



Examining Gender Portrayals and Audience Exposure to Detergent Television Advertisements in Ifo, Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Although awareness of gender inequality is increasing, the belief persists that gender stereotypes in advertising are natural due to traditional views of women as homemakers. In Nigeria, detergent television advertisements frequently depict women primarily as caregivers responsible for domestic chores. Men are either absent or portrayed as superior figureheads who do not participate in household responsibilities. Such portrayals overlook the fact that detergent use extends beyond gendered expectations, involving men and women, health care services, industrial cleaning services, and commercial laundry services. Hence, this study evaluated gender portrayals and audience exposure to detergent television advertisements among residents in Ifo, Ogun State, Nigeria. Anchored on the AIDA model, the study adopted a convergent mixed-method research design that combined a content analysis of nine detergent advertisements aired between 2015 and 2025 with a survey of 383 participants in Ifo Local Government Area, Ogun State. The qualitative results showed that gender stereotypes remain common in Nigerian detergent adverts, portraying women as primary laundry performers; men are often depicted as beneficiaries of laundry or detached from the actual task. The quantitative results revealed that residents have a high level of exposure to detergent television advertisements, which enhances brand recall and recognition ($\bar{x} = 3.09$). This study concluded that television remains a significant medium for promoting detergent products and shaping consumers' brand recall. It therefore recommended that advertisers shift to gender-sensitive advertising that reflects modern household realities where domestic responsibilities are shared.

Keywords: audience exposure, detergent, gender stereotype, television advertisements

Introduction

The persistent depiction of women as homemakers and caregivers, and men as career-focused individuals, remains a salient feature of advertising in Nigeria (Ezeah & Ifebunandu, 2025; Okorie et al., 2024). This pattern, while reflective of some traditional norms, is increasingly at odds with the realities of evolving family structures, where domestic and professional responsibilities are shared across genders. Despite a growing societal consciousness regarding gender equality, advertisers continue to rely on gendered stereotypes to appeal to perceived cultural expectations, thereby reinforcing outdated social norms (Qader et al., 2022). Advertising thus operates not only as an economic driver but also as a vehicle for the transmission of social values and expectations. However, the extent to which advertising adapts to or resists shifting gender roles remains contested within the literature. While some studies highlight the economic rationale for such portrayals, others critique their role in perpetuating social inequities and misrepresenting contemporary Nigerian households. Television advertising, with its unique ability to combine audio and visual elements, wields significant influence in shaping societal perceptions and norms (Qader et al., 2022). Scholars such as Wilson (2021) argue that television advertisements are especially potent in reinforcing gender norms, using both visual and verbal cues to entrench associations between certain behaviours, interests, and occupations and specific



genders. For instance, women are often portrayed as performing domestic tasks and occupying subordinate roles, while men are depicted as authoritative figures (Bello et al., 2024).

Although some researchers, such as Ezeah and Ifebunandu (2025) and Okorie et al. (2024), assert that these portrayals reflect prevailing societal expectations, others contend that such representations actively reinforce and legitimise harmful gender stereotypes (Adelabu et al., 2018; Akpan et al., 2024), thereby impeding progress towards gender equity. Therefore, television advertisements not only reinforce traditional gender hierarchies but also condition consumers to view women as primary decision-makers for household products, thereby sustaining gendered consumption patterns in society. The implications of these representations are significant, as gendered advertising not only shapes audience perceptions but also influences purchasing decisions - often positioning women as the primary decision-makers for household products (Wilson, 2021). Yet, an emerging body of research questions whether such portrayals accurately reflect present-day social realities or perpetuate outdated assumptions (Bello et al., 2024). This debate reveals a central tension in the literature between commercial imperatives and advertisers' ethical responsibility to promote more equitable representations.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), gender comprises the socially constructed characteristics of women, men, girls, and boys. Advertising leverages these constructs to communicate gender identities, but often does so by reiterating stereotypes instead of fostering balanced representation (Adelabu et al., 2018; Akpan et al., 2024; Ezeah & Ifebunandu, 2025; Okorie et al., 2024). Sun (2024) argues that many advertisements exacerbate perceptions of inequality by failing to adopt an objective, equitable stance. However, there is limited consensus regarding advertising's potential as an agent of social change - some scholars advocate for greater corporate responsibility, while others highlight the persistent tension between commercial strategy and ethical imperatives.

Gender stereotypes, defined as culturally ingrained beliefs about appropriate attributes and behaviours for men and women (Aloma & Arbazia, 2021), are frequently echoed in advertising, contributing to unequal gender representation (Ahamadov, 2025). Dai et al. (2025) observe that women are disproportionately targeted by ads that promote restrictive and often unattainable standards of beauty, femininity, and domesticity. While there is broad agreement on these trends, studies diverge on the extent of their impact: some document shifts in attitudes and behaviours, while others suggest that resistance to change remains strong.

The case of detergent advertising in Nigeria is particularly illustrative. Such advertisements overwhelmingly feature women, reinforcing the association between domestic chores and femininity, even as these portrayals become increasingly incongruent with contemporary realities (Bello et al., 2024). Despite the growing participation of women in professional spheres and the trend toward shared domestic responsibilities, the persistence of these stereotypes in advertising points to a lag in industry adaptation.

Despite expanding scholarship (Adelabu et al., 2018; Akpan et al., 2024; Ezeah & Ifebunandu, 2025; Okorie et al., 2024) on gender stereotypes in advertising, significant gaps remain. For instance, it is unclear how studies critically evaluate the operationalisation of gender stereotypes in detergent television advertisements or assess audience exposure to such portrayals (Armah & Attafuah, 2020). There is also limited synthesis of conflicting findings regarding the persistence of these stereotypes, audience reception, and possible shifts in advertising practices



over time. Therefore, this study seeks to address these gaps by systematically evaluating gender portrayals and audience exposure to detergent television advertisements.

Objectives of the Study

This study's main objective is to evaluate gender portrayals and audience exposure to detergent television advertisements in Ifo, Ogun State, Nigeria. The specific objectives include:

1. Examine the level of exposure of consumers to detergent products' television advertisements among residents in Ifo, Ogun State
2. Find out how gender is portrayed in detergent products' television advertisements in Nigeria

Literature Review

Consumer Exposure to Television Advertisements

Television advertisements are persuasive messages broadcast to inform or influence viewers about brands, products, or services (Nwamara, 2023). These commercials use creative and attention-grabbing techniques to prompt consumer action, such as purchasing products or visiting websites (Aibangbee et al., 2023), and have become widespread across different social classes and regions (Armah & Attafuah, 2020). The history of television advertising dates back to the 1941 Bulova Watch commercial (Erhumwunse, 2024), with significant growth following the introduction of colour TV and, in Nigeria, the rise of local stations like the National Television Authority in the late 1950s. Liberalisation of broadcasting in the 1990s and the digital revolution in the 2000s further expanded the influence of TV ads. Over time, Nigerian television advertisements have become more creative, enhancing brand awareness and shaping consumer perceptions by associating products with aspirational values and lifestyles.

Bettiga and Noci (2024) demonstrate that television content significantly influences consumer responses to advertisements and the values associated with brands, confirming the presence of a halo effect. Their study highlights that different types of television content elicit varied consumer reactions, with positive product perceptions often formed through advertisements featuring testimonials, endorsements, or success stories (Mwaifuge et al., 2025). These elements build credibility and trust, enhancing consumer perception and increasing the likelihood of product purchase. Consequently, the authors recommend that advertisers design television ads that are easily understood, leveraging the medium's unique ability to combine visual and auditory cues for greater memorability compared to radio and magazines. However, integrating Rauf's (2020) findings reveals a more nuanced picture: contemporary youth tend to hold negative and unenthusiastic attitudes toward television advertisements, frequently changing the channel when ads are perceived as too long, uninteresting, or unattractive. This disapproval is largely attributed to the current nature of advertisements, which are often seen as lengthy, misleading, and overly dramatic characteristics that disengage viewers and can ultimately diminish product sales. The studies imply that while television remains a powerful medium for influencing consumer perceptions, advertisers must carefully consider content relevance, clarity, and audience preferences to maximise effectiveness.

Gender Portrayal in Advertising

The concept of gender encompasses both biological distinctions and the social and cultural constructs assigned to masculinity and femininity (Putri & Unidana, 2021). Advertising has historically reinforced gender roles by repeatedly depicting men and women in ways that align with societal expectations. Such portrayals, as Spasova (2022) notes, are intended to leverage



familiar stereotypes for consumer appeal, often presenting women as cheerful participants in domestic chores and men in dominant, professional roles. However, these depictions may also unintentionally perpetuate traditional gender norms, objectification, and unrealistic standards. The persistent exposure to such content normalises these biases, consistent with Bandura's (1971) social learning theory, which posits that individuals adopt attitudes and behaviours observed in media. Furthermore, advertisers often utilise cultural symbols and norms to emotionally engage audiences, yet this practice risks reinforcing stereotypes if certain traits are exaggerated (Ahmadov, 2025; Ejem et al., 2022).

In Nigeria, gender roles are shaped by cultural, religious, and traditional influences, with a patriarchal structure limiting women to domestic and caregiving positions while men maintain dominance in leadership and financial spheres. This has resulted in significant gender inequality, evident in limited employment opportunities and a low representation of women in professional roles (Olonade et al., 2021). Despite women's demonstrated leadership skills, media and advertisements continue to reinforce traditional domestic roles, perpetuating societal imbalance. The interplay of media, cultural symbols, and entrenched gender expectations sustains these stereotypes in contemporary society (Ihehu & Nwabuisi, 2021). Detergent advertisements often use gender stereotypes to highlight product effectiveness, typically showing women performing laundry tasks and portraying them as responsible for domestic chores. In Nigeria, aggressive detergent advertising responds to heightened hygiene awareness and competition, but often relies on gendered portrayals to boost consumer recall (Odunlami et al., 2024). Despite claims that such strategies are effective, using content that undermines women's societal values is considered irrational, even if it enhances recall (Bayazit, 2020).

Theoretical Review

This study was anchored on the AIDA Model. The study done by Pramita and Manafe (2022) introduces the AIDA model – Attention, Interest, Desire and Action, which was developed in 1898 by an American entrepreneur, Elmo Lewis, as a framework for effective advertisements. Lewis further explains that advertisements are important for maximising profit by structuring the interactions that go on between buyers and sellers. Iwamoto (2023) explains that the AIDA model is probably the most widely quoted model in the world of marketing, advertising and selling, which explains consumers' mental process when faced with advertisements or sales promotions. The AIDA model is essential because it shows a step-by-step framework for constructing effective selling messages. It also shows the cognitive process a consumer moves through from initial unawareness to final purchase. AIDA is a formula that we can use as a benchmark when we want to market a product. The formula will guide every person in business and marketers in increasing their sales, starting from attracting the attention of potential customers to inviting them to buy a product (Fortenberry & McGoldrick, 2020).

In a study done by Purbaningsih et al. (2022), Purbaningsih explains how this marketing strategy can be executed. Firstly, Awareness (A). The goal of this process is to capture consumers' attention and establish brand visibility. Secondly, Interest (I). The goal of this process is to maintain engagement from consumers by providing relevant information about the features and use of the product. Here, the advertisers have to write their selling messages in a way that speaks to the consumer's needs. Thirdly, Desire (D). At this stage, the consumers mentally shift from interest to intent. This is achieved by sending repetitive and persuasive selling messages. Lastly, Action (A). In this stage, the final goal is to drive the customer to complete the purchase using



different payment methods Gender stereotypes are deliberately employed in the awareness stage to gather attention and brand recall from consumers, often shown in domestic settings and men in authoritative settings. Even though the stereotypes give advertisers an easy way out while using the AIDA model, these stereotypes reinforce traditional gender roles in society.

This model underpins the present study in two significant ways. First, it provides an explanatory lens for understanding the strategic use of gender portrayals in detergent advertisements. At the attention stage, advertisers deploy culturally resonant gender representations, such as the nurturing mother, the efficient housewife, or the emerging domesticated male, to capture viewership in a cluttered media environment. At the interest and desire stages, these portrayals are narrativised into relatable domestic experiences that sustain engagement and create aspiration around cleanliness, family care, and social approval. Gender, therefore, is not merely a creative element but a persuasive mechanism deployed to progress the viewer along the AIDA hierarchy. Second, the model justifies examining audience exposure as a predictor of cognitive and behavioural outcomes. By positioning exposure as the entry point into the hierarchy, the study interrogates whether frequency and level of exposure to gendered detergent advertisements among residents of Ifo, Ogun State, translate beyond attention into interest, desire for the advertised brands, and eventual purchase action. The AIDA model thus offers a coherent framework for linking audience exposure with content analysis of gender portrayals, which is central to this study.

Materials and methods

This study adopted a convergent research design. In this approach, qualitative and quantitative data were analysed simultaneously to identify and explore gender stereotypes in selected detergent advertisements and the level of consumers' exposure to detergent products' television advertisements among residents in Ifo, Ogun State. The study population comprised two distinct elements corresponding to the two methodological components. For the qualitative analysis, the population consisted of all Nigerian market detergent advertisements from 2015 to 2025. To determine the sample size, purposive sampling and content analysis approaches were employed. Purposive sampling is one of the most commonly used approaches in qualitative research across a wide range of scientific disciplines (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2025). Purposive sampling allows participants with specific characteristics relevant to the study to be selected. In this case, detergent advertisements were analysed. Content analysis was also considered the most suitable approach as it enables the systematic examination of various related YouTube videos. Nine (9) detergent product advertisements were systematically and purposively selected from a population of 20 detergent product advertisement-related videos retrieved from YouTube channels.

Content was qualified for inclusion when it: (a) explicitly portrayed a Nigerian market detergent product, (b) demonstrated models' engagement, irrespective of gender, (c) appeared in English or Nigerian Pidgin, and (d) fell within the 2015- 2025 timeframe. The 9-item sample size was selected in response to qualitative content analysis principles prioritising depth over breadth. Saturation assessment guided sampling, where collection continued until new items ceased revealing thematic objectives. This approach aligns with established qualitative sampling logic where adequacy depends on information richness and pattern saturation rather than statistical representativeness (Saunders et al., 2018).



Content selection employed maximum variation sampling to capture diverse perspectives (Adetola et al., 2024). Directional diversity guides selection to include positive, negative, and neutral content, ensuring analytical attention to the full spectrum of framing directions rather than dominant perspectives alone (Olajuwon et al., 2024). The main instrument for qualitative data collection was a developed coding sheet. The coding sheet included coding categories such as detergent brand, major gender featured, gender role portrayal, gender of the primary laundry performer, themes, and underlying messages. This ensured comprehensive coverage of both manifest and latent content. This approach allowed identification of the visual and verbal portrayal of males and females in selected detergent advertisements.

For the quantitative aspect, the population consisted of residents of Ifo Local Government Area, Ogun State, aged 18 and above. As of 2022, the total population of Ifo, Ogun State, was recorded as 917,000 (City Population, 2022). This large population reflected a diverse and sufficient pool of potential respondents for this study, and its proximity to Lagos means respondents are significantly exposed to television, making it an ideal location to carry out this study. This demographic was important because these people are active detergent users and primary household decision-makers, and equally exposed to television advertisements, making them the most relevant respondents for this study. However, to determine the population sample size for the residents of Ifo Local Government Area, the Cochran sample size formula was used:

$$No = Z^2 p (1 - p) / E^2$$

Where:

No = Required sample size

Using the formula:

$$No = (1.96^2 0.5 (1 - 0.5) / 0.05^2)$$

$$No = (3.8416 (0.25/0.0025))$$

$$No = 0.9604 / 0.0025$$

$$No = 384.16$$

So, the required sample size is 384.

This study also employed multistage sampling to categorise the residents of Ifo Local Government Area into streets. Multi-stage sampling involves dividing the population into smaller units and randomly selecting a unit at each stage. This type of sampling is adopted because of the large number of residents in the Ifo Local Government Area and to ensure that all eligible adults get an equal chance in this study. To conclude participants' selection, the study adopted systematic sampling with a random start technique. Houses were selected using a sample interval (number) determined by dividing the total number of houses on each street by the required sample size for that area.

This technique began with a random start, where the first house on each selected street is chosen using a simple random method. From that starting point, every nth house (e. g., every 2nd or 5th house) was visited to administer the questionnaires. This technique was adopted to ensure that the sample was spread evenly across the various streets in Ifo Local Government Area, reducing bias and providing a more representative view of the residents. A validated questionnaire was the research instrument for the quantitative study. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: A, B, and C. Section A focused on gathering participants' demographic information, such as gender, age, marital status and occupation. Section B focused on the level of exposure to



detergent television advertisements. Section C focused on audience perceptions of gender-stereotyped portrayals in the selected detergent advertisements. The study's instruments underwent face, content, and construct validity checks to ensure their suitability and accuracy. For face validity, the instruments were first reviewed by Mass Communication and Media Studies professionals, who are experts in the field. Proper revision and correction of these instruments were done to create more accurate and meaningful results.

To test the reliability of this study, a pilot study involving 10% of the sample size was carried out on respondents outside the target population, the Ilishan community in the Ikenne Local Government Area of Ogun State. The reason was to identify and reduce factors that affect data collector bias and issues. The data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using Cronbach's alpha to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. To ensure reliability, only instruments that yielded a coefficient of 0.70 or above were deemed acceptable. In this case, the survey instrument yielded 0.732.

For the qualitative aspect, data obtained from YouTube, an online streaming platform, were carefully analysed through a systematic process. The content analysis of detergent advertisements was conducted using thematic analysis drawn from the coding categories. These include detergent brand, major gender featured, gender role portrayal, gender of the primary laundry performer, themes, and underlying messages that were presented in a narrative format. This guarantees a thorough presentation of data by fostering efficient interpretations and understanding of the portrayal of men and women in detergent advertisements. For the quantitative aspect, the researchers and at least two research assistants who had been instructed on the ethical guidelines for administering and retrieving questionnaires were present to administer and retrieve copies of the questionnaire and provide further clarification in the local language to ensure clarity for respondents in the Ifo Local Government Area. The questionnaire data were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which included descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results

Table 1. *Presentation of Demographic Information of Sampled Videos (Qualitative)*

S/N	Year	Detergent Brand	Major Gender Featured	Gender Role Portrayal	Gender of the Primary Laundry Performer
1.	2025	Klin	Woman	Laundry	Woman
2.	2025	Mama Joy	Man and woman	Laundry	Collective
3.	2025	WAW	Woman	Laundry	Woman
4.	2024	Sunlight	Woman	Laundry	Woman
5.	2023	Viva	Woman	Laundry	Woman
6.	2022	Ariel	Woman	Laundry	Woman
7.	2021	Too Clean	Man, woman, and children (Family)	Laundry	Woman
8.	2019	Ariel	Woman	Laundry	Woman
9.	2017	Good Mama	Woman	Laundry	Woman

Table 1 shows data obtained from YouTube, an online streaming platform, through qualitative content analysis of detergent advertisement videos. The results indicate that detergents such as *Klin*, *Good Mamma*, *Ariel*, *Viva*, *Mama Joy*, *WAW*, *Sunlight* and *Too Clean* from 2021 to 2025 were analysed.

Table 2. Demographic Information of Respondents (Quantitative)

Of the 384 questionnaire copies distributed, 383 were returned and found valid for analysis, representing a 99.7% return rate.

Items	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	152	39.7
	Female	231	60.3
	Total	383	100
Age	18-27	177	46.2
	28-37	98	25.6
	38-47	54	14.1
	48-57	46	12.0
	58 and above	8	2.1
	Total	383	100
Marital Status	Single	217	56.7
	Married	144	37.6
	Divorced	8	2.1
	Widowed	10	2.6
	Separated	4	1.0
	Total	383	100
Occupation	Student	148	38.6
	Civil servant	49	12.8
	Business owner	79	20.6
	Private sector employee	88	23.0
	Unemployed	19	5.0
	Other	0	0.0
	Total	383	100

With respect to gender distribution, the majority of respondents were female, accounting for 231 participants (60.3%), while males constituted 152 participants (39.7%). This indicates a higher female representation in the study sample. Regarding age, nearly half of the respondents, 177 individuals (46.2%), were between 18 and 27 years, making this the dominant age group. Respondents aged 28–37 years accounted for 98 participants (25.6%), followed by those aged 38–47 years with 54 participants (14.1%). Participants aged 48–57 years represented 46 individuals (12.0%), while only 8 respondents (2.1%) were aged 58 years and above. This suggests that the sample was largely composed of young adults. In terms of marital status, the majority of respondents were single, with 217 participants (56.7%). Married respondents accounted for 144 individuals (37.6%). Smaller proportions were divorced (8 respondents; 2.1%), widowed (10 respondents; 2.6%), and separated (4 respondents; 1.0%). This distribution reflects a predominance of unmarried individuals within the study population. Concerning occupation, students formed the largest group, comprising 148 respondents (38.6%). Private sector employees followed with 88 respondents (23.0%), while business owners accounted for 79 respondents (20.6%). Civil servants represented 49 respondents (12.8%), and 19 respondents (5.0%) were unemployed. No respondents selected the “other” occupation category. Overall, the occupational distribution shows a strong representation of students and working individuals, particularly in the private sector.

Table 3. *Level of Exposure to Detergent Television Advertisements*

Items	VH Freq. (%)	H Freq. (%)	L Freq. (%)	VL Freq. (%)	Mean
I regularly watch detergent advertisements on television	62 (16.2%)	211 (55.1%)	93 (24.3%)	17 (4.4%)	2.83
I can recall that the detergent advertisement was often shown on television	95 (24.8%)	233 (60.8%)	49 (12.8%)	6 (1.6%)	3.09
I am frequently exposed to detergent advertisements on TV	84 (21.9%)	173 (45.2%)	110 (28.7%)	16 (4.2%)	2.85
Television adverts influence my awareness of detergent brands	83 (21.7%)	164 (42.8%)	118 (30.8%)	18 (4.7%)	2.81
I prefer detergent brands that are often shown on television	64 (16.7%)	142 (37.1%)	141 (36.8%)	36 (9.4%)	2.61
Average Weighted Mean					2.83

Note: VH= Very High; H=High; L= Low; VL= Very Low; Decision rule if mean is: 1-1.49 = VL; 1.5-2.49 = L; 2.5-3.49 = H; 3.5-4.0 = VH

The results in Table 3 indicate that the level of exposure to detergent television advertisements among residents in Ifo was generally high, with an overall weighted mean score of ($\bar{x} = 2.83$). The statement “I can recall detergent advertisements often advertised on television” recorded the highest mean score of ($\bar{x} = 3.09$), suggesting that most respondents frequently remember detergent adverts they have seen on TV. High mean scores were also observed for being frequently exposed to detergent advertisements on TV ($\bar{x} = 2.85$), regularly watching detergent advertisements on television ($\bar{x} = 2.83$), and television adverts influencing awareness of detergent brands ($\bar{x} = 2.81$). These patterns may be attributed to the prevalent presence of detergent advertisements on popular television channels, frequent media consumption by residents, and effective advertising strategies that enhance visibility and brand recall. Although slightly lower, the statement “I prefer detergent brands that are often shown on television” still recorded a mean score of ($\bar{x} = 2.61$), indicating that while television exposure increases awareness, it has a moderate influence on actual brand preference. Generally, these findings suggest that television remains a significant medium for promoting detergent products and shaping consumer awareness and recognition among residents in the study area.

Thematic analysis of gender portrayal in the ads

Theme 1. The Virtuous Woman Standard

This theme explores how Nigerian detergent television advertisements position laundry as an expression of maternal love and being the ultimate homemaker instead of a chore. The woman’s identity is consumed by her role in the household. In the *So Klin* detergent “Feel the Pink with *So Klin*” advertisement released in 2025, different women are shown throughout the advertisement and towards the end, a woman is shown in a bright domestic setting, handling clothes with a smile, deriving fulfilment with no male participant in this action. The theme is also portrayed in the *Good Mama’s* “Good Mama Cinderella” advertisement in 2017. In this advert, the king orders a search for a bride for the prince. In this advert, the test for a potential bride is laundry. This essentially shows that the value of the bride is tied to their laundry performance. By using the laundry test,



the advertisement reinforces domestic competence as a criterion for being an ideal woman. In *Ariel's* "Twice the Delight" in 2022, the woman is the primary performer of the laundry in her home and derives joy in using *Ariel* instead of regular hand washing to remove stubborn stains. While the advert highlights the product's efficacy in removing stubborn stains in one wash, she is positioned as the sole protagonist in the laundry room, and her joy is derived from the ability to wash a stained garment efficiently.

Theme 2. Men as Beneficiaries

This theme explains that men are frequently portrayed as the end users of the laundry process rather than the performers. In detergent television advertisements, men are portrayed as the reason why the laundry needs to be done or the authority who validates the product, but not as active performers of the action. This theme is also seen in the *Good Mama* Cinderella advert in 2017. The prince and the king act as the ultimate authority on domestic labour, not just benefiting from the clean clothes, but their approval is the currency that the prospective brides were competing for. This is seen in the "No Stain Removal Challenge" by *Ariel* detergent in 2019. In this advertisement, the male character is the expert or voice of reason and authority. He recommends the *Ariel* detergent as the best detergent, and the female characters are led to believe the product has met the highest possible standard of professional cleanliness. He does the final check and approves the cleanliness of *Ariel* detergent. Therefore, these advertisements suggest that the woman's labour is only successful when a male figure confirms it.

Theme 3. The Double Burden

This theme explains that advertisements acknowledge the societal shift where women's entry into the workforce is acknowledged, but their domestic expectations do not change. This portrays women as people "who can do it all". In these advertisements, the woman returns home from work, and instead of sharing the household responsibilities, she immediately engages in laundry. These adverts create a form of reassurance that a woman can be modern and successful without failing her domestic duties. This theme is present in *Ariel's* "The Big One in 2025". The advertisement begins with a lady at a social event in her professional capacity, then transitions into a scene where she is doing laundry and showing the efficiency of the product. The advert uses the detergent to bridge the gap between her two worlds. This theme is also seen in the "Make Every Lit" with *Viva* detergent advertisement in 2023. Here, the female figure is carrying out multiple functions in both professional and social capacities while creating time at home for laundry, thereby perpetuating the expectation that a woman's social and professional advancement should not prevent her from performing her domestic duties. In *So Klin's* "Snow Tech" advertisement in 2025, the woman is dressed in an outfit that shows that she is both a mother and a temporary professional. The scene transitions to her giving a breakdown of the efficiency of the detergent. At the end, she is surrounded by her family, who are wearing clean clothes.

Theme 4. Shared Responsibility

This theme looks for a progressive depiction of men and women in detergent advertisements. It represents the departure from the traditional narrative of the Nigerian advertising industry, where women are depicted as the sole "active performers" of domestic labour and men as the "passive beneficiaries". However, this theme identifies the contemporary progression towards equality in the household structure, where domestic chores are portrayed as gender neutral responsibilities rather than inherent feminine duties. Mama Joy's "The Joy of Freshness in Every Wash" advertisement in 2025 offers a significant departure from the stereotypical, traditional



maternal responsibility of laundry. The advertisement begins with an old woman surrounded by clothes on the line while actively washing clothes. The scene transitions to a laundry room where both men and women are actively working together to perform the laundry action using various washing machines. This theme also looks at advertisements, where laundry is seen as a family activity and not a “one- man” chore. In the *Too Clean* detergent “Don’t Settle for Clean, Go Too Clean” advertisement in 2021. Although the primary laundry performer is the woman, the advertisement portrays laundry as a family responsibility, with the children and husband helping her with the laundry. Here, the woman is the domestic gatekeeper, but there is a brief inclusion of a man participating in the laundry process, which represents an emerging shift towards shared responsibility. His presence in the washing scene shifts the portrayal of men from passive beneficiary to collaborative partner.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the study show that residents in Ifo are generally exposed to detergent television advertisements, which corroborates the study carried out by Valtorta et. al. (2023), which showed that gender stereotypes are still frequently seen in Italian children’s television advertisements. This shows that consumers are being exposed to detergent advertisements. Also, these results align with previous studies, such as Attafuah (2020), Elsen et al. (2025), and Zhao et al. (2022), emphasising the importance of media exposure in shaping consumer knowledge and awareness. For instance, the findings of Armah and Attafuah (2020) explain that frequent advertisement exposure increases brand recall and brand recognition, which corresponds with the high recall and viewing scores observed in this study. Elsen et al. (2025) also reported that consistent exposure to advertisements of products enhances brand familiarity and awareness. However, the influence on brand preference suggests that while television advertisements are used to promote and inform consumers, there are other factors such as product quality, price, availability and personal experience that also significantly guide choice. This pattern is consistent with the observations of Zhao et al. (2022), who noted that awareness generated through television adverts does not automatically convert to brand loyalty or consumer purchase behaviour, but television commercials are more successful.

The exploration of gender stereotypes in Nigerian detergent television advertisements shows that women are portrayed as the primary performers of domestic chores. This analysis supports the findings by Ihehu and Nwabuisi (2021), which primarily found that women are negatively portrayed in television advertising. Women are mainly portrayed with roles that relate to domesticity and dependence, while men remain associated with dominance and authority. These portrayals were prominent in advertisements for *So Klin* (2025), *Ariel* (2022) and *Good Mama* (2017). These persistent portrayals in Nigerian detergent television advertisements have failed to acknowledge modern families where domestic labour is shared; they reinforce gender roles to appeal to Nigerian consumers. Anweh (2020) supports this notion by explaining that, despite studies showing improved gender role portrayals in other countries, negative representations of women in advertising persist in Nigeria. This analysis equally corroborates Raymond and Ayedun's (2025) findings, which explain that there is no correlation between the gender roles portrayed in Nigerian television advertisements and those in real life. Contemporary Nigerian advertisements have started to acknowledge the presence of women in the workforce, as seen in adverts by *Ariel* (2025), *Viva* (2023), and *So Klin* (2025). Although women are acknowledged in the workforce, they still play the role of primary laundry performers. This shows that a woman’s



professional advancement should not compromise her domestic efficiency. These adverts effectively reassure the audience that a modern career should not disrupt her primary duty as a homemaker in her family. It was equally seen that men are the primary beneficiaries of the laundry. In these advertisements, men are either the recipients of clean laundry or the voice of authority that tells women what detergent is the best product for clothes. This is seen in advertisements such as *Ariel* (2019) and *Good Mama* (2017). These portrayals corroborate the study by Himika and Alicia (2025), which explains that 70.1% of television advertisements are dominated by male voiceovers even when the product is for the household, positioning them as authoritative figures while women remain domestic figures.

In *Mama Joy's* (2025) advertisement, there is an emerging shift in the traditional depiction of women and men in Nigerian detergent television advertisements. There is a use of other settings and characters beyond the domestic kitchen and backyard. This shows the collaborative effort of both men and women performing laundry together. It is also seen in the *Too clean* advert (2021). Although the advert shows the woman as the primary laundry performer, the man also joins in to help with the laundry. This shows how the advertising industry is slowly beginning to reflect the egalitarian changes of the 21st century, even though some brands are still reluctant to do so. Theoretically, the findings about gender representation in detergent advertising connect closely to the AIDA Model, which describes the stages a consumer goes through in response to advertising. The findings highlight a critical caveat: while leveraging gender stereotypes might be effective in moving consumers through the AIDA stages, it can perpetuate harmful societal norms and reinforce gender inequality.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study evaluated gender stereotypes and audience exposure to detergent television advertisements among residents in Ifo, Ogun State, Nigeria. After both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, the study revealed how gender is portrayed in detergent television advertisements in Nigeria and the exposure levels of consumers to detergent products' television advertisements. The study affirms that the Nigerian advertising industry continues to heavily rely on gender stereotypes as a creative strategy. Women are still seen as the primary laundry maker and caretaker of their home, while men are continuously shown in dominating positions. Men are the beneficiaries of these clean clothes and often serve as the voice of authority over these women. Women are seen balancing the demands of the workforce and still being made to prioritise the demands of their home.

Television remains a significant medium for promoting detergent products and shaping customers' brand recall. Although traditional stereotypes may continue to influence short-term sales, the study recommends the adoption of more gender-sensitive advertising practices in Nigeria. Detergent brands seeking to maintain relevance among a progressively educated audience should move beyond outdated gender portrayals. The implications of these findings for the study are multifaceted. The study reveals that exposure to detergent advertisements entrenched in gender stereotypes reinforces traditional gender roles among viewers.

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