



THE RHETORIC OF HERBAL ADVERTISEMENTS IN GHANA: A DESCRIPTIVE CASE STUDY OF INFORMATION CENTERS IN CAPE COAST NORTH

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Abstract

The use of persuasion in herbal medicine advertising has received scholarly attention across disciplines such as health communication, linguistic and cultural studies. However, scholarly inquiries regarding how herbal medicine advertisement influence buying behaviors are uncommon to local communities that may be influenced by economic and demographic factors. This study focuses on the Cape Coast North Constituency in Ghana, specifically the Amamoma, Apewosika, Akotokyir and Kwaprow communities, where information centers serve as prominent platforms for advertising herbal medicine. The research was evaluated in the light of Aristotle's rhetoric theory which posit three modes of persuasion: ethos, pathos, and logos. The study employed a qualitative descriptive case study design, involving open-ended interviews (five herbal medicine advertisers and five consumers of herbal medicine) and content analysis of pre-recorded jingles to analyze the persuasive strategies that herbal medicine advertisers in these areas employ to lure consumers to make purchases. The study found that the consumers' perception about the appearances and the credibility of the advertisers (e.g., physical appearance, religious titles and display of certifications) partly influenced their purchase and consumption patterns. Again, the study found that advertisers and producers herbal medicine advertisers in the Amamoma, Apewosika, Akotokyir and Kwaprow communities relied heavily on testimonial appeals, referrals to respected figures (such as chiefs or lecturers), and repetition in their jingles to appeal to and persuade people to buy their products without stating their dosages and possible side effects. Consumers revealed that these strategies heavily influenced their decisions to purchase herbal medicine, often without critical consideration of verification, side effects or dosage. The study recommends that the Ghana Food and Drugs Authority, the government of Ghana and other stakeholders in this field make sure that all jingles are examined for safety, accuracy, and public protection, and pass the necessary checks before they are made available to the public to do their intended functions. Additionally, herbal medicine advertisers should be trained on how to effectively use persuasion with evidence rather than deception. Consumers of herbal medicine are also encouraged to verify the sources and originality of herbal medicine before making purchases for consumption.

Keywords

Advertising, Persuasion, Herbal Medicine, Rhetoric, Consumers, Ethos, Pathos, Logos

Introduction

According to Dyer (1982), advertising refers to the act of capturing one's attention or providing notification or information about something. According to Mensah and Asemanyi (2021), advertising is a significant communication tool that has the potential to impact consumer purchasing attitudes. The use of advertising is a pivotal factor in augmenting the sales, production, and messaging of herbal enterprises that have attained prosperity. To sustain their existence, commercial advertisements consistently employ

persuasive tactics to sway the public. Advertising is a potent mechanism for enhancing consumer recognition and appraisal. As such, advertisers employ various mediums such as commercial television and radio, the national and local press, magazines, and community information centers to endorse herbal products.

Herbal medicine, according to the World Health Organization (2003), consists of health practices, approaches, knowledge, and beliefs that include plants, animals, and mineral-based medicines; spiritual therapies; manual techniques; and exercises that are used singly or in combination to treat, diagnose, and prevent illnesses or maintain well-being. These modalities are employed either individually or in combination to prevent, diagnose, and treat illnesses or promote overall wellness. As per the World Health Organization (WHO), there is a noteworthy increase in the number of individuals seeking traditional remedies in comparison to conventional treatment. In Ghana, it is reported that approximately 70% of patients utilize herbal medicine. Since 1975, the Center for Scientific Research in Plant Medicine in the country has been engaged in the research and development of traditional medicines in collaboration with traditional health practitioners. The Ghana Federation of Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Association represents most of the practitioners because herbal treatment is especially popular in the medical field.

Herbal medicine is a prominent subject in the realm of healthcare in Ghana, as it garners significant patronage from a diverse clientele, including individuals with varying levels of familiarity with the practice. Numerous studies have been conducted on herbal advertisements. Researchers have investigated various areas related to advertising, such as the use of language (Amoah, 2019), the method of dissemination, and their impact on the audience (Olaleye, Bejide, & Adekoya, 2019; Mbum, 2019). According to Abedu (2019), herbal medicine practitioners employ an excessive use of pathos, or emotional appeals, to exert control over the minds and experiences of their audience. This manipulation of beliefs and attitudes is intended to encourage patronage for their products. Salarian, H., & Afri, E. (2022) assert that advertisers use phrases like 'the best traditional doctor in town,' 'Stop suffering,' and 'Get all your problems solved.' These topics obviously have the power to attract the attention of the readers and are memorable. This advantage is because persuasion is the act of using language to stimulate a desired action from individuals (Aristotle, 2008). Persuasive skills are used in courtrooms, in political campaign discourses, in the launch of new products onto the market, and most especially in herbal medicinal advertisements. Persuasion can be defined as the act of convincing or influencing someone to believe or do something through various means such as logical arguments, emotional appeals, or personal credibility (Cialdini, 2001). Herbal medicine advertisers use rhetoric as a potent tool to exploit a desired response from potential customers and to maintain the interest of already-existing customers.

Advertising, according to Mzoughi and Abdelhak (2012), consists of two parts: content and style, which work together to produce the desired effect on the audience. According to Kenechukwu et al. (2013), three factors must be considered for advertising to be successful in influencing its target audience: the advertising message and the recipient, the appeal to emotions and logic, and a grasp of the desired effect of the message on the target audience. These studies suggest that using persuasive factors strategically is crucial for getting the desired effects since different contexts—geographic or psychological—have an impact on how effectively they are used.

This study investigates the rhetoric of herbal medicine advertisements in Ghana but is limited to the Amamoma, Apewosika, Kwaprow and Akotokyir information centers in the Cape Coast North Constituency. This present study seeks to address the gaps of previous studies in the field of herbal medicine advertisements; researchers broaden the scope of their studies without paying attention to local and community information centers. Many studies have been conducted on this topic and have been beneficial but mainly revolved around the dominant rhetorical strategies in herbal medicine advertising (Mutunda, 2018), without analyzing their influence on buying and this narrows the scope of their work. However, herbal medicine advertisement is not all about the sales one makes daily but also the effects the messages have on the consumers' buying behavior and the persuasive skills the producers have and how well they employ rhetorical elements to arrive at their desired outcomes. Vahid (2012) asserts that advertisers tend to project the listener, reader, or viewer as powerful, with the ability to choose their product or that of their competitor. Therefore, producers of herbal medicines view humans as rational beings capable of independent thought and decision-making; however, advertisements remain significant because they influence customer perceptions. Furthermore, although a lot of research has been conducted in Ghana, there are just a few like Amoah (2019) who focused and limited her study to information centers found in the Cape Coast North Constituency. However, her study on the use of language in herbal medicine advertisements analyzed just one jingle from the Amamoma community center; hence, the

findings would not be enough to draw conclusions about the language use of herbal medicine ads in Cape Coast. It is therefore imperative to find out how the application of rhetorical elements in the advertisement of herbal medicine by word of mouth and through jingles influences the purchasing habits of people, especially the buyers of herbal medicine at the aforementioned information centers in Cape Coast. Adegoju (2013), in the Rhetoric of herbal advertisements in Nigeria, identifies that the display of practical intelligence and knowledge of herbal healing enhances the credibility of the advertiser and causes the audience to act accordingly. After realizing the enormous impact advertising has not only on sales but also on the overall lifestyle of consumers and the advertisers, a need was felt to investigate the rhetoric on herbal medicine advertisements in Ghana and narrowed to the communities in the Cape Coast North Constituency. The objectives of this study include finding how herbal advertisers at information centers use persuasive devices to persuade consumers and to investigate how persuasive language influences buying. Prior to the research problem, the study seeks to answer the following questions: how do herbal advertisers at information centers use persuasive devices to persuade consumers? And how does persuasive language affect consumer purchasing decisions?

This research will examine the extent to which advertisers use persuasive elements in winning their audience in such a way that makes it difficult for them to analyze the content of the advertising message or information until the expected end of the advertisers has been reached. Again, it will show with distinction how other persuasive tools and propaganda techniques, in addition to Aristotle and Cicero's rhetoric theory, contribute to achieving advertising objectives. This research is also significant because it localizes the study of persuasion in the context of information centers in underdeveloped communities, deviating from conventional research on the subject. The findings of the research would provide policymakers such as the Ghana Food and Drugs authority and the government of Ghana with important information on how to develop strategies and working policies that will help in achieving successful herbal medicine advertisement. It will raise awareness among audiences and Stakeholders and encourage researchers to conduct more studies on advertising in local communities and its impacts and will add to the literature of health communication.

Review of Related Literature

Herbal medicine advertising techniques

According to Mavuga (2013), producers employ a variety of approaches to sell their products to their target audiences, with rhetoric serving as a tool rather than an end in itself. The use of propaganda techniques as rhetorical strategies encompasses a range of methods such as bandwagons, testimonials, assertions, euphoria, narration, and others (Adegoju, 2013). Mavuga (2013) also identifies those techniques such as juxtaposition, rhetorical questions, hyperbole, punctuation marks, use of indigenous languages, and personality testimonials, among others, play a role in building positive perception about a product. Again, the use of structures such as "last lover: bring back lover in three days," "traditional doctor in town," "get the best of all your problems solved," "failure to conceive: enable you to have babies," and others were noted as typical examples of formal structures that evince certain powerful impressions about the product that urge buyers to respond in the desired way of the advertiser. In the same vein, Adegoju (2013) finds that techniques including titles such as "Dr.," "Chief," and "Prince," as well as nominals such as "pathfinder," "pioneer," "pacesetter," and glittering generalities, are used by advertisers to establish source credibility. Adegoju (2013) postulates that the fact that a drug has been registered with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) serves as a means of demonstrating the drug's authenticity and promoting the overall approval of the herbal medicine by regulatory bodies. Adegoju (2013) asserts that advertisers of herbal medicine employ rhetorical tactics to enhance the marketing of traditional medicine, thereby reinforcing the trust that consumers have in these advertisers.

According to Mavuga (2013), advertisers of herbal medicines emphasize the beliefs and psychological makeup of their target customers to influence them. The use of fear as a marketing strategy has been recognized as a more efficacious approach to inducing a shift in attitude among the intended audience in comparison to the use of emotional appeals, as per the findings of Sinha, Sahdeo, and Sinha (2017). The study reveals that the use of fear appeals in advertising can effectively capture the audience's attention and convey the intended message, thereby achieving the advertiser's objective. The use of phrases such as "we possess specialised equipment for diagnosing illnesses prior to treatment" is perceived to possess persuasive elements. According to Kamukama, Nabachwa, and Nsambu (2019), advertising and hawking are prevalent methods of promoting traditional medicine in Africa. They posit that the primary

strategy employed by herbal advertisements is reliant on the dissemination of information through interpersonal communication, specifically through referrals from contented or recovered customers, as a means of augmenting their customer base and sales. Therefore, the approaches that advertisers use to manipulate their audiences may be inherent in ideologies and social cognition through control of context, through careful choice of microstructures, of which stating the problems that affect the people and making those problems stand out play a dominant role.

Persuasive Advertising and Language

Kenechukwu, Asemah, and Edegoh (2013) analyze persuasive techniques such as bandwagon, humor, testimonials, and name-calling as measures that herbal medicine advertisers employ to win their customers' trust. The study discusses how the manner of delivery, in addition to its content, determines the persuasive impact of advertising communication. Mbum (2019) also examined the interplay between rhetoric, style, tone, persuasion, propaganda techniques, and semantic devices in enhancing consumer purchasing behavior and product performance and found that the presence of celebrity endorsements and testimonials significantly impacts consumer behavior and purchasing patterns as compared to products that lack such endorsements. According to Kruti and Alan (2009), the process of advertising involves the conversion of a significant concept into a tangible advertisement that can effectively attract and engage the target audience. This research is very quintessential to the study on the basis that it shows the extent to which persuasion is employed in varied ways by herbal medicine advertisers. The text demonstrates the potential for an advertiser to juxtapose persuasion and propaganda to achieve their desired outcome.

Klinogo (2019) did a similar investigation into the rhetoric used in advertisements for herbal remedies. He explored the diverse tactics used by promoters of herbal remedies within the Volta Region of Ghana. Like Mavuga (2013), Klinogo (2019) highlights the use of source credibility as a promotional strategy in the field of herbal medicine. This advertising strategy involves the demonstration of a practical and intelligent understanding of prevalent, widespread, and challenging medical conditions that affect the general audience. This study presents a distinctive finding that possesses a compelling aspect: the identification of challenges faced by the intended recipient through emphasizing their complexities. The findings can be compared to the use of the appeal-to-fear tactic in communication.

Consumer perception of persuasion

Even though there is the large use of persuasion by advertisers in their bid to outsmart one another in an advertisement, the real purpose remains the fact that it is done to influence purchase intention and change the preconceived perception of their potential client to make them believe in them. According to Amoah, these activities affect the consumer's purchasing intentions. Amoah (2019) focuses her study on language usage in herbal medicine advertisements and the persuasive strategies used by herbal practitioners to advertise their products. Using Van Dijk's (2006) concept of manipulation, the study analyzed an audio-recorded jingle aired at a community information center in Amamoma, a suburb of Cape Coast. She posits that traditional medicine practitioners employ culturally unique languages to persuade their audiences. They depend on the common ground of their audiences and use local language in advertising their medicine in order to identify with the audience, regardless of their educational, economic and social background to induce the experiences and feelings of these audiences by referring to certain aspects of their culture. Therefore, persuasion may not guarantee effective advertisement, especially if there is no correlation between the customer and the endorsed product. I think this is a beautiful study, but to me, interviews together with the analysis of five or more pre-recorded jingles instead of one would have been beneficial to this study. This is because one jingle may not be enough to draw conclusions about the advertising language.

Olaleye, Bejide, & Adekoya (2019) examine "Audience Perception of the Influence of Puffery as a Persuasive Tool in Herbal Medicine Advertisement in Ondo State" and posit that puffery is employed in advertising to gain superiority. The study postulates that puffery is a legal method of promoting a product or service by using hyperbole or exaggerated claims that cannot be objectively confirmed. They identify puffery as a persuasive strategy in advertising that influences consumer purchasing behavior. In the same vein, Aziato and Antwi (2016) assert that herbal medicine is hugely patronized based on recommendations from others who have personal experiences of the medicine's effectiveness and advertising. These techniques, according to Ofori et al. (2013), may affect consumers either positively or negatively and sometimes aim to deceive customers into purchasing the medicine at all costs, no matter what effect it may have on them. Mutunda (2018) avers that many consumers in most communities cannot afford the high

cost of Western medicine, so herbal medicine remains the only means for medical help. This scenario creates high demand for herbal medicine, which affirms the trust consumers have in the potency of traditional medicine. Although consumers need the services of herbal medicine advertisers, I believe that promotional strategies and messages also play a role in influencing their purchase behaviors.

Theoretical Framework

The study employs Aristotle's Classical Rhetorical Theory of persuasion and Cicero's rhetoric. The birth of the Aristotelian theory dates to the fourth century BC. According to Aristotle (350 B.C./1926), rhetoric is the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject presented to us (Aristotle, 1926). The Aristotelian and Ciceronian rhetoric theories were chosen to investigate how herbal medicine advertisers use Persuasion to appeal to their audiences' emotions, among others, to buy the products. Rhetoric often involves using emotional appeals, logical arguments, and credibility or authority appeals to persuade the audience to accept a particular point of view (Aristotle, 1926).

According to Aristotle, the first mode of persuasion (ethos) depends on the character of the speaker; the second mode (pathos) is the emotional influence the speaker has on the audience; and the third mode is persuasion. Pathos seeks to change the attitudes and actions of the audience by appealing to their emotions (Coker, n.d.). Logos is the appeal toward logical reasoning. This logical appeal refers to the language, communication, and rhetorical resources used by a speaker or writer to get their audiences convinced. Logos, originally a Greek word, translates as "word" or "reason." (Coker, 2023). Like an argumentative text, applying logos to an advertising message is an appeal to logical reasoning.

Cicero, on the other hand, is a well-known Roman orator and statesman who wrote extensively on rhetoric. According to Cicero, rhetoric's goal is to persuade and move the audience. Aside from the three modes of persuasion, ethos pathos and logos—he identifies five canons of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery as elements that advertisers can consider while crafting advertisements. According Cicero (55 BCE), the generation of compelling arguments and ideas to sell a product, the use of attention-grabbing headlines or opening statements to capture the audience's interest, the application of rhetorical devices such as metaphors, similes, and rhetorical questions, and repeating key phrases, slogans, or memorable catchphrases to the products' delivery can all influence its effectiveness. He believed that a skilled orator must be able to use words that create vivid images in the minds of the audience, as well as to appeal to their emotions and logic. Cicero states, "An orator is one who knows the right thing to say, the right way to say it, and the right time to say it" (De Inventione, 1.17). He also highlighted the importance of using various rhetorical devices and strategies, like repetition, parallelism, and rhetorical questions, to make a persuasive argument. He posits, "Repetition is the mother of memory, and parallelism is the father of persuasive speech" (De Inventione, 2.23). Cicero's theory of rhetoric emphasized the importance of skillfully using language to persuade and move the audience through the art of repetition.

Rapp and Christof (2002) identify that in addition to the three modes of Persuasion (ethos, pathos, and logos), three distinct rhetorical speeches, like deliberative, forensic, and epideictic speeches, have the capacity to sway the decisions of their listeners. Therefore, the purchasing decisions of the audience are occasionally impacted by Aristotle's persuasive techniques: ethos, logos, and pathos. This present study is grounded on the supposition that herbal medicine advertisers tend to use some persuasive assertions over others. Consequently, these theories shall be used to clarify the way advertising messages are employed to sway consumers, the prominent elements of persuasion in advertising campaigns, and prevalent patterns in the modes of persuasion employed in the contexts of advertising messages. To achieve this objective, the three modes of Persuasion will serve as indicators to ascertain the most prominent persuasive elements in advertising messages employed by herbal medicine advertisers at information centers situated in the Cape Coast North Constituency. Likewise, as every theory has The challenges faced by rhetoric theories are also significant. Lunsford and Edy opine that the rational man of Aristotle's Rhetoric is not a logic-chopping automaton but a language-using animal who unites reason and emotion in discourse with others (Welch, 1987). This means that for a fact, an advertiser will unite all the modes of Persuasion, audiences still have purchasing power. Aristotle and Cicero's theories assume that consumers apply reason and emotions in purchasing. However, consumers tend to be more critical of the extent to which elements are applied.

Study Design and Methods

This study, being a descriptive one, employed a qualitative research design. The goal of a descriptive research analysis is to identify characteristics, trends, and categories. It aims to analyze the content of the collected data by answering the what, when, how, and where questions (McCombs, 2019). This research design is essential to this research because the objective of this research is not to deal with a large population of humans, figures, or statistics; rather, it seeks to perform a content analysis by discussing the persuasive elements employed by herbal medicine advertisers in advertising their products. The study was conducted at the Amamoma, Kwaprow, Apewosika, and Akotokyir communities in the Cape Coast North Constituency. The Cape Coast North constituency is one of the 23 in the Central Region of Ghana. It is found in the northern part of Cape Coast, the capital city of the Central Region. The constituency covers approximately 77 square kilometers and has a population of about 198,000 people, according to the 2021 Population and Housing Census (Ghana Statistical Services, 2021). The constituency is also home to the University of Cape Coast, one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in Ghana. The research sites (Amamoma, Kwaprow, Apewosika and Akotokyir) were used for this research because of their proximity or nearness to the University of Cape Coast. Again, of all the above-mentioned communities, there are not many established health facilities except for the Kwaprow and Amamoma communities, which have chips compounds. The selection of these information centers was based on the significant patronage of herbal medicine producers and advertisers, as they are perceived as a prime location to access a large portion of the target audience. I gained access to the research sites without any formalities, as they are information centers that are accessible to the public. Upon arrival at Kwaprow and Akotokyir, I presented myself as a prospective beneficiary of their services. Following a brief discourse on the efficacy of their medicinal products, I proceeded to inform them of the primary motive behind my visit, which they graciously accommodated by granting me interviews.

The study's target population is the Cape Coast North Constituency. However, to arrive at the findings, the study conducted interviews with a sample of 10 traders, consisting of five herbal medicine sellers and five buyers, who frequented the Akotokyir, Amamoma, Apewosika, and Kwaprow community information centers. The rationale behind selecting these centers was due to the absence of health facilities in these communities, which increases the likelihood of the consumption of herbal medicine products. Both genders were given the opportunity to actively engage in the data collection process to ensure gender inclusivity. The reason for the higher number of interviews conducted with women as compared to men was since women exhibit a greater tendency to procure herbal medicine than men. At each of the four information centers, a total of four individuals were interviewed, comprising two sellers and two buyers.

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that allows researchers to select participants who meet the criteria that are relevant to their research question or study objectives. According to Babbie (2016), purposive sampling is a sampling method that "involves selecting". This study focuses on individuals, groups, or events selected based on its specific purpose or research question (p. 228). We employed this method for the study because it aided in selecting the sample size based on the study's rationale. Interviews and pre-recorded jingles were the study's primary data collection methods. For this study's investigation into respondents' individual experiences with herbal medications, primary data were acquired through direct contact with respondents and some over the phone due to their unavailability. The instrument was designed with reference to the research objectives: how herbal advertisers use words to persuade consumers and how herbal medicine advertisements influence their purchase decisions.

Responses from interviews were transcribed and coded into the following categorizations: persuasion devices in herbal medicine advertising and the influence of persuasive devices on consumer buying behavior. Because qualitative data is subjective, two coders independently coded my interviews to ensure reliability and credibility. After that, the codes were clustered based on themes that were interpreted according to the research objectives. We used the simple percentage analysis method to analyze the responses, adhering to the study objectives outlined in the interview guide. Also, the study analyzed four jingles, one each from the aforementioned information centers.

This study employed Sarah Tracey's concept of situational ethics in its ethical framework. Situational ethics refers to ethical issues that arise in specific contexts or sample populations. This means that everyone can think of acts that may be ethical in some situations or with some people but not in other situations with others (Tracy, 2013). To adhere to a fundamental ethical principle of research, I ensured that I sought the participants' consent before interviewing them, and I confirmed that all the participants were older than 18. The participants had guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity, and they had the

opportunity to leave the interview at any time if they felt uncomfortable. Another ethical criterion that was applied in the research was voluntariness; as a result, no research participant was required to participate in an interview or reveal any information that they intended to keep private. All interviews were acquired out of their volition.

Some few challenges I encountered include the unwillingness of research participants to grant interviews. At the Amamoma information center, it took minutes to convince the man that I am a student and not a tax collector who is there to spy on him. Apparently, most operators of these information centers do not pay taxes so when I went there, he thought I was there to spy; as a result, he was very hostile. Language barrier because the research questions were solely in English. In resolving these challenges, I had to buy some of their products before they participated. Also, the interview questions were translated into Akan versions of the questions, in case a research participant would like to respond to the interview in his or her local dialect. The interview's transcription was difficult as well because most of the participants answered the questions in Fante, which required me to translate them into English before transcribing. The free flow and clarity of the sounds were again hindered by ambient noise from traffic, commercials, and other traders. Furthermore, another major challenge I encountered was the fact that none of the advertisers were willing to give out their jingles to be analyzed for this study. Of all the information centers I went to, they all kept saying that some bad people replicate their products with their packaging and use their jingles to sell those fake products. As a result, they do not give out their jingles to people who do not sell their products. Another individual told me that she couldn't distribute her jingle because it was under review. Following several conversations, I was able to get five jingles because they were for academic purposes, and even then, I got them very late.

Analysis and Discussion

Persuasive techniques in Advertising

Most advertisers and consumers of herbal medicine at the Amamoma, Kwaprow, Apewosika and Akotokyir information centers use persuasive techniques to get people to buy their products. Dominant among these techniques are source credibility, testimonials, referrals, and repetition. For instance,

Source Credibility

According to Aristotle, the first mode of Persuasion (ethos) depends on the character of the speaker. Advertisers use their persuasive power to present themselves as credible and trustworthy to the audiences. This extract explains this claim.

Advertiser Two: as you can see, I am physically challenged; I often break down easily but this medicine gets me going and so I often use the ointments.

Nyame Ahyirado Jingle: I have always said that I did not just start selling this medicine; I'm a prophetess in the Christ Apostolic Church International (CAC). God revealed this medicine to me while I was sleeping.

Similarly, some consumers attest to the fact that advertisers use source credibility including titles like Dr. as a technique to get them to buy their products.

Consumer one: the first person I bought my ointment from was a retailer, so she did not have much information about the drug; however, the second person appeared good and from his messages, he is a doctor that has a license and that motivated me to buy his product.

Source credibility is used by herbal medicine advertisers to enhance trust and credibility. For instance, the advertiser 2 emphasizes his condition of being physically challenged to establish credibility, stating that he relies on the medicine and it helps him a lot. This personal testimony can connect with consumers who may trust a product used by someone who understands their struggles. Again, the advertiser in the Nyame Ahyirado jingle establishes source credibility by referring to her role as a prophetess in the CAC, while others present themselves as doctors to leverage their authority and expertise associated with the medical profession. Since consumers often place trust in individuals with relevant qualifications and licenses, these personal experiences, spiritual connections, and professional expertise

techniques can increase the likelihood of consumers purchasing the products based on the credibility of the sources.

Testimonials

Testimonial is a persuasive technique that herbal medicine advertisers employ in their advertising message to get the audiences to believe that once some people have had positive results after using their herbal medicines, they too will equally benefit. The extract below confirms this assertion.

Nyame Ahyirado Jingles: ... Someone came to give a testimony that, three months after their marriage, her husband died so I told her to burn Nyame Ahyirado in her room. The following day the mother's sister came to confess... Someone contracted HIV/AIDS and went to Edumfa and Maame Grace gave her Nyame Ahyirado and after using it, the AIDS vanished... Men always come her way and go, not knowing it was from the house... the day she bathed with Nyame Ahyirado her story changed, and she is now wearing two rings.

Yesu Mo Jingle: I had severe Gonorrhea and after using Yesu Mo herbal mixture from Addae Munumkum herbal center, I am now relieved.

Advertiser one: sometimes people come straight from the hospital to wake me up from my sleep to buy specific medicines because they have used them and can testify that they're good.

Again, it appears that some consumers buy products following testimonials that they hear from the advertisers and other consumers.

Consumer three: So usually the individuals who advertise for these products come along with testimonies from other people. And when you investigate their statistics, the numbers they present and the number of successful cases and cures sit with me, and it pushes me to get and try to see if some will work for me.

Consumer four: Actually, it was about a testimony from someone using the products, so I decided to give it a try.

Stories of miraculous healings, the disappearance of HIV/AIDS symptoms, and personal transformations are all testimonies from people that advertisers use to bait potential consumers. Advertiser one mentions that people come to him straight from the hospital, interrupting his sleep, just to buy from him because of testimonials. Through this testimony, he tries to create a sense of reliability. These testimonials seek to convince consumers of their product's effectiveness. Moreover, testimonials from other consumers play a significant role in building trust and credibility, as individuals tend to rely on the experiences and recommendations of others when making purchasing decisions. For instance, consumers three and four explain that they are influenced by testimonials they hear from advertisers and other consumers.

Referrals

Advertisers of herbal medicine refer their consumers to prominent personalities who use their medicine, and this persuasive technique influences consumers' buying behavior.

Seller one: I tell them the personalities who buy from me are like chiefs and elders.

Consumer two: While the jingle airs, the advertisers mention lecturers and others who have also used the medicine and stress its effectiveness so it motivates me that I would also get positive results after usage, so I buy.

Yesu Mo: I know many chiefs who have used my medicine. It was my medicine Nana Yaa Asantewaa used before going to war.

The use of referrals or references to influential individuals, like chiefs, elders, and lecturers, by herbal medicine advertisers appeals to the authority and status of their consumers. This reference aims to create a sense of trust and credibility in the minds of potential customers because people often look to influential figures for validation. The mention of Nana Yaa Asantewaa using it before going to war serves

as a historical reference and association with a respected figure. Such an association motivates potential customers and increases the likelihood of making a purchase based on the influence and authority of these references.

Repetition

Herbal medicine advertisers use repetition to create memories. "repetition is the mother of memory, and parallelism is the father of persuasive speech" (De Inventione, 2.23). Responses from the data illustrate this assertion.

Magic Powder Jingle: wherever you are, try and get some of the magic powder (repeated four times); listen to it carefully. Spread it on your compound and stand there for a minute; you will see it is the work of magic powder (repeated four times). Use words such as "father, mother, brother, and sister" consistently to foster a sense of community and foster trust.

Apinko Herbal Jingle: Apinko Koo Capsules (4 times)

Yesu Mo: The word of God has it in Ezekiel that we should eat the fruits of a tree and use the herbs for medicine for healing.

The extract above shows that the repetition of the term "magic powder" in the jingle on four different occasions reinforces the product's name, creates a memorable association in the minds of the listeners, and helps with brand recognition and recall. The use of words like "father, mother, brother, and sister" aims to evoke a sense of familiarity, belongingness, and trust. By associating these terms with the product, the advertisers build an emotional connection with the audience and promote an image of dependability and trustworthiness. Also, the phrase "eat the fruits of a tree and use the herbs for medicine for healing" is restated to emphasize the message that the use of natural herbs and fruits for medicinal purposes is advocated in the biblical context to enhance memorability and emphasize the product's effectiveness or alignment with religious teachings, as seen in the case of Yesu Mo.

Advertisers purposefully employ each of these techniques to fulfill specific roles. From persuading, building trust, and leaving traces in the minds of consumers for easy recall. The use of persuasive elements in jingles is evident from the responses of both sellers and advertisers, as well as a meticulous analysis of the content, with the aim of attracting or captivating potential customers. The motivation behind the deployment of testimonies and mentioning far-reaching sources of herbs is to create legitimacy and credibility and to instill confidence in prospective customers (Mawere, M., 2011). The observations support the conclusions of Kenekchukwu, Asemah, and Edegoh (2013) that marketers of herbal remedies employ various forms of persuasive tactics, including but not limited to repetition, recommendations, testimonials, and name-calling, with the aim of establishing credibility and fostering trust among their target audience. These also speaks to Adegoju's (2013) findings that herbal medicine Advertisers utilize source credibility as a key strategy to market their products. The use of techniques like source credibility appeals to the ethos, the use of testimonies and referrals to appeal to the reasoning, and the use of fear to appeal to the emotions of the potential consumers to respond in their desired way is evident, just as Aristotle (1926) posits. Again, a closer analysis of the jingles manifests what Cicero refers to as the five canons of rhetoric. All the jingles analyzed are invented, arranged, have specific styles, create memory through repetition, and have their unique ways of delivery.

Influence of persuasive advertising on Consumer buying Behaviour

Inasmuch as the primary objective of herbal medicine advertisements is to generate revenue, the purchasing power heavily relies on consumers' hands. It appears that advertisers of herbal medicine employ various persuasive techniques, such as testimonials, referrals, and source credibility, to lure consumers to purchase their products. These techniques, according to Ofosu et al. (2013), may affect consumers either positively or negatively and sometimes aim to mislead customers into purchasing the medicine at all costs, no matter what effect it may have on them. The consumers of herbal medicine at the Amamoma, Kwaprow, Apewosika, and Akotokyir information centers concurred with the fact that advertisers' use of persuasive techniques to promote their products influenced their purchasing behaviors. For instance,

Consumer two: *While the jingle airs, the advertisers mention people who have also used the medicine and stressed its effectiveness so it motivates me that I would also get positive results after usage, so I buy.*

Consumer three: *Majority of the time it is based on the advertisement and testimonies of other users; they testify how effective it has been and how their health has improved. This is what motivates me to use or purchase the product.*

Consumer one: *the advertisers appeared good and had a license*

Consumer four: *Actually, it was about a testimony from someone who uses the products. So, I decided to give it a try.*

Based on the responses provided by Consumer two, Consumer three, and Consumer four, the frequent use of testimonials by herbal medicine advertisers influences their buying behavior. This strategy makes Consumer two confident that she too can achieve positive results by using the herbal medicine, ultimately leading her to buy it. Consumer three, on the other hand, states that much of the time, advertisements and testimonies of other users make him feel more compelled to try the medicine. Similarly, consumer four asserts that a testimonial from a user of the herbal medicine influenced her decision to try it. These testimonials and other persuasive tools motivate consumers to believe that they too can experience positive results and encourage them to try or purchase the product, sometimes even against their will. From the above, it is evident that persuasive strategies employed by advertisers influence consumers' buying behaviors.

Just as Ruiz (2014) asserts, advertisements are ubiquitous and impact everybody. The findings of the study revealed that persuasive techniques like testimonials, source credibility, and referrals employed by advertisers at the Amamoma, Apewosika, Akotokyir, and Kwaprow information centers in their promotional messages have impacts on consumers' buying behaviors. This also supports Olaleye, Bejide, & Adekoya's (2019) conclusion that persuasive strategies in advertising influence consumer purchasing behavior. The results of the study are consistent with Aristotle's three modes of persuasion, the credibility and character of the speaker, the emotional impact that the speaker has on the audience, and the appeal to logical reasoning by using testimonies, among other persuasive techniques influence how consumers make purchasing decisions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study sought to examine the rhetoric of herbal medicine advertisements in Ghana and the specific objectives were to find out how herbal medicine advertisers at information centers employ rhetorical devices to convince their audiences to make purchases and to investigate how persuasive language influences buying. With reference to the analysis of the data gathered, it was revealed that the advertisers employ persuasive language and techniques, such as source credibility, testimonials, referrals, and repetition, to instill fear and appeal to the emotions of the consumers. However, the study also found out that the consumers' perception about the appearances and the credibility of the sellers or advertisers partly influenced their purchase and consumption patterns. It is my hope that future research on the rhetoric of herbal medicine advertisements thoroughly investigate the rural communities to find out how they are being persuaded by people with power who claim to be spiritual healers to buy products without questioning their authenticity because, apparently, from the responses of the interviews, most of these sellers lack expertise and are not licensed and not even aware of the content of their jingles; instead, they simply pay people to put some general information about their products into advertisements. If these jingle writers ignore salient points like dosage or even include false information, it might be exceedingly dangerous and cause users to react negatively to the medications. On this basis, policymakers such as Ghana Food and Drugs Authority, the government of Ghana and other stakeholders in this field should make sure that all jingles are examined and pass the necessary checks before they are made available to the public to do their intended functions.

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