

# Re-thinking the Creative Economy: The Place of Advertising and Public Relations in Nigeria

Bobmanuel, Karibi Benson Ph.D

*Department of mass communication  
Ken Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic, Bori, Rivers State*

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## ABSTRACT

The creative ecosystem has been inundated with idea generation and execution of ideas. Idea generation requires knowledge, skills and creative medium of communication. Advertising and public relations organization produces contents of all kinds like any other industry but the creative economy has come to depend on them to promote and drive the economic growth and prosperity. Hence, the media has become indispensable industry actively involved in the production and distribution process to enhance consumerism. This study will therefore adopt the secondary research methods. The purpose of the study is to investigate and help find gaps in the current literature in the field and highlight future directions. This study, therefore recommends that, the creative economy is a key driver to economic diversifications', innovative in problem-solving that facilitates unique solution to challenges with emphasis on the quality of life and well-being, creation of jobs, as pragmatic outcome of a targeted economic process. The study concludes that advertising and public relations are creative strategic communication targets for the knowledge economy, whether it is for profit or humanitarian benefits. Advertising have a permanent place in everyday life as well as public relations which creates favorable image, goodwill and reputation to its target audience.

**Keywords;** Creative economy, Idea generation, Advertising, Public relations and media in Nigeria

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades or more, attention has been drawn by the Global North towards the creative economy as a renewed hope of economic growth across the developing South. Nigeria is not an exception in this quest. The essential elements of creativity are imagination and inventiveness prompted by discipline in various routine skills. Hence, the creative ecosystem is replete with idea generation and innovations. Innovation requires knowledge, skills and, above all human creativity

in the execution of an idea required for the effective running of the various organizations. According to Hautamaki (2008), innovations are new, practical things that are put to use that, are essential for the generation and commercialization of an idea. By imputation, this is integral to the creative policy that constitutes the framework for innovative processes - that flourish in a place that offers a comprehensive economy that feeds and support creativity and channel it into innovations.

Rastogi & Gupta (2019) notes, ideas must not only be fresh, but must also be relevant to the target current trends, and current events, target appeals, cultural relevance, immediate response motivation, and measurable results. Martins & Wilson (2018) adds, the promotion of creative industries as drivers of economic growth and urban regeneration is now a well established strategic policy priority from the influential insights of and the accompanying valorization of creative class, as a broad and expanding category of contemporary worker. By the same token, Scott, (2010) writes, the new structures of production and work that are now so strongly evident in both advanced and less advanced economies have been variously categorized by labels such as flexible specialization, the knowledge economy, or sometimes the new economy. Comparatively, these phenomena are that they are associated with high levels of computerization and incessant innovation in both process and product configurations, especially when compared with the economy of mechanization and reputation that dominated up to 1980, (Corsani 2003; Levy & Murnane 2004; Autoret et al 2006 cited in Scott, 2010).

The creative industries are among the most dynamic sectors in the world economy that sets out to make good its promise that they provide new opportunities for developing countries to leapfrog into emerging high-growth areas of the world economy, O'Connor (2019). However, across Africa the creative industries have had less traction as a national policy idea, but the promotion

of creative entrepreneurship, central to the creative economy agenda, has been driven by programmes of the British Council.

More importantly, Towse (2010), writes, the concept of the creative economy emphasizes human capital and knowledge as sources of economic growth in the post-industrial world, the importance of innovation and creativity, and the prominent role intellectual property law plays as a growth policy driver. However, Nigeria, as the most populated black nation has huge and vibrant creative industries, employing millions of people and creating wealth for them. The country is considered a rich haven of creative assets that can help it provide employment, alleviate poverty and diversify its economy (Agoralumiére International, 2009) cited in Nwankwo 2018).

In the light of the creative economy is the new normal considering the relevance of creativity, knowledge, innovation, disruption; start-ups, co-working spaces, creative hubs, entrepreneurship programmes; these are now a shared policy vernacular...They help articulate a global imaginary by which aspiring young people in the Global South seeking to make a living for themselves, for their communities and for their nations, (O'Connor 2019).

On the other hand, the creative economy can have positive effects on every aspect of sustainable development due to the delivering of a constant flow of ideas, inspiration and impulses to create. Regardless, the United Nations have recognized the growing importance of creative industries for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Funds. The SDF Funds has started a series of initiative to bring creative industries at the forefront of sustainable development (Howkins 2001; Florida 2003, 2004; Nalkamura 2018; United Nations 2019. Cite in Fazlagic & Skikiewicz 2019). The concept of creativity and its impact on sustainable development is relatively new. The above view is corroborated by Howkins (2001) who states, developed the concept to describe economic systems where value is based on novel imaginative qualities rather than the traditional resources of land's labour and capital compared to creative industries, which are limited to specific sectors.

To truly understand the dynamics' of advertising and public relations as a driver of the creative economy, the mass media can also be currently compared with industrial organization since they produce, distribute and exchange products just like any other industry. Analyzing these viewpoints, Ennst, (1979; 29), describes

creativity in advertising as a "juxtaposition of two previously unrelated ideas with a creative idea, the association, relationship is unexpected. Here, creativity comes after hard work, concentration and total immersion in the product and the problems of the prospect. By common sense, however, an effective communication message; a message that will create shared meaning between the sender (the creative team) and the receiver (consumer) must be able to comprehend the information. If the flow of information is restrained for any reason, the communication process fails. Again, another important aspect of communication utilized in the creative economy is public relations. This tool can also be seen as everything directed towards improving communication between people, organization or all actions to broaden the sphere of influence of an organization by appropriate publicity, advertising and other forms of communication, (Asemah 2016) cited by Abasifreke & Samuel (2020).

In a synthesis on the foregoing adduced that, public relations and advertising seems to be the core of creative economy in Nigeria. In Nigeria, public relations helps in creating good relationships with popular press and other media to help companies communicate messages to their publics, the general public's, government regulators. Their job consists of not only encouraging the press to cover positive stories about companies, but also of managing unfavorable rumors stories and events, (Onabajo 2013). To a large extent, the place of advertising and public relations is to reposition and showcase skills and talents imbedded in the creative industry in Nigeria through its media of communication.

#### Synthesizing Advertising and Public Relations Media

Every creative economy conveys messages or tells their stories to achieve their desired objectives through advertising and public relations media. These media: newspaper, magazine, radio, television, billboards, films & videos etc and in recent times the new media is special because they hold the publicity power to make activities known to the outside world. There effects used to create awareness, sensitize and mobilize citizens, and to ensure peaceful co-existence where meaningful development can thrive. In the words of Arens (2004) advertising has subtle ability to reach out and touch everyone living and working in the modern world today. In fact, at some time in their lives most people will probably become amateur

creators of advertising whether they design fliers for a school car wash, write a classified ad for a garage sale, or develop a whole campaign for some business or charity, or political cause.

Accordingly, Onabajo (2013, p. 88) also notes that, public relations helps in creating good relationships with the popular press and other media to help companies communicate messages to their publics. It plays a key role in reaching and influencing those whose opinions influence end users. The two approaches imply that, without the media of communication whatever happens in the creative economy is localized and remains within its domain. The media is the mid-wife through which the knowledge economy can see itself and also get there reflection of how it is seen by its publics.

The media in turn has become more dependent on advertising and public relations to supply content to fill air time or column inches. In this instance, publicity can help increase awareness locally and internationally. Deriving from the above, Nwamara (2019,p.111 cited in Guanah ,2021) notes, the combination of the promotional tools or marketing communication will result in maximum publicity for a product, and will also increase turnover, promote corporate image and enhance corporate growth. Jefkins, (1992, p.14) also points out that publicity yields an image, subject to adequate information. The image of any subject can only be what it truly is. Information in this context must be complete, accurate, unbiased and ascertained by some means that it is so.

More so, the place of the mass media in the society is to ensure that positive news items about the creative economy is reported to its diverse audience. When the media gives hype to news about the creative industry and artists, it catches the attention of the audience who patronize them. This has brought about artists being used for endorsements of products by big companies and or conglomerates. Here, the artists is paid while the company receives patronage, the economy of the nations benefits too because money circulates, while individuals taxes, company taxes and value added taxes are also paid, (Guanah, 2021).

Each of the media is presumed to affect perceptions and behavior in a distinctive way. They can affect the society and the society can also affect the media. It must however be noted that the mass media are the uniquely modern means of public communication, and much of their importance lies in the fact that they are a major cause of whatever modes of perception , thought, public discourse, and political action. Because of their size and the

large number of people they reach, the mass media have tremendous impact on society, ( Daramola. 2005, p.160)

### **Theoretical Assumptions**

This study is premised on the discourse of Agenda setting. Agenda setting theory also known as agenda setting function of the mass media describes a very powerful influence of the media: that is the ability to tell us what issues are important. The main thrust of the theory is that media may not always determine what we think about. In the words of Cohen (1963) “the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think about, Thus, the theory holds the assumption that there is relationship between news coverage and public perception of the importance of issues.

The presupposition here is that: the amount of attention given to an issue in the media affects the level of importance the public assign to that issue. To this end, the media predetermine what issues are regarded as important at a given time in a society. This means that media attention to an issue will elevate such issue to high point of importance by the public.

This discourse is in tandem with this study, the theory of agenda setting highlights the facts that since the mass media construct our social reality, they unintentionally tell us what to think about and how to think. To a large extent, corroborate the fact that our perception of creative economy can be influenced by the mass media through content and presentation. The foregoing unquestionably is a precondition of sustainable development.

### **Review of Related literature.**

Given the growing discourse about the creative economy in our society; emerging messages suggest that economic activities generated sustainable development goals and opportunities for Nigeria if properly harnessed. In a study: Hopeful work and the creative economy, Martin & Wilson (2018), the researchers, emphasizes on creative labour to reflect on the place of hope in understanding the creative economy. The policy imaginary of the creative economy synonymizes creativity with innovation. The creative industry themselves claimed to have unleashed some much needed dynamism into sluggish post-industrial economies.

The creative economy has come to depend on and stand for a precarious and exclusionary labour market. Despite this, work in

these industries remains attractive to many young people, and researchers have continued to identify enthusiasm for creative work alongside recognition of its importance. O'Connor (2019) on a study, Resources of Hope, unpick the dominant creative economy model of entrepreneurship, creative human capital and open market opportunity suggest that, other than in East Asia-it is business as usual for the Global North. The creative economy not only fails to deliver its promise of development but has profound consequences for local cultures, caught up in an ever more global web of exploitation driven by the new digital platforms. In the words of Johnson (2014) "creativity is not limited to advertising and public relation alone, it is also in engineering, medicine and all other discipline, creative people are found in business, science, engineering, advertising and many other fields. But in advertising it is both a job description, and a goal" (Moriarty, Mitchell & Wells, 2009, p.401 cited in Johnson 2014, P. 7)

As regards measuring sustainable development, the creative economy perspective, Fazlagic & Skikiewicz (2019) writes, the measurement of sustainable development is an important contribution to the overall efforts in fighting the climate change. Statistical figures show that the share of the creative economy in GDP of the most developed countries is steadily increasing. Therefore, it is legitimate to analyze the sustainable development issues not only through the lenses of utilization of natural resources and environmental issues but also to look at the sustainability challenges for the creative economies

According to Sandor, Robert & Sandor (2019) in a study, sustainable development of the rural economy, adds, rural development is of great significance for the future of both the EU and Hungary, we must reduce migration, create new jobs and focus on sustainability and the principles and goals of environmental protection and nature conservation.

On brand advertising as creative publicity, Andrew, Neil, Rachel & Helen (2002).Points out that, brand advertising seems to work mainly by creatively publicizing the brand, without trying to persuade people that the brand differs from other brands, or is better or best. Fairly, few advertisements actually feature potentially persuasive inducements for their brand. According to Rauwers & Van Noort (2016), in a study, underlying processes of creative media advertising writes, creative media advertising also known as creative media choice can be classified as a form of guerilla marketing. Guerilla marketing is

unconventional advertising formats that make use of low-cost marketing tactics. The key principle of guerilla marketing campaign is to attract the attention of as many consumers as possible by surprising them with unexpected activities or messages.

Notwithstanding, Carla (2010) on the creative approach of the South African advertising industry towards the black consumer, says, successful advertising emerges as a creative and effective communication strategy. The creative team must be familiar with the values, needs and aspirations of the potential consumer and their creative ability to effectively act upon the value system of the consumer realizes in the design of the advertising messages.

As regards creative excellence in advertising, Shanti, & Devaraj (2016), observes, that creativity of an advertisement lies in bringing together a number of separate elements. The creative idea results from a new combination of ideas enabling a relation to be formed between two concepts that have never previously been linked. Creativity embodying the strategic principle in an idea intended to catch the consumer attention. In the same vein, creativity in public relations, Andy, (2010), notes, creativity in public relations attempts to fill this lacuna. It is written to help public relations practitioners understand the creative process –both how it works and how it can be managed. It also explains how public relations practitioners can improve their own individual skills, using and managing a range of techniques and tips to generate creative ideas.

Howbeit, in a study entitled, Theories and success stories of advertising and public relations, Setia (2012), notes, advertising involves communicating the company's brand's value proposition by using paid media to inform, persuade, and remind consumers. While Public relations is aimed at building good relations with various publics-from consumers and the general public's to the media, investor, donor and government publics. As with all the promotional mix tools. Advertising and public relations must blend into the overall integrated marketing communication programme to achieve its concise objectives.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

Creswell (2012, p.274) explains the purpose of descriptive method is to find a detailed explanation and description about the object of the research systemically. The descriptive method of research, according to; Creswell (1994) is to gather

information about present existing condition. Because this study is descriptive in nature emphasis shall be on the impact of advertising and public relations as drivers of national / global economy. Since advertising and public relations promotes products and services in Nigeria and, perhaps, in other developing countries, statistics shows that most advertising spending were on TV and Video ads, with \$156 million in 2018, \$165 million in 2019, and \$177 million in the first half of 2020 (Nairamatics, 2019 cited in Okonji, 2020). He adds, while radio recorded \$42 million in 2018, \$44 million in 2019 and \$47 million in 2020. The newspaper also recorded \$26 million in 2018, \$25 million in 2019, and \$24 million in 2020.

Moreover, public relations market size has grown strongly in recent years. It grew from \$106.93 billion in 2023 to \$114.1 billion in 2024 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.7%. This unprecedented growth within the period can be attributed also to the growth in the traditional media landscape, corporate reputation management, crisis communication needs, word of mouth and advocacy, community engagement and corporate social responsibility. The expected projected growth reveals that public relations market size will see a strong growth in the next few years. It is also predicted to grow up to \$144.28 billion in 2028 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.0%. The growth in these forecasted periods may be attributed to digital and social media dominance, influencer marketing integration, authenticity and transparency, globalization and cross-cultural communication and, data driven decision making. In this instance, a well-structured marketing communication mix can accelerate integrated public relations plan and connect potential clients with standard businesses and, create a competitive advantage for organizations. It also helps to attract attention and raise visibility for products or services.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- This study recommends that the government should create a ministry of creative industry and sustainable development, with the aim to alleviate poverty in the three tiers of government.
- That the creative industry should be categorized for easy identification and accessibility.
- The creative industry must be data driven in accordance with global best practices. This will enable government maintain data about persons and agencies within the industry for

the purposes of development, planning and income generation.

- Government should provide grants to practitioners' in the creative industry in line with global practices.

### IV. CONCLUSION

- Advertising and public relations are creative strategic communication targets for the knowledge industry, whether it is for profit or for a more altruistic benefit, advertising have a permanent place in everyday life as well as public relations which creates favorable image and reputation.
- In essence advertising and public relations uses the mass media to reach out to its diverse audiences across national frontiers for the purposes of communication engagements.

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