church.

In essence, the man of God instils a sense of spiritual authority in the minds of church followers, and as such, the pastor is central to the spiritual wellbeing of the people. Given the common belief of many Nigerians that pastors are integral to spiritual goals, it does affect the way people perceive church advertising, especially when the man of God is boldly presented in such advertisements.

3. Brevity: It has also been discovered that most of the church advertisements economise in their use of words. For instance, most of the expressions written on the advertisements are presented in phrases, or at most clauses. There are no full sentences in most of the advertisements sampled, except if one takes the name of the ministry together with other words.

Even if one takes the name of the ministry together with other words, all the words are not presented in the same font size or style. The advertisements have more pictorial than linguistic resources. This is done to enhance effectiveness because the target audience can be drawn in mainly using pictures, rather than by the use of long texts.

Besides this, most of the billboards were strategically placed where many viewers could easily observe them. For example, at the roadside for motorists. Therefore, the audience would not have ample time to read long messages, so economy of words is meant to enhance a brief view and quick understanding of the important message(s) embedded in the advertisements.

4. Prophet-centrism as authentication: Nearly all the sampled advertisements contain the notion of prophet-centrism. As illustrated in the previous chapter, this deals with the use of the picture of the man of God, who also logically doubles as the advertiser. In some instances, the picture of the man of God also appears along with a portrayal of Jesus Christ, whom the advertiser is ultimately proclaiming.

From a quantitative perspective, only two of the sampled advertisements do not have a picture of the advertiser. These are datum 7 and 8. By implication, only about 20 percent of the advertisements sampled do not directly entail prophet-centrism.

While datum 7 only has the picture of Jesus Christ and the congregation, datum 8 does not, but has the pictures of a warrior and some trumpeters. Considering the pictures of the advertiser or the man of God and/or the picture of Jesus Christ, one can conclude that these pictures are meant to validate or authenticate the advertisement just as the pictures of the men of God validate others.

5. Problem-solving as attraction: All the advertisements considered or analysed have problem-solving as an attraction. This is mostly achieved by the use of linguistic expressions which appeal to the target audience's sense of reasoning. This is important to the advertisements, because the expected attendees will have a sense of possibility attached to them and this will draw them to the programme. An example of this can be found in the datum with the theme "It is possible".

The theme implies that whatever people need, they have an assurance of obtaining if they attend the programme. As presented in the analysis chapter, the sampled advertisements all address problem solving, although some are more pronounced than others. Kitause (2015: 283) also admits that in their empowerment principles, the Pentecostal churches link every setback to a spiritual

cause and set themselves to overcoming it by conducting deliverance for the individual, as well as the entire community, for overt prosperity.

Magbadelo (2004) equally observes that the messages of prosperity in Pentecostalism have received wider acceptance amongst the populace, and as such Pentecostal churches in the country have continued to feast on the psychology of the masses, who are genuinely desirous of relief from their sordid existential realities. Kitause (2015: 10) also considers prosperity preaching as the major preoccupation of the Pentecostals by challenging endemic poverty in Nigeria through their emphasis on spiritual and economic empowerment programmes.

- 6. Biblical allusion:** Since the foundation of what the church advertisers communicate is available in the Bible, it has become important for them to use biblical references to authenticate their themes or titles. As such, most of the advertisements authenticate their messages by alluding to the Bible. While some advertisers use biblical allusions directly by quoting specific portions of scripture, others do so indirectly through imagery and other symbolism.

- 7. Use of sociolinguistic features:** Some advertisements use sociolinguistic features such as code-mixing and code-switching. These features create a close link between the advertiser and his expected audience. In this case, some Yoruba expressions are used by advertisers to create familiarity since the study focused on south western Nigeria where Yoruba is the popular language. Considering

datum 3, for instance, there is the use of the Yoruba expression which goes thus: "OLORUN ABANIMULE MADANI".

The Yoruba expression can be translated as "God who makes a covenant without wavering". Although the advertiser could have used the English equivalent of the phrase, the Yoruba expression is intentionally chosen to create a familiar effect in the minds of the audience, since the English version may not conspicuously capture the same effect in their minds.

- 8. Exclusion of women as advertisers:** One of the study's subtle findings is that there is no particular ministry amongst the sampled ministries wholly or solely run by a woman. This implies that men are much more involved in God's work than women are. It also implies, by extension, that women mostly play complementary roles in their husbands' ministerial callings. They do this by supporting their husbands so that their husbands' work will be more effective.

Migwi (2016) also affirms that women perform low key roles in the Pentecostal churches he selected which is influenced by religious and cultural perceptions. He, however, advises that this could be deconstructed and reconstructed to empower women. Although some ministries have both the men of God and their wives in their advertisements, some do not. Those that do imply that wives are actively supporting their husbands in the kingdom's business. Those who do not have their wives imply that their wives are probably operating behind the scenes, or that the women's involvement is not projected to the whole world.

9. Use of computer language: It has also been observed that there are many instances of the use of computer language or terms in the advertisements of Nigerian churches. For example, many of the advertisements make use of the symbol “@” instead of the preposition “at.”

Similarly, many of the advertisements make use of the logos of social media platforms instead of writing their names. For instance, there is the use of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram logos instead of mentioning the social media platforms directly. Churches generally aspire to have a global outreach; hence, the use of social network handles to attract a global audience.

6.1.1 An Afrocentric Model for Analysing Visual Culture in Church Advertising

The third objective of this research work was to propose an Afro-centric model or framework for analysing visual culture in church advertising. As such, I propose the model below:

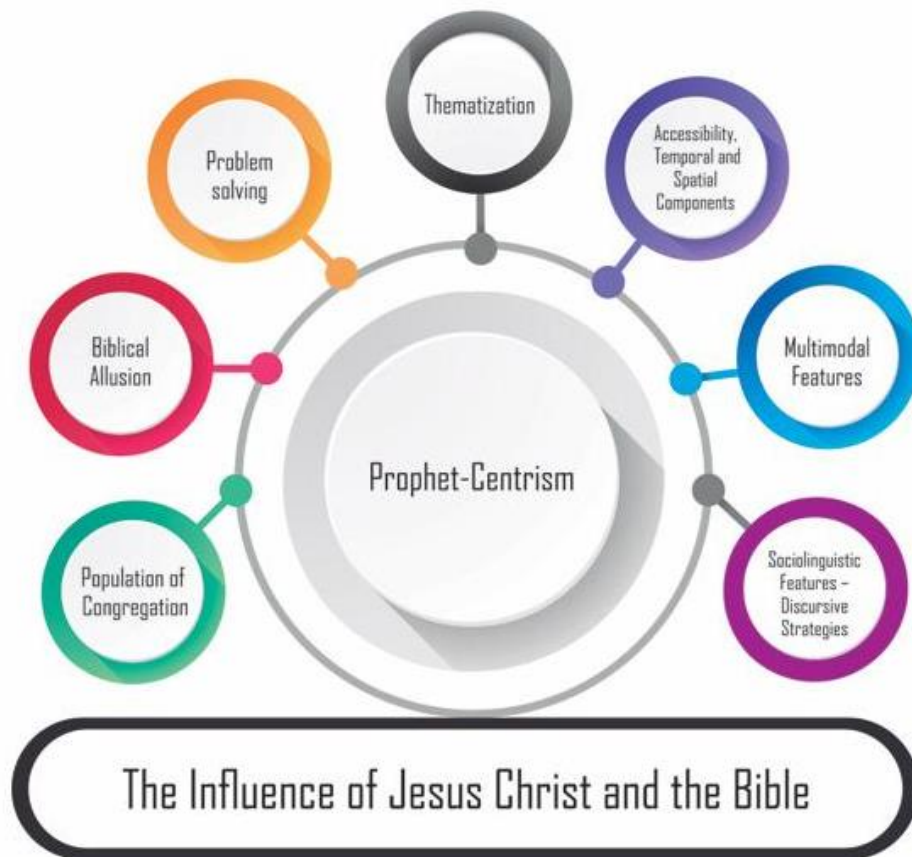


Figure 2: An Afrocentric model for analysing visual culture in Church advertising

It is evident in most of the advertisements that the Bible as well as Jesus Christ constitute the bedrock of church advertising. Both also serve as the focal point of Christian belief. The Bible serves as the foundation because it is the central idea on which the Christian faith is anchored and points potential believers to Jesus Christ. Without the Bible or Jesus Christ, the Christian church might not be in existence. In addition, the Christian religion derives its authority from the contents of the Bible as well as the name of Jesus, and all other factors depend mostly on the Bible.

Apart from the foundation of the model, the circle is important, and it is placed on the foundation. The circle encloses all other advertising techniques which undergird the church, its activities, its membership and so forth. At the centre of the circle is the man of God who serves as the rallying point between all the other features. By implication, all other techniques revolve around the pastor, who is the face of the whole church.

The pastor or man of God is the core of all other activities because he is the vision bearer and other people only serve to complement his efforts. Around the man of God are all the other factors. Such factors include problem-solving; supporting multimodal and sociolinguistic features; thematic emphasis for each programme; and accessibility methods which serve as a means of contacting the churches. All these features may also differentiate a church or a man of God from other churches and men of God.

Thus, based on the analysis presented in Chapter Five, future studies of a similar nature can adopt the proposed framework.

6.2 Recommendations for Future Studies

Following the strengths and limitations of this study presented in the methodology chapter, I present the following recommendations for future researchers.

Firstly, more samples of Christian advertisements should be analysed to authenticate the features identified so far in this research work, particularly from other geographical zones in Nigeria such as the North and the East, amongst others. It would be interesting to examine how church

advertisements in Nigeria are similar or dissimilar based on geographical locations.

By extension, studies of a similar nature may be encouraged in other parts of Africa to study the homogeneity or heterogeneity of church advertisements across the continent. A comparative analysis of church advertisements may be conducted to investigate similar qualities or patterns in church advertisements.

Secondly, researchers may focus on differences and similarities in various types of advertisements in Nigeria and perhaps Africa. For instance, a researcher may look at the similarities and differences between church advertisements and movie advertisements or cosmetic advertisements. This type of study would go a long way in determining what areas of differences and similarities exist between various types of advertisements.

Thirdly, since there are three major religions in Nigeria, namely Islam, Christianity and Traditional Religion, and all these religions advertise their services in one way or the other, it would be effective to have researchers study the rudiments of advertising by these different religions. As such, one might examine how these religions tend to present their advertisements similarly or differently. One may not necessarily assume that they possess the same advertising behaviour and *vice versa*.

Further studies may also focus solely on linguistic resources rather than looking at visual combinations. For instance, most of the advertisements do not make use of complete sentences or clauses in the presentation of their messages. In this regard, the systemic functional grammar approach

might also be employed by future researchers to analyse the language of advertisements. This could take into consideration the three metafunctions (ideational, interpersonal and textual) identified by Halliday (1990). The metafunctions may be used to discover the functions of texts in church advertisements.

From an advertising perspective, there should often be a consistent coherence between visual multimodal resources and linguistic resources in church advertisements. In this way, there will be a proper blend of all the resources used by the advertiser. This may assist advertisers in projecting their ideas as clearly as possible, and in turn make communication more effective.

Code-mixing and code-switching, and other sociolinguistic strategies should be used often and effectively. If these discursive features are properly used, this will lead to effectiveness in information dissemination through billboards, handbills and the other media of communication adopted by church advertisers. This will ensure a better understanding on the part of the target audience. On the contrary, misuse of discursive features in church advertisements could easily indicate misleading information or an unacceptable message.

6.3 Concluding Remarks

This thesis has conducted an appraisal of visual culture in Pentecostal church advertisements in Nigeria. The research has employed multimodal discourse analysis as the theoretical framework. In total, thirteen advertisements have been analysed.

From the analysis, findings have highlighted how Nigerian churches advertise their programmes to convince people to attend them. The research concludes that the effectiveness of visual multimodal techniques determines the success of any church advertisement.

In addition, I strongly contend that both visual multimodal and linguistic resources must be properly combined for effectiveness to be attained in church advertisement. Without a proper combination of all the necessary resources, church advertisements might not be as effective and efficient.

As demonstrated in the analysis, several factors contribute to the effectiveness of advertising, and it is safe to argue that Nigerian Pentecostal church advertisers are often aware of techniques useful in drawing an audience's attention. While some of the techniques are textual, others are largely visual, thus complementing the stance of visual culture adopted for this study. It has been argued consistently that viewers of advertisements are more largely attracted by visuals than texts.

Significantly, the study has proposed a framework for the analysis of Pentecostal church advertisements. The framework offers fresh analytical directions for future studies. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is currently no existing framework for this purpose, and in fact none which focuses on the African continent.

The developed model presents a pioneering prototype which can be tested, validated and updated by future researchers. The model may be applied to other religious advertisements by either confirming the propositions in the

framework or refuting them, which may give birth to new models of a similar nature.

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Appendix A: Selected Billboards and Posters of church advertisements in Nigeria

Datum 1



Figure 1: A billboard advertisement titled "Baba Shilo"

Datum 2



Figure 2: A billboard advertisement titled "Fayegbami Prophetic Outreach"

Datum Three



Figure 3: A billboard advertisement titled “Solution Night”.

Datum Four

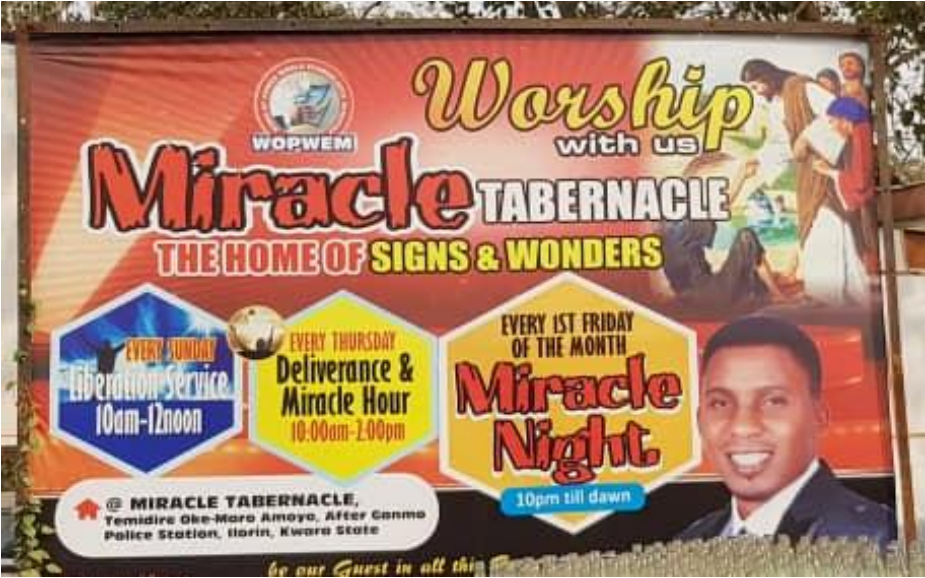


Figure 4: A billboard advertisement titled “Miracle Tabernacle”

Datum Five



Figure 5: A billboard advertisement titled “Christ Apostolic Church”

Datum Six



Figure 6: A billboard advertisement titled “The Shield of Faith Overcomers Assemble Inc.”

Datum Seven



Figure 7: A billboard advertisement titled “The Lord’s Wish Gospel Church”

Datum Eight



Figure 8: A poster advertisement titled “2017 Holy Ghost Congress”

Datum Nine



Figure 9: A billboard advertisement titled “God of Fire”

Datum Ten



Figure 10: A billboard advertisement titled “The Flourishing Family Int'l Bible Church”

Datum Eleven



Figure 11: A poster advertisement titled “The Foursquare Gospel Church of Nigeria”

Datum Twelve

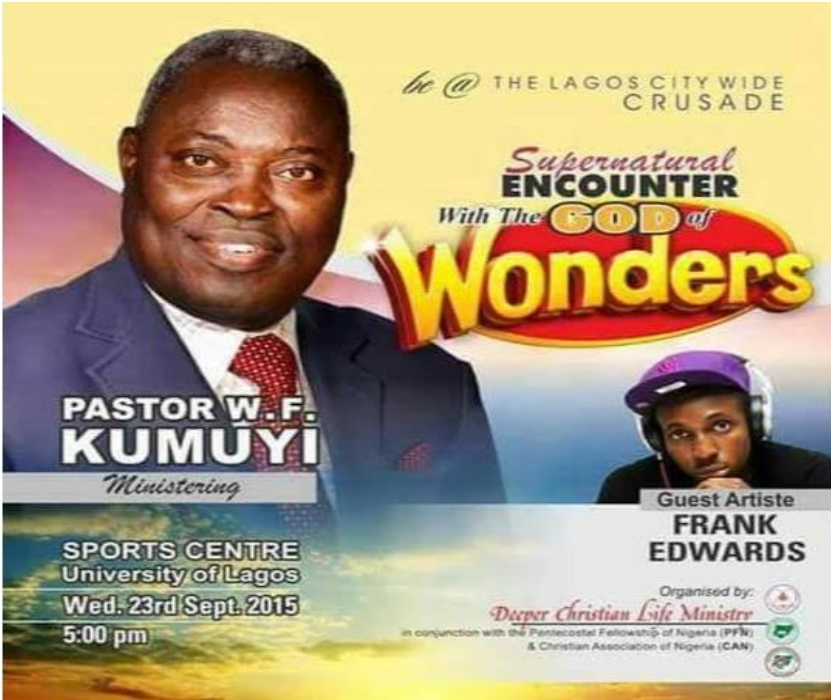


Figure 12: A poster advertisement titled “The Lagos City Wide Crusade”

Datum Thirteen



Figure 13: A poster advertisement titled “Calvary Bible Church”.

Appendix B: Certificate of Language Editing

Trevor French

Professional Editing, Proofreading
& Copy writing

treg369@gmail.com

084 326 9251

30 April 2019

LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

To whom it may concern:

I have language-edited and proofread the PhD. dissertation by Grace Temiloluwa Agbede entitled:

**"ANALYSING VISUAL CULTURE IN SELECTED
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH ADVERTISEMENTS IN NIGERIA:
A CASE STUDY"**

To the best of my knowledge, this work is the author's own, and is free of spelling, grammatical, structural and stylistic errors to meet the requirements for submission to the Durban University of Technology.

With gratitude.



T. G. French (Mr)

Appendix C: Turnitin Report

Adegbedi

ORIGINALITY REPORT

% 14	% 11	% 4	% 8
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	uav.ro Internet Source	% 2
2	ir.dut.ac.za Internet Source	% 1
3	rah-net.com Internet Source	<% 1
4	www.ajol.info Internet Source	<% 1
5	www.codesria.org Internet Source	<% 1
6	www.koersjournal.org.za Internet Source	<% 1
7	iiste.org Internet Source	<% 1
8	verbumeteclesia.org.za Internet Source	<% 1
9	Submitted to Midlands State University Student Paper	<% 1
