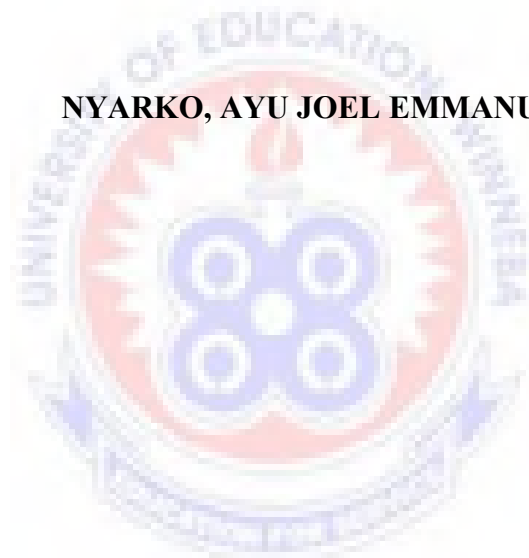


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

TELEVISION CHANNEL BRANDING IN GHANA:

A STUDY OF TELEVISION IDENTIS

NYARKO, AYU JOEL EMMANUEL



**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC EDUCATION, SCHOOL OF
CREATIVE ARTS, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
(ARTS AND CULTURE) DEGREE**

JULY, 2015

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I Emmanuel Joel Ayu Nyarko declare that this thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for any degree elsewhere.

.....

.....

Date

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines of supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Patrique deGraft-Yankson, PHD.

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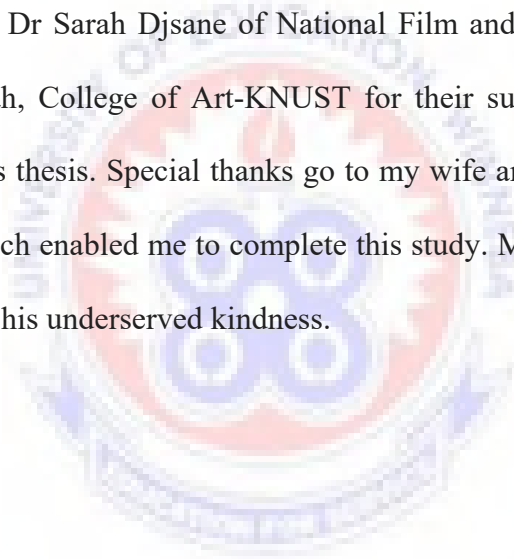
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Date

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife Mrs. Rita Nyarko, my daughter, Naa Ofiebia Efyia Nyarko.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Pages
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Dedication	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Figures	x
List of Tables.....	xiii
Definition of Terms.....	xiv
Abbreviations	xv
Abstract	xvi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	6
Objectives of the Study	7
Research Questions.....	7
Significance of the Study.....	7
Delimitation.....	8
Organization of the study	9

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	10
Television Channel Branding	12
The Emergence of Television Branding and Its Importance.....	15
Television Idents.....	19
Visual Elements of Television idents	21
Logo.....	22
Typography.....	23
Colour	23
Visuals and Images.....	24
Slogans / Taglines.....	24
Television Ident Design and Best Production Practices.....	26
Television Ident Audiences	30
Television Idents and the Production of Meanings	31
Branding	35
Brand Identity	39
Brand Image	45
Brand Communication.....	43
Semiotics	47
The production of meaning and sign systems	48
Film Aesthetics and Symbolism.....	60

Tone and Contrast	61
Lighting	62
Camera angle and shots	62
Film Editing	63
Montage	64
Conclusion.....	64
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY_	67
Introduction	67
Research Design	67
Qualitative Research	68
Library Search Activities.	69
Population for the study	69
Sample.....	71
Sampling technique	73
Data Collection instruments for this study	74
Interview	74
Questionnaire.....	76
Semiotic Analysis	76
Data collection Procedure	77
Interviews	77

Questionnaire.....	78	
Semiotic Analysis.....	78	
Types of Data Collected.....	78	
Primary Data.....	78	
Secondary Data.....	79	
Methods of Data Analysis.....	79	
CHAPTER FOUR : DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND		
DISCUSSION		81
Overview.....	81	
Philosophical underpinnings of television channels	81	
Ghana Television (GTV).....	81	
TV3 Television Channel.....	83	
United Television (UTV)	84	
Channel philosophies and television idents	85	
Ghana Television (GTV).....	85	
TV3 Channel.....	95	
United Television (UTV)	102	
Pattern of Meanings	108	
Ghana Television (GTV).....	108	
TV3 Channel.....	110	

United Television (UTV)	110
Semiotic Implications of the selected television idents.....	111
Ghana Television.....	111
TV3 Channel.....	113
United Television (UTV)	114
Discussion	109
Philosophical underpinnings of television channels in Ghana	109
Meanings of dominant visual and aesthetic elements in relation to channel philosophies	116
Patterns of meanings in relation to Television Channel Philosophies.....	121
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	125
Overview	125
Summary	125
Major Findings.....	129
Conclusions	131
Recommendations	132
REFERENCES	135
APPENDIX	140

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	BBC One ident	27
Figure 2	BBC One ident	28
Figure 3	BBC One ident.....	28
Figure 4.	BBC One ident.	33
Figure 5	BBC Two ident.	34
Figure 6	BBC News ident	35
Figure 7	Nature of Brand	36
Figure 8	Brand Building Model	46
Figure 9	Saussure sign concept.....	49
Figure 10	Shematic representation of Saussure’s model of sign and Meenaghan’s identity and image.	50
Figure 11	Comparative representation of Saussure’s model of sign and the concept of television ident as brand sign image.....	51
Figure 12	Semiotics of Television Ident, based on Pierce’s model of sign.....	56
Figure 13	The process of semiosis.	59
Figure 14	The process of television idents semiosis based on Reid’ model.....	59
Figure 15	GTV Ident Snap Shot 1.....	86
Figure 16	GTV Ident Snap Shot 2.....	86
Figure 17	GTV Ident Snap Shot 3.....	87
Figure 18	GTV Ident Snap Shot 4.....	87
Figure 19	GTV Ident Snap Shot 5.....	88
Figure 20	GTV Ident Snap Shot 6.....	88

Figure 21	GTV Ident Snap Shot 7.....	89
Figure 22	GTV Ident Snap Shot 8.....	89
Figure 23	GTV Ident Snap Shot 9.....	90
Figure 24	GTV Ident Snap Shot 10.....	90
Figure 25	GTV Ident Snap Shot 11.....	91
Figure 26	GTV Ident Snap Shot 12.....	91
Figure 27	GTV Ident Snap Shot 13.....	92
Figure 28	GTV Ident Snap Shot 14.....	92
Figure 29	GTV Ident Snap Shot 15.....	93
Figure 30	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 16.....	93
Figure 31	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 1.....	96
Figure 32	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 2.....	97
Figure 33	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 3.....	97
Figure 34	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 4.....	99
Figure 35	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 5.....	94
Figure 36	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 6.....	99
Figure 37	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 7.....	99
Figure 38	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 8.....	100
Figure 39	TV3 Ident Snap Shot 9.....	100
Figure 40	UTV Ident Snap Shot 1.....	99
Figure 41	UTV Ident Snap Shot 2.....	99
Figure 42	UTV Ident Snap Shot 3.....	103
Figure 43	UTV Ident Snap Shot 3.....	104

Figure 44	UTV Ident Snap Shot 2.....	104
Figure 45	UTV Ident Snap Shot 3.....	105
Figure 46	UTV Ident Snap Shot 3.....	106



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.Free to Air Terretial Television Channels In Ghana.....	70
Table 2.Total Respondents for the study.....	74



DEFINITION OF TERMS

TV idents: Short video of 2 to 10 seconds played in-between television programmes to indicate a TV channel corporate visual identity

Corporate visual identity: Visual elements that are used by corporate organizations for identification and differentiation.

Visual Branding: The complex practice of creating unique visual sign for product or a company.

Film aesthetics: Visual and aural properties that are used in film production to appeal to the senses of audiences

Semiotics: The study of signs and symbols.

Sign: Anything that stands for or represents a concept or idea

Cinematic practices: The application of techniques and conventions in filmmaking

Television network: A media company the broadcasts audio visual media content to television set and electronic devices.

Visual Branding: The creation of visual identity for companies and organizations

ABBREVIATIONS

AMA: American Marketing Association

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

CBS: Cable Broadcasting Service

CNN: Cable News Network

EICAR: École Internationale de Création Audiovisuelle et de Réalisation

ET AL: And others

GTV: Ghana television

HBO: Home Base Television

KISS: Keep It Simple and Stupid

PBS: Public Broadcasting Service

SABC: South African Broadcasting Corporation

TV3: Television 3 Network

TV: Television

UEW: University Of Education Winneba

UTV: United Television

USA: United State of America

ABSTRACT

TV Idents are short videos or animated sequence of about 3-7 seconds that are played in between programmes to identify, promote and advertise a TV channel to its audience. This communication tool has become increasingly important the Ghanaian television landscape in recent times. A close observation of Ghanaian television idents from both experts and laymen point of view suggest that the visual elements do not reflect channel philosophy. Besides, the design structure and aesthetic contents seem to lack the expected commensurability with the core philosophies of television channels in Ghana. The aim for this study was to investigate the extent to which TV idents express the brand philosophies of GTV, TV3 and UTV. The study was conceptualized under the interpretivist worldview of research and therefore takes the disposition that knowledge, truth and reality regarding the construction and deconstruction of meanings through television idents are subjective. In view of this, the qualitative research approach was employed to investigate motives, meanings, reasons, and other subjective experiences of television channels, visual communicators and audiences regarding the use television idents as a means of communication. Using the purposive sampling technique, the researcher sampled GTV, TV3 and UTV, which form the three top television channels out of the accessible population of 21 free-to -air television channels in Ghana. Data was collected through interviews, questionnaires and semiotic analysis. Findings indicate that, though the selected channels are deeply steeped in philosophies, there is a disconnection between the visual elements, design structure and the philosophical underpinnings of the selected channels. Rather than visually explaining their philosophies, television channels rely solely on their slogans. Again, the study discovered that the pattern of meanings from the television idents do not commensurate with their philosophical underpinnings. The

researcher recommends that GTV, TV3 and UTV could improve on their ident by expressing their core philosophies through visuals that simply explain their core philosophies rather than relying solely on slogan to communicate their core philosophies. Television channels should develop brand manual to guide designers in communications.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Television channel branding is a communication strategy of using logos and short advertising videos to promote a television channel to its audiences. It also includes all visual and audio elements that are used by television channels to create differentiation from other competitors. This communication option has become an important feature of the television medium in Ghana in recent times. Currently, the practice appears as a major communication strategy and an artform among television channels in Ghana because during transmission many television channels play their logos or short videos during and after programmes to identify their channel. These identity elements are also meant to remind audiences of the channel they are watching.

However, the current popularity of television channel branding among television channels as a communication strategy in Ghana had a small beginning and it is synonymous to the commencement of Ghana Television Service (now Ghana Television- GTV) in 1965. The core purpose of television channel branding was to augment Ghana Television Service to achieve its aim of using television to inform, educate, entertain and ultimately to improve the social cultural developments of Ghanaians. Hence, each television programme was preceded by graphical elements that supplement recorded camera output to communicate with the heterogeneous Ghanaian audience. This approach also helped the Ghana Television Service to cue audiences for programme transmission (GBC, 2010; Ocloo, 2014).

In the early stages of television branding in Ghana, the practice of television branding was manually based because of the absence of computers and software to automate the design processes. Text, visual drawings, paintings were manually designed on paperboards and wood surfaces. These communicative designs were then shot with television studio cameras and translated geometrically across screen during broadcasting (GBC, 2010; Ocloo 2014). Thus, the effectiveness of these television-branding elements on screen depended heavily on creativity, craftsmanship and artistry and the ability to visually present the philosophy of the nation's broadcaster through visual elements. Any design elements that lack these qualities will confuse audiences and will cause aberrant communication. In view of the fact that Ghana Television Service remained the only television station in Ghana for many years, the practice of television branding remained popular only with Ghana Television Service for several decades

However, in the last two decades, significant developments in the television landscape in Ghana have changed the practice of television branding in Ghana. The practice is no more associated only with Ghana Television Services. It has become an essential and common practice for television channels in Ghana. Additionally, computer and its software applications have rendered the practice of television branding less cumbersome compared to the initial stages.

At the core of these significant developments is the liberalization of Ghana's media in 1994 which halted the monopoly of Ghana Television Service and allowed the introduction of Crystal Television, Metro Television, TV3 Network and other channels to compete with GTV (Digital Ghana, 2010).

Since then many television channels have been licensed to operate in the Ghanaian television market, and compete for the attention of Ghanaians.

The migration from analogue television to digital terrestrial television is another contributing factor to the changes in television branding in Ghana. The digital terrestrial television technology has become eminent due to global standardization in television broadcasting industry and as such Ghana cannot live in isolation. Besides, the new technology provides better transmission quality in terms of pictures and sound and it is easy to operate a television channel as compared to analogue television (Digital Ghana, 2010; Association for Progressive Communication and Balancing Act (APC) Ghana Report, 2011).

In view of these factors and in addition to technological improvements in internet services, telecommunications and globalization, television channels in Ghana have seen a sharp increase. According to the APC Ghana Report (2011), GBC stands to have over 30 new channels in addition to the existing ones because of the change in technology. Again, according to the National Communication Authority (NCA), there are 54 licensed television channels as at the first quarter of 2015. Out of these channels, 21 are free to air terrestrial channels, 4 are digital terrestrial pay channels, 15 are free satellite television channels, 6 are satellite television pay channels, 1 digital cable channel and 1 pay digital terrestrial channel. These developments have created a keen competition among television channels in Ghana, especially over the last decade.

While the current changes in the television landscape in Ghana present social and economic opportunities for all Ghanaians, businesses and audiences, this sharp increase in television channels in Ghana also presents a challenge of identity for television channels. In order to be recognized and patronized by television audiences, television channels must have a rigorous and effective television branding strategy that discriminates among the many television channels that are equally trying to clamor for attention. The need to design and use visual element to create unique identity is therefore not optional, especially in a multichannel environment like the Ghanaian television industry.

The need for television branding is not confined only to the Ghanaian television landscape. Many television channels have turned to television branding strategies such as, animated logos, bugs, interstitials, upfront and television channel identification (TV idents) as an antidote to the cluttering and encumbering nature of the global television industry (Johnson, 2007). For many television channels in Ghana, the practice of television branding is more than just a way of identity. It has become an indispensable communication strategy for television channels if they are to survive the harsh and congested television ecology.

In response to the need for television branding, television channels in Ghana have resorted to the global practice of using television idents (TV Idents) as strategy. TV Idents are short videos or animated sequence of about 3-7 seconds that are played in between programmes to identify and promote a TV channel's corporate identity. According to Johnson (2007), Idents are the primary way through which brand philosophies of television channels can be communicated to audiences to establish relationships. Thus, Ghanaian

television channels assiduously design and play their idents on their networks especially during peak and off-peak times. The aim is not only to identify their channels but also to create loyalty among viewers. This is reflected in the nature of design idents. They range from simple typographic animation, to a more complex video idents that make use of all kind of cinematic techniques, styles and genres and stories to promote the identity of television channels.

The growing need for television branding among television channels in Ghana has therefore attracted many artist, graphic designers and motion designers the production of Tv idents. Though some TV channels outsource the designing of their idents to production houses, the majority of television channels have in-house creative units or department that are tasked to produce both programme specific and generic idents to brand their channels. Conversely, some television channels also have resorted to the use of template idents that are available on the Internet. Consequently, it is common to see the same or similar idents on different channels with slight modifications.

Moreover, the availability of software such as Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere Pro, Cinema 4D, Adobe Illustrator, Sound Booth have all provided impetus to the design of television idents. Television idents as an on-screen identity and a communication strategy has hence assumed important disposition in the television branding landscape of Ghana.

Owing to the fact that television idents have emerged as central brand communication practice for television channels in Ghana, it is imperative to conduct a study to understand issues surrounding the practice of television idents. Again, due to the continuing proliferation of television channels in

Ghana, there is the need to conduct an empirical research to explore the design of television idents and its use among television channels. Such pool of knowledge will be useful for both practitioners and scholars.

Statement of the Problem

Television idents have become a major brand communication practice and many television channels have creative units and departments who are tasked to manage the image of their channels through idents. However, a close observation of Ghanaian television idents from both expert and laymen points of view suggest a disconnection between the visual elements and the channel brand philosophies. Besides, the design structure and aesthetic elements seem to lack the expected commensurability with the core philosophies of television channels in Ghana. This situation has created the assumption that Ghanaian television channels approach television idents creation and adoption more as a trend than a thoughtful representation of brand philosophies. The extent to which television idents reflect the brand philosophies of television channels in Ghana therefore crave for answers any time a television ident flashes over the screen. This research therefore seeks to study Ghanaian television channel idents and to explore the meaning of the dominant visuals, design and aesthetic elements of selected television idents in relation to their core brand philosophies that underpin their operations.

Objectives of the study

The following were the objectives for this study:

1. To explore the philosophical underpinnings behind selected television channels in Ghana.
2. To investigate what meanings have been encoded through dominant visual elements and design structure, and how such elements relate to the philosophies that underpin their operations?
3. To examine the pattern of meanings emanating from the dominant visual elements in relation to their philosophical underpinnings.

Research Questions

The following were the research questions for this study:

1. What are the philosophical underpinnings of television channels in Ghana?
2. How do the meanings of dominant visual elements and design structure elements relate to the philosophies that underpin their operations?
3. What patterns of meanings emanate from the dominant visual elements and how do they relate to the philosophical underpinnings

Significance of the Study

The television industry in Ghana is expected to grow and will continue to need television branding practices due the proliferation of television channels and media convergences. In view of these, there is a need for a pool of empirical knowledge and data on the practice and use of television idents to help improve their use and practice within the scope of television channel

branding. The findings of this study should hopefully create a platform for addressing issues that are missing in relation to television ident and channel philosophies in Ghana.

This study would further provide valuable insight and serve as reference material for academia and other research institutions engaged in research or teaching of television branding. It is also hoped to provide general overview of the philosophical underpinnings of television channels in Ghana and provide valuable understandings into how television channels in Ghana communicate their brand philosophies through TV idents.

Furthermore, participating television channels stand to gain first-hand information on their idents as a form of evaluation. This would inform television channels in Ghana if they are to re-examine their branding design strategies. It is hoped that the research would also benefit motion graphics designers, filmmakers and visual communicators in general who are contracted to design idents.

Moreover, the outcomes of the study would open up possibilities for future researches, which would aid in bridging the gap between the practice of television branding and scholarship. Above all, the study is an academic exercise in the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Master of Philosophy to the researcher in Arts and Culture.

Delimitation

Though this research is about TV idents, the study focuses on the design and use of generic idents that are designed to promote television channels' identity as unique brands. Thus, this study does not discuss idents that are designed to promote specific programmes. Again, the study focuses on

the visual elements that have been used in the idents as well as the structure of the idents in relation to the television channels' brand philosophies.

Organization of the study

The study examines the design and use of TV idents as a branding tool for television channels in Ghana. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, this work is structured into five chapters. Chapter one gives background to the study and also presents the statement of the problem, research objectives and questions and significance of the study. Chapter two deals with the review of related literature for this study. The review covers television branding, television idents and best production practices, branding, semiotics and film aesthetics. Chapter three describes the methodology for this study and justifies why the chosen methods are preferred over other methods. It also discusses the research approach, sources of data and collection procedure, population sample size and procedure for data analysis. Chapter four deals with findings and discussions in relation to the objectives and the reviewed literature for this research. Chapter five provides the summary, conclusions and recommendations for this study. Finally, references for this study are have been arranged in an alphabetical order in the appendix page and followed the APA referencing (6th edition) format.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Overview

Television ident is one of the major strategies that television channels employ to promote and advertise their channels in order to attract more viewers, maintain existence viewers and to increase their revenues to survive the competitive nature of the television landscape (Meech, 2005; Johnson, 2007). This study takes a critical analysis at television idents as a channel brand identity for GTV, TV3 and UTV from the perspective of visual communication. Taking television idents as visual communication strategy, the purpose is to investigate the extent to which television idents reflect the philosophical underpinnings of selected television channels in Ghana.

The study argues that television idents are more visual and that their construction and deconstruction rest in the realms of visual communication. According to Mirzoeff (1999) in Botha (2000), television is visually biased rather than textual. This argument implies that the consumption of television content is visually obsessed rather than reading. Television ident, which has become a core feature of the television culture, is therefore visually based rather than textually based. Thus, television idents as visual manifestation of television channel's cultural productions are constructed and consumed through the dynamics of visual communication. Against this backdrop, the focus of this chapter is to review literature on television branding and idents and other related literature. The review of literature for this study explores four core areas.

Firstly, the review explores literature on television branding and idents because they are germane to this study. Again, the review also explores literature on visual elements, best design practices for television idents and theoretical underpinnings that affect the usage. Secondly, the review will explore literature on the concepts of branding. The section first traces the meaning of brand to its current meanings. The purpose is established that though the term branding may have assumed other meanings in the field of management and marketing studies, at the core of branding is the act of visually making signs and symbols for visual discrimination.

Thirdly, the review of literatures on branding concepts would focus on the concepts of brand identity, brand communication, and brand image. Television idents are brand elements and as such follow the decrees of these three concepts branding (Chan-Olmsted, 2011; Danesi, 2013; Keller, 2005). Finally, there is review of literature on theory of semiotics. This study argues that the concept of television branding and the designing of television idents involve the process of encoding meanings, which is core to the concept of semiotics. Again the process of decoding brand elements, like television ident, is influenced and dictated by semiotic systems. Thus, literature on television ident, television branding, branding and semiotics form the bases for the literature review for this study. It will demonstrate and support the argument that television idents are visual brand identity elements, which manifests the philosophical underpinnings of television channels

Television Channel Branding

According to Krasner (2008), television channel branding is the creation and management of on-screen identity for television channels to differentiate their brand identity from other television channels in a multichannel environment. Similarly, Lambie Nairn (1997) and Meech (1999 and 2001) as cited in Singh (2004) argue that television branding is a visual representation of television networks through the use of visual symbols, logos and slogans. These assertions therefore conceptualize television branding as all visual elements that are used on television screen to identify the source of a television programme. The denotative function of television brands is emphasized in the above definitions, which presuppose that television branding provides visual labels to television audiences to identify and select their favourite television channels.

However, in a research article by Meech (2007), which studied the television channel branding activities and why television channel branding has become common in the United Kingdom (UK) television landscape found that television channel branding extends beyond the use of visual cues for identity sake. Analyzing the branding activities of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) 1, 2, 3, BBC World News and BBC 24, the article concluded that television branding involves providing a denotative label for identification sake.

The research claimed that the rebranding of the BBC news and BBC 24 BBC World Service in 1997 were to project a new image for the BBC. The new branding elements were to connote authority and trust which form the philosophical underpinnings of the BBC brand. Additionally, the research

maintained that television branding is used as a branding strategy to communicate essential messages to augment the public relation activities of BBC channels. While the research did not provide a detailed explanation of the dominant visual elements, design structure and how they communicate essential messages of the BBC brand, the findings, however, suggest that television branding is considered as brand communication strategy with public relation functions.

Gaggio (1999), as cited in Singh (2004), posits that television channel branding involves the creation of disparity among television channels by communicating brand personality. Brand personality refers to all perception of human good qualities that are associated with product or organizational brands. Some brand personalities may also be metaphors that express some qualities of animals (Roper & Fill, 2012). Thus, whether a television brand personality is based on human's qualities or not such perceptions stem from the philosophical disposition of a television channel and are communicated through branding to create an identity.

Blandford and Mcelroy (2009) also conducted extensive research on BBC Wales branding activities and concluded that television branding must foster a relationship between audiences by reinforcing brand philosophies of a television channel through visual cues. Hence, by the works of Gaggio (1999), television channel branding is the act of creating relationship with television audiences by communicating philosophical messages through the use of unique visual elements to establish the identity of a television channel.

The assertion that television branding is about communicating philosophical messages is consistent with the practice of global television

channels. The research work of Johnson (2007) is a point in case. The study focused on Home Box Office (HBO) television to explore how television branding should be understood. Using interviews and visual analysis, the study suggested that television branding could be defined in two ways. First, the use of visual cues such as logos, slogan, idents, colours, bugs to identify a television channel. However, the second definition asserted that the visual cues are just labels and that television branding is about articulating a television channel's philosophies through visual branding elements and programmes' style and genre. Hence, by this definition television branding can also be defined as the expression of a television channel's philosophies through corporate identities and programmes.

The concept of television branding is related to how a television channel is perceived by audiences. This is revealed in the research work of Chan-olmsted and Kim (2010). One of the key research aims in the study was to discover how television managers in United States of America define television branding. The sample consists of 84 television channels managers. The study revealed that television channel branding was defined as creating channel awareness, creating channel image or identity and positioning a television channel. Thus, the study concluded that television branding is a "design and control function" of managing brand image (Chan-olmsted & Kim, 2010, p.85). This study therefore indicates that television branding is the conscious management effort of controlling promotional activities to improve a television channel's image. Again, the study does not limit television channel branding to corporate identities and programme genres and styles as proposed

by Johnson (2007). The term control function suggests the use of all promotional activities that are used to promote a television channel.

Conclusively, television branding is the use of visual cues to identify a channel on the screen space. Beneath the visual cues are philosophical messages that give identity and meaning to the existence of the channel. Additionally, television branding is how a television channel wants to be perceived by its audiences and members of the public. However, the popularity and the importance of television branding emerged from pressing industry demands that made it important for television channels to pay attention to television branding. The next section discusses some key issues that have contributed to the emergence of television branding as an important practice among television channels. The overarching concept of branding and has become an industry jargon. However, to fully understand the concept television branding, it is imperative to look at the meaning of brand from the term television branding stems from.

The emergence of television branding and its importance

Television channel branding was not considered as a cost-effective venture in the initial stages of television channel branding. Perhaps the nature of television channel as means of broadcasting and the fact many people naturally watch television rendered branding, as practiced in mainstream product branding illogical to many television channel managers (Johnson, 2002; Stipp, 2012). However, this apathy from television managers changed due to some industry forces. According to Stipp (2012), the developments in the broadcasting technology and marketing forces in the 1970s marked the beginning of change in the stable television landscape. Again, Stipp asserts that

two strategies emerged, the expansion and growth of established major television channel as brands and the branding practices of smaller television networks competing to attain a competitive edge over bigger television channel slowly coerced the big television channels managers to consider branding seriously.

In recent times however, the concept of television channel branding has become very important to television channels operating in a multichannel environment and critical to their survival due to two main factors. First, branding has become relevant to television channel due to the merging digital media (Johnson, 2007). The merging of both traditional and new media is blurring the defining lines and making it difficult for media intuitions to establish the identity. Secondly, Eastman, Ferguson, and Klein (2006) explain that the proliferation of thousands of television channels, and in some instances, with similar names and visual identities make branding and on-screen corporate identity for television channel unavoidable. Thus, the increase in television networks, Internet and activities of globalization are factors that make it imperative for television channels to resort to television branding more seriously. Branding for television channels therefore has become a communication strategy not only to communicate or connect to audience, but also to keep up with the wanton competition in industry.

Johnson (2012) and Meech (2005) agree that television branding is a major key factor in competing in a multichannel television industry. Thus, without strategic branding practices, it will be difficult for a channel to survive in such a clutter space of television channels. Moreover, Chan-Olmsted and Cha (2007) after studying the branding activities of Cable News Network

(CNN), FOX and Canal Broadcasting Service (CBS) television channels concluded that because television channel need to survive and make profit, channels must have a better understanding of branding as means of image construction and achieving financial goals.

Furthermore, the way are conceptualized and commissioned also creates the need for television branding. Channels are created with distinct philosophies that define their operation and consequently dictate their programming style. Light (2004) concluded from his research on BBC branding that television channel has become a hub for cultural production because of the philosophies that motivated their creation. This assertion implies that television channels are created with pre-defined philosophies, which manifest in the form of mission, vision, aims etc. Again, these philosophies are created with specific target audience in view. These philosophical dispositions create a need for branding in order to express such worldviews to audiences in a more persuasive approach. Hence, beyond the use of programme style and tone, which are deliberately constructed, to reflect those philosophies, visual branding elements also play very important role television branding.

In view of these assertions and the context of this study, the constructions of channel identity through visual cues are very crucial and important for creating relationships with audience. Again, it can also be deduced from these arguments that due to the purpose of television branding, visual cues used in branding television channels must be deeply steeped in philosophies. Such branding approach is unavoidable because of the cluttered nature of the television landscape. It requires branding elements that will not

only help audience to know the existence of a channel but also to express the philosophies of a television channel.

Krasner (2008) outlines television channel branding tools that are used on screen. They include all on-screen graphics that give identity to the channels: lower thirds, bumpers, interstitials, show openers, network packages tags, mortises, station identification or idents.

Lower thirds are combinations of graphics and text that appear within the lower third of the screen. The purpose of lower thirds is to identify the channel, the presenter(s) and the on-screen content. Additionally, interstitials are short video programs that are inserted during programmes to direct attention to key facts. Furthermore, a show opener serves as a cue for an upcoming programme. On the other hand, a show package is a collection of video with designs that give identity to television channel.

Tags occur at the beginning or end of a spot, news open, or commercial, to inform viewers on how to get additional information, by providing a phone number or Web site address. Mortises are graphics placeholders that hold live footage with lower thirds to identify personalities. Television idents or station identification (IDs), which is the subject matter for this study, is a short video that is played in-between programs to promote a television channel.

Among all these visual elements, television idents have remained the most popular visual branding element through which television channels promote and communicate to their audiences. Television idents are the major tools for television channel branding due to their nature, which comprises both aural and visual features (Meech 2005; Johnson, 2007). In the next session, television ident is discussed.

Television idents

TV idents are short identity videos played in-between television programmes to communicate the brand identity of a television channel. Television idents manifest the brand visual and aural elements that are associated with a television channels and give unique identity. Johnson, (2012) and Meech (2002) posit that idents are short films that combine both visuals and sound elements that are transmitted in-between programmes to identify and distinguish one television channel from another. In addition, idents are short film stories of identity that seek to exploit discrimination among television channels (Blandford & Mcelroy, 2009). Thus, idents as short as they may be, are creative short stories that capture the identity of a television channel. Television idents identify channels in the midst of the global multi-channel phenomenon. Additionally, these definitions provide a denotative definition of television idents because they stress the function of identification and differentiation.

However, television idents are more than just identifying and differentiating branding tools. They are considered as promotional strategies that identify a network and communicate a directed brand message to varied audiences (Meech, 2002). Television idents are significant collection of images, sound and films techniques that carry philosophical and ideological messages which have become a genre within television culture and form of textual production (Grainge, 2007).

Singh (2004) and Brown and Hobson (2008) also support this by advancing that idents are visual representation of the core philosophy of a television channel. Beneath the denotative cues of a television idents are

ideological and philosophical messages that visually encapsulate television channel's brand personality. Hence, television idents can be conceptualized as the visual embodiment of brand ideologies that are employed to strategically evoke television as a medium for cultural and ideological propagation. Again, this assertion contextualizes television idents as composition of semiotic signs that carry connotative meaning and are to shape brand image of television channels.

The use of ident for television branding has evolved and changed the way television idents are designed and used in television broadcasting. They are not just an identity tool of logo animation or animated pictures for the sake of aesthetics. Blandford and Mcelroy (2009) express the evolution that has changed the use of television ident by stating that television idents have become mini television programmes because most have become like television commercials and are enjoyed by viewers. Similarly, Meech and Meech (2010) agree that the design and production of television idents have become sophisticated like conventional television advertising drawing from both visual communication design aesthetics and marketing to communicate cohesive and specific brand message to stakeholders. The notion that television idents have become mini television commercials or programmes suggests that they are carefully crafted to carry specific content to promote television channels.

Again, television idents are equated to television commercials in the sense that they are to attract audiences or followers just as it is done for germane television programmes or television commercials. These significant changes have become industry practice for many television channels. Meech (2002) stressed that the design and production of television ident should be

contextualized as corporate television advertising, because current practice at the BBC show that, television idents share the same production values, they compete with television commercials for attention and finally combines philosophical messages with entertainments like conventional television advertising.

Television idents have evolved into a communication art form that transcend beyond aesthetical appeals and decisions. They are promotional tools that carry philosophical messages through carefully selected visual and communicate elements and largely influenced by marketing, corporate image and public relation needs. The purpose is to communicate, entertain, and attract followers or maintain audiences. The next session of this literature review looks at what visual elements constitute television idents and the role they play in communicating brand philosophies.

Visual Elements of Television Idents

TV idents are the visual articulation of a television channel philosophies. As film medium, television idents thrives on traditional cinematic techniques and conventions. Again, because television idents have assumed some characteristics of television commercials in terms of content, style and production process, television idents share the same visual elements and best design practices (Meech, 2002; Meech & Meech, 2010).

The components of television idents are generally logo, videos, typography, colour, video/images, tagline and sound. The combination of these elements exert power and create a communication genre with connotations that affect audience's perception.

According to Eastman, Ferguson and Klien (2006), all elements employed in a television ident must be there for a purpose. Thus, the all visual element must support the expressing of a television channel philosophy.

Logo

A logo is the basic element that identifies a company and it is the first point of contact for every television channel. Logos capture the values, attributes that differentiate and create a unique identity for organizations. Most experts claim that logos create a visual link between the organization and the ideologies, philosophies that drive their existence and operations. For instance, Landa (2006) believes that a logo is a distinctive identifying symbol that expresses values and attributes of a brand and it provides immediate recognition for organizations. A logo in a television ident is as a badge of identification and mark of programme ownership (Hynes, 2009). More importantly, the above assertion suggests that as a visual sign, a television channels logo may both have denotations and connotations implications that feed into the corporate image agenda. Hence, logos can be considered as the important elements of every television channel corporate visual identity.

Logos are very important due to fact they are fundamental ways through which TV channels can identify their channel on the television space. This is echoed by Johnson (2007) who argues that idents' logos are the primary ways in which brands are made visible and the values are communicated is through the TV idents. In view of the importance of logos to television stations, many experts suggest that ident logos must be treated so that they give maximum recognition to the channel. For instance, Krasner (2008) suggests that logos

must be animated by applying the aesthetics of effective logo treatment to a time-based environment. The intention is to maintain clarity and effective communication of identity. Similarly, logos must be used in way that deeply embeds a TV channel brand identity and personality.

Fonts or Typography

Typography is the art of designing and arranging letterforms to communicate both verbal and visual messages. According to Landa (2006), type is a communicative visual element that operates both at denotative and connotative levels. Similarly, every typeface has unique characteristics in terms of form and construction. Furthermore, text in motion design should not be perceived as literal presentation of verbal thoughts but rather should be perceived as a visual element that connotes meaning (Krasner, 2008).

Colour

Colour is what we perceive with our eyes. Landa (2008) asserts that colour is the product of light energy, the perceiving of outward appearance of objects in our environment. Most experts claim that colour has a symbolic value which plays important role in visual communication. Hynes (2009) advances that colour plays a major role in encoding message and creates a lasting identity because it creates imagery which becomes a symbolic value of the perceived object. Likewise, Krasner (2008) affirms that colour exerts strong impact on audiences because of its ability to create mood, symbolize ideas, and express emotions to produce a desired audience response. Colour therefore is an important element in any visual communication medium. Apart from making visibility possible, it affects audience emotionally and creates a lasting imagery connection for objects we see on screen.

Visual and Images

Visuals refer to all kinds of representational objects and ideas in the abstract or realistic that are used in visual communication. It refers to photographs, videos, animations, illustrations, drawings, paintings, prints, graphic elements such as icons and marks. Parsa (1999) asserts that in advertising, visual is the perfect representation of everyday concepts which can be in the form of motion picture or still pictures. Again, Parsa asserts that images or visuals have become our everyday life because visuals have become the central medium communicating ideas. Krasner (2008) also states that visuals are powerful means of presenting information and as such images should be used to support express concept, message and mood in motion design.

Tagline/Slogan

Tagline, also known as slogan or pay-off, is a very important element of every corporate identity element. For TV adverts, it is a short phrase or word that encapsulate a TV channel's beliefs and ideology, and mostly the last shot seen which links all the other elements together and makes final statement to reinforce a TV channel's brand position. Jun and Lee (2007) posits that a tagline is a catchphrase that verbally shows a brand value, ideology or attribute, brand essence, personality, positioning, and differentiates it from its core competitors and presents a unique identity to its audiences.

Again, Jun and Lee (2007) argue that a tagline or a slogan can be seen as clarifier, mantra, company statement, or guiding principle that represents and summarizes a company's vision, mission and give direction to a

company at a particular time. Thus, tagline combines with other corporate identity elements to present an organizational identity to audiences. For instance, according to Eastman *et al.* (2006), HBO uses the tagline “it’s not TV. It’s HBO” in its television idents. This tagline sets HBO apart and promises that HBO is more than just a television. Similarly, Johnson (2007) explains that the HBO TV idents and tagline, ‘HBO’, is placed for unique programmes, hence their programmes cannot be found elsewhere on television. The tagline or slogan in a television ident therefore evokes the network’s brand identity.

Chan-Olmsted and Kim (2010) also assert that among television broadcasters in USA, PBS has been a more active and a strong brand personality and essence. The brand personality and its essence is explained with the slogan of "If PBS doesn't do it, who will?"(Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2010, p.341). With this tagline, PBS has positioned itself as a TV channel for public education. Tagline therefore cannot be used in isolation and out of vacuum. They must connect with other elements and must project the brand identity of a company. Tagline in a TV ident must therefore connect with other elements. A well-constructed tagline must truly reflect a brand philosophy in the mind of audiences.

Thus, television ident, as a television channel identity, is a combination of various communicative elements. The purpose of combining such communicative elements is to communicate philosophical messages to audiences.

However, before television idents can effectively communicate such messages, there must be cohesion between the various elements that are employed. The following part of the literature review looks at literature on practice.

Television ident design and best production practices

TV idents, as a film form and a branch of motion graphics, rely solely on the techniques and styles of traditional film just like television commercials communicate brand or corporate identity (Fanthome, 2007; Meech, 2002). Television idents, though are short, are just like TV commercials and therefore must be designed and constructed like the production of TV commercials to be more effective (Eastman *et al.*, 2006). TV idents make use of visuals, sound, editing form, storyline or plot and graphic elements such as logo and typography etc. According to Eastman *et al.*, (2006 p.78), every “visual and auditory” element must not be there by accident or by how designers feel, but must be “controlled and managed” to communicate a TV channel’s brand position or corporate ideology.

Brand identity is one of the key elements that must be considered in the production of TV idents. Brand or corporate personality is an ideological statement, a belief, values or a claim that sets apart a brand from other brands. Roper and Fill, (2012) give more insight on brand personality by asserting that the end product of the interaction between values, mission and vision is sometimes expressed by metaphorically associating a brand with human traits, or positive concepts and feelings. This is emphasized by Johnson (2007) who explained that HBO’s brand beliefs, vision and mission which form the brand

philosophy is overtly presented in the visuals and it's augmented by the slogan: It's not TV. It's HBO.

According to Krasner (2008), television ident projects have a clear story that is crafted around an objective. It must present a television brand personality in clear and simple terms. Also, Eastman *et al.*, (2006) posit that the most effective way of designing television idents is to have a central idea or a theme and visually explain the theme or idea so that audiences can easily associate the brand personality to something. The message or idea must be clear and meaningful enough because of the transience of television experience (Eastman *et al.*, 2006). Thus, though different visuals can be used to express the brand philosophy of a television channel, it is important to maintain common theme throughout as shown in figure 1.



Figure 1. BBC One Ident



Figure 2. BBC One Ident



Figure 3. BBC One Ident

Again, there should be a story that drives the ident, and the story should be interesting and original. Eastman *et al.* (2006) state that an original ident's story that is interesting, informative and humorous with twist in plot is very important in making idents meaningful and exciting to audiences. Again, effective television idents are those that come from good ideas and original concept and capture the brand essences. Messages and all elements must be simple. The KISS approach must be used. KISS stands for "Keep It Simple and Stupid". Thus, straightforwardness and the need to communicate to audiences should be selected above elaborations (Eastman *et al.*, 2006).

Krasner (2008) argues that the goal of every visual communication is to facilitate a reaction from an audience. Therefore in designing television idents, Krasner (2008) again asserts that the target audiences should be seriously considered as early as possible so that the content (message or theme) can be aligned to the nature and the behaviour of the targeted audience. Similarly, Landa (2006) also suggests that the relevance of content should be assessed before the start of any design venture. This implies that the content of any communication design must be relevant in the sense that it must contain elements that can communicate to a particular audience.

Television idents must accurately and concisely convey the brands personality in simple visuals to enable viewers to connect to the brand. In designing TV idents, the brand personality must therefore be the driving force behind design and aesthetic decisions. Taglines, logos visual effects and animations used must express the symbolic meaning to reinforce the TV channel's corporate personality (Eastman *et al.*, 2006). The ultimate goal is to visually communicate the brand philosophy to audiences. Thus, all design elements used must explain a television channel's corporate philosophy and create stable messages in the mind of audiences.

Finally, Krasner (2008) suggests that form and style should be strategically selected and must symbolize or suggest ideas, or convey moods or emotions that can easily be associated with theme a TV channel's brand personality. The form, style and technique used in the presentation of the visual and other design elements can affect the production of meaning. TV idents, like any other film medium, can take different forms such as, video, 2D or 3D animation, kinetic typography or a combination of all. Visual style

can range from illustrative, jerky photography, sketchy visuals etc. Film techniques such as camera works, lighting and editing techniques and style should support the central idea to establish channel identity. Having looked at television ident elements and best practices on the application of such communicative elements, the next session of the literature review looks at television idents' audiences.

Television Idents Audiences

Television idents are normally targeted to specific audiences. According to Eastman *et al.* (2006) the three main groups for which promotional messages like TV idents are created are general audiences, advertisers, and affiliates. General audiences are people who mostly watch a particular form of programme. Audiences may be segregated by “demographics and psychographic” elements like age, sex, tribe, level of education, lifestyle, goals, attitudes etc. (Eastman *et al.*, 2006). These elements may determine the nature of television channel and what kind of programmes may be presented to audiences.

Secondly, channels also design television idents to appeal to companies and organizations which form the advertisers' audiences. The focus is to establish a good brand or corporate image among these categories of audiences and to attract their attention to buy more advertising time or space. (Eastman *et al.* (2006) posits that most television channels rely on this advertiser to for their funding and profit making. Thus, the need to design TV idents to boost a television channel's image is crucial especially in the era of multichannel and media conglomeration

A third a group of people that are considered in the designing of TV idents are Affiliates. According to Eastman *et al.*, (2006), the term affiliates refers to small television channels that are connected to bigger channels to broadcast some special programmes. In well-developed television industries, these small channels also have customers to whom they appeal. Thus, most are ready to partner with bigger television channels to meet their corporate objectives. To attract these small channels, Eastman *et al.* (2006) asserts that bigger channels design television idents and supply them with TV idents to be used on their channels for promotion.

Television idents and production of meanings

The semiotization of television idents as sign is very much in consistence with branding practices. According to Danesi (2013), the process of branding involves the conscious act of transforming a service or product into a brand by assigning it a unique code of meanings. Andersen, Andersen, Sørensen, and Danesi (2008) agree that turning a product into a brand involves the tapping into social conventions that direct social interactions and beliefs. Similarly, Ambrose and Harris (2008) assert that when communication designers apply “semiotic principles” in selecting visual and verbal cues for communication more impact can be achieved. Thus, the application of semiotics to the designing of television idents has changed drastically in practice and has evolved from just identification sign of a short video for television channels to a complex art form with exciting storyline which makes some experts to classify them as mini television programmes with embed meaning (Blandford & Mcelroy, 2009).

Similarly, according to Brownrigg and Meech, (2015) ident is an example of semiotization that conceptualizes television channel as a sign because ident sums up all values, beliefs, history, mission, vision etc. in a signal symbol that communicate to viewers between 3–5 seconds. Thus, television idents, irrespective of the visual style they take, are signs with values harnessed through carefully selected visual cues to promote television channels.

The HBO TV ident is a point in case. According to Johnson (2007), the animation of the HBO idents have semiotic values that denote and connote meaning through its interaction with other visual elements and sound. Johnson (2007, pp.8-9) explains that the HBO idents:

Evoked the impression of an appointment to view with each programme, creating a separate and special place in which its programmes are encountered. The logo contributes further to the network's brand identity through its resonance with an earlier age of television. The 'snow', the slow 'warming up' of the image, the fade to a white dot, and the use of black and white, are all evocative symbols of an early period of television when receivers took a while to warm up, when programmes were broadcast in black and white, and when close-down, with its snow and fade to a white dot, was a regular occurrence. HBO's logo, therefore, offers a symbolic evocation of an earlier period of broadcasting, one commonly associated with a Golden Age in US television, contributing to the creation of a brand image that offers quality...

Similarly, Meech (2005), explains that when the BBC launched new channels and decided to improve on the on-screen visual identity, the idents designed by Martin Lambie-Nairn were simple animation of Gill Sans

roman typeface, with each capital letter on a separate contrasting square background are visual manifestation of the BBC corporate values. According to Meech (2005), these idents communicate the concept of authoritativeness and trustworthiness which the channel adopted to differentiate, identify and remind audiences of their brand on the television space.

Ambrose and Harris (2008) also provide a description of BBC idents to support how idents have become a complex television channel branding sign with dynamic values. First, they explain that the BBC One globe (as shown by Figure 4), has been a constant feature of the ident since the 1950s. As a key visual feature, the globe signifies unity and connotes how the BBC brings the information, education and entertainment to every nation in the United Kingdom. Additionally, the ident as a complex sign, communicates confidence and excellence of the BBC programming (Ambrose & Harris, 2008).



Figure 4. BBC One ident. Source: (Ambrose & Harris, 2008)

Secondly, the BBC Two idents feature a '2' character denotes a personified as a robot (See Figure 5). This according to Ambrose and Harris, (2008 p.58) connotes "fun and mischief", and are appropriate because the ident speaks to the younger and urban audience. This identity roll-out supported a scheduling change, which together attracted a new audience without alienating the existing viewers.



Figure 5: BBC Two ident. Source (Ambrose & Harris, 2008)

Finally, according to Ambrose and Harris (2008), the BBC News ident denotes abstract globe imagery, but on the connotative level the ident suggests a sense of immediacy which is the core to the philosophy of BBC news. Again, Ambrose and Harris (2008) added that though the three idents of the BBC are different in visual style, they, however, demonstrate how the application of semiotization approach to design can create a dynamic and engaging set of visual cues that maintains BBC brand philosophies.



Figure 6: BBC News ident. Source (Ambrose & Harris, 2008)

Furthermore, Botha (2010) who did a critical visual analysis on SABC1, SABC2 and SABC3 Channel's brand identities, concluded that these channels are structured in specific brand philosophies and these are manifested through television idents. These idents, according to him, create a unique brand identity that creates visual vocabulary that connote the South African identity.

The literature review has so far considered television branding and television idents. It has explored the assertion that television idents are the primary ways through which television communicates their channels philosophies. The following section of this review looks at the concept of branding and three sub-concepts of branding that affect the way television idents are design and used as a brand identity.

Branding

In defining branding, Clifton and Simmons (2003) refer to brand as process and end product of using visual cues to make a mark or tag a product to create an identification. Similarly, Jevons (2005) and also resort to the famous

American Marketing Association (AMA) definition to argue that brand refers to a name, term, sign, symbol, or design that identifies and differentiates goods or services of different sources.

The two definitions above assert that brand refers to product or service, and can also refer to the source of the product or services because the adopted mark, name, sign etc. denote a legal ownership. Again, a brand is also a process or an act that identifies a product or the source of a product.

However, other literature on brand does not agree with Clifton and Simmson. For instance, Kapferer (1992) as quoted by De Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) claim that brand is not a product in any sense. Rather brand is the meaning attached to a product through the communication of philosophies that define the creation and the existence of the product or service. Moreover, according to the Harvard Business Review (as quoted in Roper & Fill, 2012), branding goes beyond the use of visual cues for differentiation and identification to identify a product. It is a multi-dimensional approach of marshalling visual and non-visual cues that emanate from ideological underpinnings to create an identity for a product of a service (Roper & Fill, 2012). Thus, brand or branding is the act of communicating concepts of ideas, which form the larger outlook of the owner and beliefs. This claim is also substantiated by De Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) that a brand is a complex symbol that gives meaning and directions that are accumulated over a period of time through association and communication.

In brand communication, Roper and Fill (2012) assert that because brand provides cues to brand design, it should be based on strong and clear philosophical grounds. They provide three questions that must be answered

during brand communication: what makes a strong brand, what is the driver of that brand, and is there a message about the brand that can be conveyed cohesively and consistently? By these assertions, designing brand conceptualization and communication cannot just be based on aesthetic elements. Though the latter is also important, branding can only be successful when its conception is based on strong brand philosophies.

In reference to the works of Clifton and Simmons (2003), De Chernatony and Dall'Omo Riley (1998) and Roper and Fill (2012) and in the context of this study, two main assertions can be made to support this research study. First, television channels though they are not physical products, can be considered as brands and that all branding theories can be applied. This assertion is in consistence with literature on Television Channel Branding. For instance, Johnson (2007) argued that because all visual cues that are adopted as an identity for television channels are distinctive signs that are backed by trade laws and protected and that television channels should be viewed as brands. Trademark or logos therefore does more than protect the owner a brand from unfair forms of competition. It makes it possible for mark owners to exploit new forms of expressing their brand visually (Lurie 2004, as quoted in Johnson 2007). These assertions suggest that like product brand owner, television channel owners can use their visual identities as legal entity and use them in trading.

Secondly, television channel branding practice refers to the planned and strategic effort of expressing philosophical dispositions of a channel through visual cues to provide meaning that connects to the needs of consumer or audiences. Hence, branding goes beyond the use of visual cues for

differentiation and identification sake. Behind the physical product or service or the visual cues are a collection of intangible factors that determine the physical presentation branding elements services (as shown in Figure 1).

Moreover, branding is the communication of concepts or ideas, which form the larger outlook of owner of product or service with a belief that such concepts or ideas can convince a consumer to differentiate between two similar products or services.

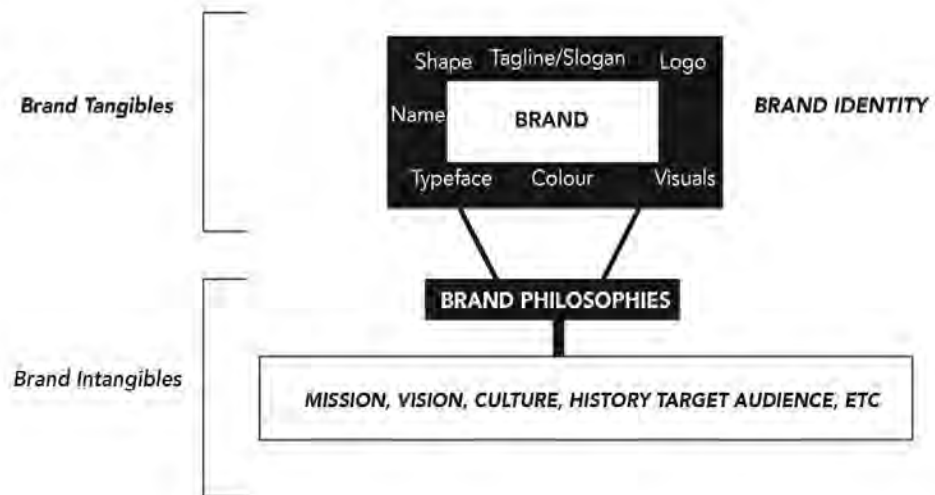


Figure 7. The nature of Brand (Researcher representation)

Based on Clifton and Simmons (2003), De Chernatony & Dall’Olmo Riley (1998) definition of brand

According to Pickton and Amanda (2005), there are some situational factors that interact to and culminate into brand philosophies. These factors determine the physical or psychological distinctiveness of a brand. These are history, mission, vision, values, corporate culture, founder or owners, products, history and target audience etc. These brand physical and psychological determinants are expressed through name, letters, numbers, symbol, signature, shape, slogan,

colour and particular typeface and in the context of this study through television adverts (Clifton & Simmons, 2003; Landa, 2006). The interaction of these elements manifests the brand philosophies of a product or service.

Works of brand designers and academia have shaped the meaning of branding and have developed sub-concepts from the term brand. These concepts are corporate brand identity, brand communication design and corporate brand image. These have become a major platform on which designers and corporate institutions approach brand management. For instance, Oba (2011) provides a brand building model that must be followed in designing a brand. These include, brand identity, brand communication and brand image. Similarly, Roper and Fill (2012) assert that the practice of brand management and design cannot be done effectively without looking at branding through three related fields; namely, corporate or brand identity, brand image, and communication. The following is a review of these three branding concepts

Brand identity

Brand identity is mostly associated with graphic design elements that visually and verbally identify a company and mostly are used interchangeably with corporate visual identity. For instance, Alessandri (2001) and Bosch (2005) claim that brand identity practitioners define corporate identity by focusing on visual assets like corporate name, logo, colours, typeface and taglines or slogans put forth by the corporation. Similarly, Landa (2006) argues that brand identity is the visual and verbal expression of a brand and conscious creation of a systematic visual language which includes all tangible assets that bears the logo, colour of a brand.

Thus, by this assertion and in the context of this study, brand identity refers to all visual assets like idents, lower thirds, bugs, and interstitials. These elements form the visual language of a television channel as a brand and identify a television channel on screen.

However, Balmer (2001), Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006), and Roper and Fill (2012) assert that brand identity is how an institution wants to be perceived or how a brand designer wants a brand to be perceived or what he wants people to associate a brand with through the use of symbolic artefacts that give direction and meaning. Thus, brand identity in these contexts is more philosophical and intangible. Again, Otubanjo and Melewar (2007) argued that brand or corporate identity should be viewed as a symbolic sign that represents philosophies and ideologies. The tangible elements of brand identity play the role of physical labels that hold and present the philosophies of a channel. Brand identity therefore is the presentation of what a company believes it is and what it should be to stakeholders. By the definition of Otubanjo and Melewar (2007), brand identity refers to the psychological meanings that define and give unique identity to television channels. These meanings therefore dictate how the visual cues are presented.

Alessandri (2001) provides two separate definitions of brand identity namely, conceptual and operational. Firstly, the conceptual definition of a brand identity according to Alessandri is the purposeful presentation of an organization to evoke a positive corporate image in the minds of the public. In other words, this definition encapsulates all the intangible aspect of

corporate identity of what an organization believe to be and what it wants to be in the mind of the public. It refers to culture, values, beliefs, historical stories, philosophies and ideologies.

On the other hand, the second operational definition embraces all the overt and measurable elements of a firm's identity, which is expressed in its comprehensive visual presentation. It includes logo, tagline, colour, and images, architecture and firm's public behaviour. In addition, Alessandri (2001) contends that the conceptual definition is philosophical and refers to the mission of an organization and the operational definition is the channel through which the philosophy or mission is manifested for the public. Thus, these two concepts complement each other and constitute the corporate identity of an organization.

Again, Alessandri (2001) further explained that brand identity shows that corporate identity is a product of two complex factors. Firstly, there is the visible part of a corporate identity. These include logos, colours and names and are all other visible elements of an organization. Secondly, below the visual style of this model are corporate structure, communications and behaviour. While these are not visible to the public, they are vital forces that drive the construction of corporate identity (Alessandri, 2001). Brand identity in this sense is the summation of all organizational values, ideologies, beliefs etc. which are expressed in visual form through colours, logos, names, imagery.

Moreover, Chan-olmsted and Cha, (2007) and Oba (2011) who both conducted case studies on different television channel branding concluded that television channels have resorted to the creation of strong brand identity

and are mostly express through their slogans or taglines. For instance, Chan-Olmsted and Cha concluded that CNN has the strongest brand identity compared to CBS. Oba also found that Disney Channel and FOX are strong brands because the brand identities resonate with their audiences

Thus, in reference to the works of Chan-olmsted and Cha (2007), Oba (2011), Alessandri (2001) and Otubanjo & Melewar (2007), brand identity in the context of this study is defined as the philosophical perception of a television channel that dictates how they want their stakeholders to perceive them. These philosophical perceptions are derived from channel history, mission, vision, culture and beliefs and may be express through visual, text and slogans of television ident (Eastman *et al.*, 2006; Meech 2010; Oba 2011).

Brand image

Brand image is the impression customers or audiences have about a brand and a product of brand identity interpretation from the perspective of customers or audiences. Cornelissen (2004) agrees that brand image is the perception of a brand of an individual, usually a customer. Roper and Fill (2012) state that corporate image refers to the perception that stakeholders or audiences have of an organisation and it is the product of their interaction, interpretation and meaning they ascribe to an institution over an elapsed period.

However, Stuart (1998) views corporate image as the common viewpoint among stakeholders and also refers to the mental picture that has been formulated through the accumulation of all received messages.

According to these assertions and in reference to the subject matter of this study, brand image is formed based on the brand corporate identities or

brand elements that are used by television channels to brand their channel. These include idents, bugs, interstitials, lower thirds, upfront, mortise etc. (Krasner 2008). These collections of visual cues become the basis through which stakeholders form their opinions about the television channel.

Again, brand image is constructed over a long period of time through advertising campaigns and promotions. Thus, while brand identity is how an institution wants to be perceived or what they believe they are because of their philosophies, brand image is concerned about customers view or perception about a product, which is accumulated over a period. Brand image is passive and looks into the past to make decision, while brand identity is “active and strategic” and look into the future (Oba, 2011). To create a good brand image therefore means that television channels must express the philosophies that define their identity in simply and clear way so that stakeholders can understand.

The view or the perception of stakeholders about an organization is very critical and shows how the audience becomes an important component of every institution. Whatever stakeholders do or say about a brand is based on their and judgment, expectations of a brand in the past. Roper and Fill (2012) express this by stating that an organization does have little power over their image because the corporate image does not exist in the organisation but in those that perceive the organisation. Stuart (1998) also stressed the illusiveness that may appear if an organization does not plan to manage their image among stakeholders. According to him, visual messages that are presented to audiences as corporate identities in the quest of building corporate images may end up creating confused image among stakeholders. Similarly, Hynes (2009)

also claims that intuitions who select and use inappropriate visual cues to communicate their corporate identity to their audiences send conflicting signals, and would need to make extra efforts to reinforce their corporate identity. Thus, all visual elements that are used to communicate corporate beliefs, values, and philosophies must be approached strategically.

Thus, for a good corporate image to be achieved there must be coherence in the visual element used in relation to the corporate personality. Also the designing of corporate identity element to promote image should be based on an understanding of how a company is perceived by its stakeholders since their viewpoint affect the image of every organization (Hynes 2009; Roper & Fill 2012). In view of this, television channels should take seriously the perceptions of their audiences when designing brand identity and promotional elements.

Due to the difficulty in designing brand identity to project corporate images, most literature stressed the need for design to be consistent with the corporate philosophies. For instance, Schmitt, Simonson and Marcus (1995) suggest there framework that can help designers and corporate image managers to be effective in designing corporate identities for corporate image management. First, corporate identity design should be systematic and should be integrated effort of three areas namely art or design, corporate philosophy and strategic planning. The second framework should be a comprehensive approach to the use of visual and images and identity management. This framework posits that image or visuals used in design should serve the need of the intuition. Finally, there is the need for constancy in design across all visual

communications of a corporate or brand philosophies. These factors according to Schmitt *et al.* (1995) are crucial to effective corporate image management.

Brand communication

Brand Communication is conveying the brand identity, which is composed of values and meanings to customers or audiences to shape the brand image. The purpose of communication is to express the philosophies that determine brand identity in visual and aural cues to audiences (Oba, 2011). Brand communication forms the bases through which stakeholders perceive company's identity in order to form brand image, which eventually leads to reputation (Balmer & Edmund, 1999). Hence, Brand communication for television branding is the act of conveying the philosophies that define their identity of a television channel to stakeholders to gain well or maintain their image

Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) also stress that brand communication embraces all ways, both intentional and unintentional, through which brand is communicated. Thus, in the context of this study the combination of visual cues in branding television channels can send both intentional and unintentional messages about a television channel and can actively shape stakeholders perception. Thus, all of the messages emanating from an organisation, everything that it produces and all of the activities it is involved in will act to shape stakeholders' perceptions. Corporate communication can be both controlled and uncontrolled in nature. Communication intentionally instigated by management with the aim of improving stakeholder relationships is classified as controlled.

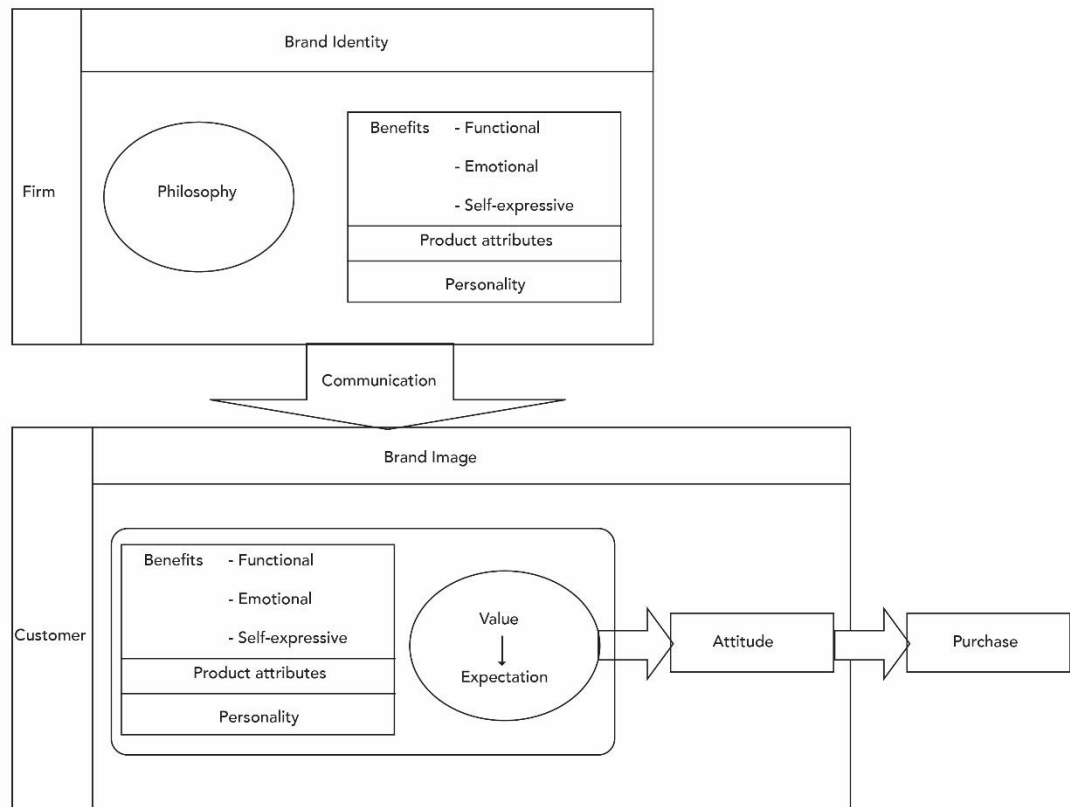


Figure 8. Brand Building Model by Oba (2011) based on Akutsu & Ishida (2002)

Brand identity, brand communication and brand image are key concepts in branding (as shown in Figure 8). Brand identity, brand image and communication are very important to television branding. Brand identity is how a television channel wants to be perceived and through its slogan it presents a unique philosophy that becomes the bases for identification and differentiation. Brand communication on the other hand is the visual expression of the channel philosophies imbedded in slogans or taglines and bases through which stakeholders perceived the identity of television channels. Finally, brand image is the viewpoint of stakeholders after interaction with the television channel through visual cues that are presented as brand identities. However, the subject of visual communication comes to play in each of the

three concept of branding. This study argues that the process of designing television ident as brand identity is dictated by the concept of semiotics which is the building block for visual communication (Danesi, 2013). The following section of this literature reviews literature on semiotics.

Semiotics

Semiotics thrives on the philosophy that everything that is perceived is a sign and must be interpreted by the viewer. William and Newton (2001) posit that semiotics as branch of visual study aims at dismembering a sign apart and investigating how meanings are propagated in relation to cultural settings and how it works in relation to a broader system of meaning within a socio-cultural settings. Semiotics attempts to breakdown the elements of encoding and decoding of meanings in a socio cultural setting to identify their functions. Hence, at the heart of communication within communities is the concept of a sign that form the building block for communication.

Signs affect the way meanings are constructed and interpreted in a community through the interaction with other signs. Thus, to use television idents as a branding tool to communicate visually to television audiences require the combination of various signs into a composite image, which become a new complex sign.

According to Harrison (2003), semiotics is not a one away process. Rather, he describes semiotics as social process and a product of social interaction. The construction and interpretation of meaning is a negotiation between a sender of a visual message and a viewer being the receiver. The whole process between the producer and the viewer is dictated by “social, cultural, political beliefs, values, and attitudes” which are shared by both the

producer and the viewer. In view of his phenomenon, signs have become the fundamental means by which mass media channels such as television, films, Internet games and magazines within cultures communicate ideas, emotions and feelings and ideologies through the powers of the images.

Television ident, which has also become part of the television culture, also thrives on the signs to communicate. Signs are therefore important to all mass media communications.

The production of meaning and sign systems

The nature of signs and their enormous application in visual communication have attracted many scholars to unravel the functions of signs and how they are applied in visual communication. Though semioticians such as Arthur Asa, Berger Charles Morris, Thomas Sebeok, Umberto Eco and Roland Barthes have done much works on the concept of sign in communication, it is generally agreed that works from Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce form the bases of all literature on semiotics. This section therefore reviews the theory of sign in the context of television branding

Saussure provided an operational view of how signs operate and create meaning. According to Chandler (2003), Saussure presented the view that signs have two parts namely signifier and signified (as shown in Figure 9). The signifier is the sound-image or the label assigned to an object for identification. Signified is the concept that is created by the evoking of the sound-image or the label. According to Saussure, the sign is the whole that results from the association of the signifier [and] the signified (Chandler, 2003).

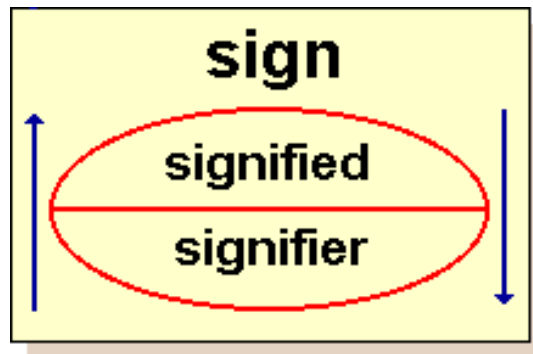


Figure 9. Saussure sign concept (Source: Chandler, 2003).

A sign is therefore the summation of the link of the sound label or identifier of an object and the concepts it carries. Berger in Moriarty (1995), also argues that, the relationship between the signifier and the signified is accidental and conventional. This assertion presupposes that the use of a label for a concept is illogical and their acceptances are based purely on conventions of communication within a society.

Saussure's concept of sign is very applicable to the concept of branding, and stresses the relationship between the identity and image or perception formation through visual or verbal cues. For instance, Botha (2000) provides a schematic representation of how Meenghan (1995) applied Saussure's model of sign to brand management. According to Meenghan (1995) the signifier, which Saussure defines as the label of identification, becomes the identity of a brand. In other words, the identities are the overt elements that identify and discriminate between other brands.

According to Meenghan, the identity comprises of products, services, building, communication, and information and organization behaviour all other material or physical of a brand. Thus, Meenghan equates the signified part of Saussure's sign model to the brand image or perception that is formed by stakeholders of a brand. (See Figure 10) Despite the arbitrariness of signifier

and the signified, Meenaghan (1995) argues that the brand identity (signifier) elements must be controlled and directed by the encoder of a brand message because the brand image (signified) cannot be controlled in the mind of the receiver of a brand message.

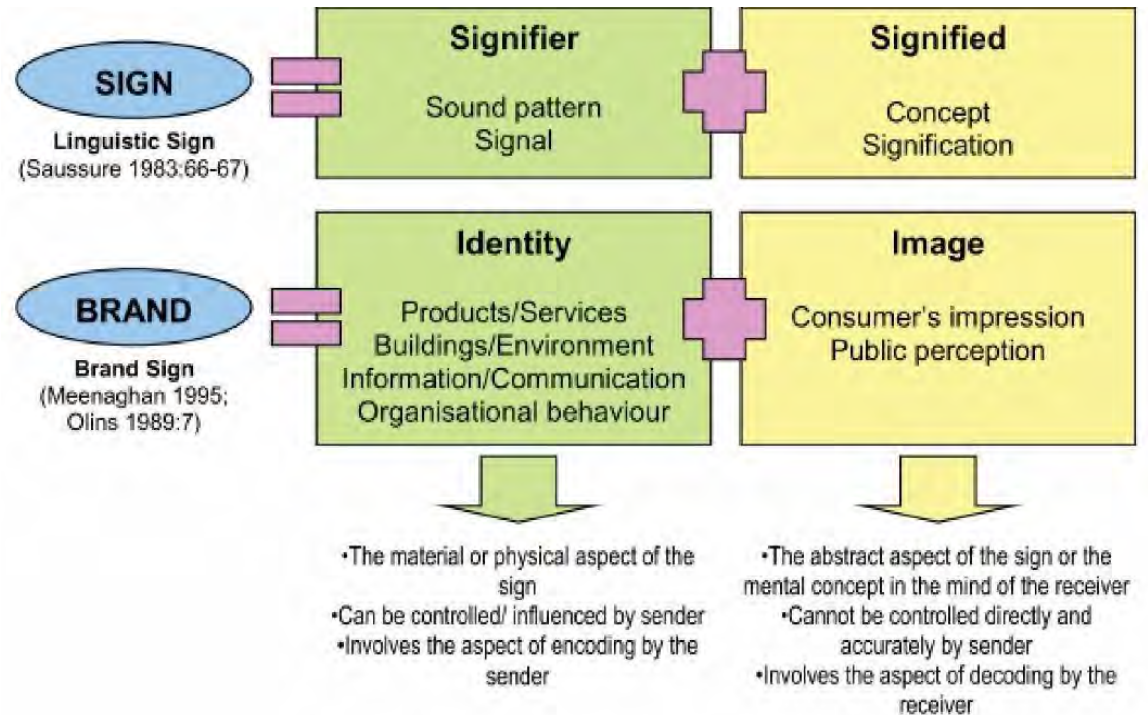


Figure 10. Saussure's model of sign and Meenaghan's identity and image.

Source: (Botha, 2000)

Thus, in the context of this assertion, brand is a sign that results from the relation between the brand identity and brand image. Due to accidental nature of signs, visual elements used in communicating brand must control to limit the arbitrariness to effective communication of brand identity (see Figure 11).

These visual elements may include, videos, photos, slogan, graphic symbols and typography and can be classified as signifiers in the context of

Meenaghan's application of Saussure's sign model to brand identity and image. The image or stakeholders perception are the mental concepts that audience formulate when they are exposed to the idents.

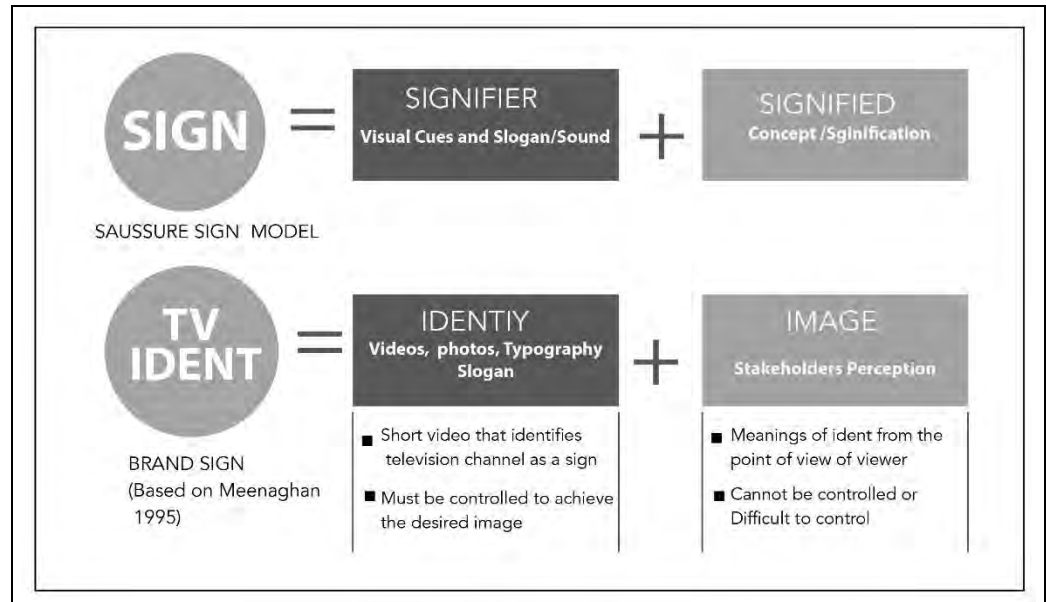


Figure 11. Comparative representation of Saussure's model of sign and the concept of television

Ident as brand sign image. (Source: Researcher representation based on Botha, 2000)

Unlike, Saussure who conceptualized sign as a two-part components, Peirce provided three terms to define sign. Peirce asserts that a sign is the dynamic interaction between three concepts: representamen or sign, interpretant and object. According to Christensen and Askegaard (2001, p.302), Peirce explained that:

A sign, or representament, is something, which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its

object. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the ground of the *representament*.

In view of Christensen and Askegaard's explanations of Pierce's concept of sign, and in the context of this study, television ident becomes the sign or the representament. This may also refer to all visual cues that form television ident. The object is what the sign stands for and refers to the core philosophy of the brand or the source of brand and this context is the message behind the ident. In other words the object in this context refers to the core philosophy of a television channel. Finally, the interpretant, which is equivalent to Saussure's concept of sign, refers to the corporate or brand image and became the mental image or concept formed by the viewer (as shown by Figure 12)

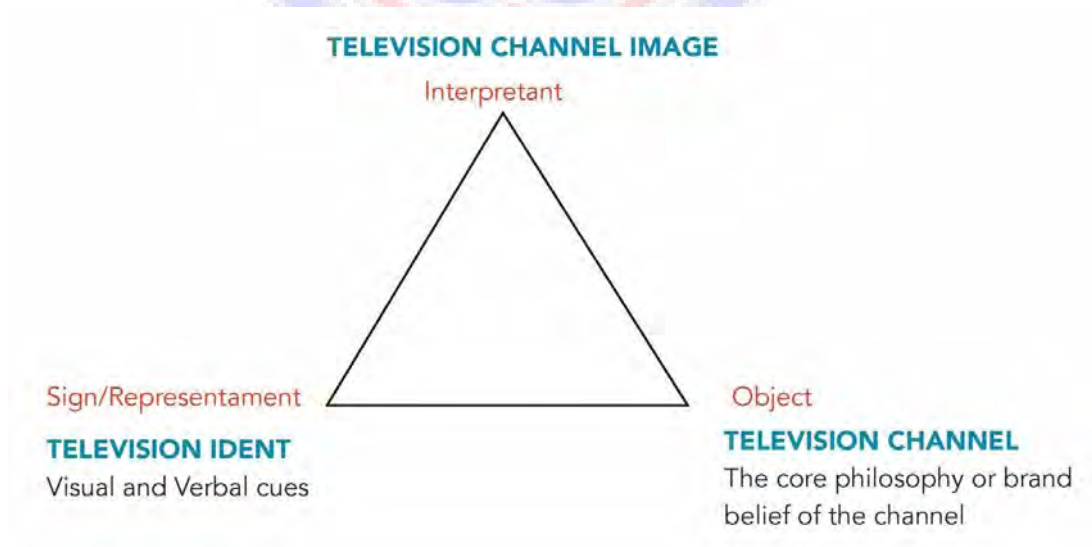


Figure 12. Semiotics of Television Ident, based on Pierce's model of sign (Source: Researcher representation based on Christensen & Askegaard, 2001)

Charles Sanders Pierce again provided another triadic approach to the study and understanding of sign. This time, Pierce grouped the construction and meaning of signs as iconic, symbolic, and indexical. An iconic sign is a direct reflection of what it refers to or tangible representational of an idea or concept (Moriarty, 2002). Similarly, Lester (2006) maintains that iconic signs have a resemblance to the things they represents. On the other hand, symbolic signs have no “logical or representational connection” to ideas they represent. Thus, it has no visual connection to an object or a person and is something people have learned (Hammerich & Harrison, 2002).

Symbolic signs, on the other hand, are the most abstract of all Pierce theory of signs and their usage are based on conventions of a society. Meanings from symbols are not universal and tend to be subjective and localized since they are influenced by social and cultural factors. Consequently, symbolic signs evoke emotional response from viewers than iconic and indexical signs. Significantly, symbolic signs existence and survival are based on heritage, which requires efforts from members of a culture to learn before the can construct or interpret meanings (Lester, 2006; Moriarty, 2002).

Finally, indexical signs are logical and have a direct link to things or idea they represent. Indexical signs give clues that link or connect things to nature rather than a direct resemblance to the object (Lester, 2006; Bulut & Yurdaisik 2005; Moriarty 1995). Pierce’s philosophy of signs provides a strong concept to the study and interpretation of mass media culture than Saussure’s definition of sign. It is however important to note that Saussure definition of sign is fundamental to the deciphering of Pierce’s definition of sign.

Sign in the context of the study of television idents can function on several levels as iconic, symbolic or indexical, which suggests that a sign can be multifunctional depending on the socio-cultural experience of the viewer. Thus, according to Eco and Sebeok (in Bulut, 2007) audiences play the role of a visual “investigator or [visual] message detective” and try to discover intended and unintended meanings of signs in midst of complex presentation of ambiguous and complex visual signs. Parsa, (1999) agrees by contending that meanings behind signs are not easily overt, it often exists latently and waits to be unveiled, analyzed and interpreted by the viewer.

According to Lester (2006), an object, image etc. only becomes a “sign” when audiences are able to perceive and make meaning from it and without the discovery and understanding of the meaning it is not a sign for them. Thus, in the context of this study television idents becomes a meaningful sign if audiences are able to decipher the meaning behind them.

Also, because television idents are combination of signs, viewers can only make meaning from the idents if they are able to identify the functions of the various sign. However, because signs themselves do not carry any meaning and do not emerge in isolation but actively interrelate within and with other signs to create a coherent message, it behooves on audiences to discover the meanings behind such signs when used in communication designs (Lester, 2006; Mick, Burroughs, Hetzel & Brannen, 2004). Thus, the cultural experience of the viewer comes to play in the decoding of complex signs like television idents to make meaning.

Barthes (in Hulle, 2006 p.245) described the cultural experiences that affect how meaning are constructed and deconstructed as codes and further

submitted that a sign becomes meaningful only if it conforms to what he called “the chain of association” or “codes”. Codes are history and customs of a community that have developed into complex systems of conventional laws that shapes their action and perception. According to Gillespie and Toynbee (2006), codes are cultural conventions or agreements established by societies that dictate how tangible and intangible ideas or concepts are constructed and deconstructed. Thus, codes are conventions that connect an assigned label to material objects or ideas to a certain meaning that are accepted by members of a society.

In view of this, to construct a message through visual cues like television idents require that the chosen visual message conform to the chain of associations or codes to make meaning. This is echoed by Eco (in Parsa, 1999) that signs are correlated with what they stand for on the basis of a rule or a convention. To create impactful television idents to communicate brand philosophies of television channels, stakeholders must be considered seriously because it is the cultural experience of the viewers that will determine the success of the ident which will eventually lead to good brand image and not the image themselves

Asa Berger (in Hulle, 2006) suggests four kinds of codes that affect visual communication. These are metonymic, analogical, displace and condensed. Metonymic codes are a collection of signs that cause the viewer to make associations or assumptions. Analogical codes are group of signs that causes the viewer to make mental comparisons. Displace codes are the transferring of meaning from one set of signs to another set of signs by associating qualities. Finally, condensed codes are group of signs that

combines to form a new composite sign. The nature of television idents will require the application of these codes depending on the cultural context and the target audience.

Furthermore, signs can assume different functions when they are in relation to other signs and these affects how meaning and interpretation are constructed and deconstructed. For instance Rose (2012), suggests sign can function as syntagmatic and paradigmatic. Syntagmatic sign makes meaning when they are placed side by side with other images as in image sequences based sign. Thus, syntagmatic signs depend on the position in the sequential order in relation to other images in the sequence to make meaning. Television ident as film medium will depend on this concept to make meaning because it is a collection of visual cues in sequences. Paradigmatic signs on the other hand, make meaning when a dominant visual elements is in contrast to other similar relational visuals (Rose, 2012). The deconstruction of meaning in this context depends on the disparity between the available and unavailable signs various visual elements. The syntagmatic and paradigmatic functions of sign in the context of this study therefore suggest that the relations between the videos, photos, colours, particular typeface and how dominant they are in relation to others affects how meanings are constructed and deconstructed and may affect the way idents are used as channel identity.

Additionally, signs can also function as denotative and connotative level to make meanings. At the denotative level, signs irrespective of their symbolic nature, describe something and provide a literal meaning. A denotative meaning is the on the surface literal meaning or the direct meaning of what we see without any socio-cultural influences (Ambrose & Harris, 2008;

Gillespie & Toynbee, 2006). Signs at the denotative level are more general and easy to understand. In contrast to this, signs at the connotative level convey a higher form of meaning which are deeply steeped in codes and conventions and there are more local rather than global. Such signs are also metaphoric in the sense that they map the meaning from one idea onto another. (Rose, 2012; Saraceni, 2001). Thus, for example while at the denotative level a woman could mean female, a woman at the connotative level could mean family, beauty, love. Thus, in the context of this study, beyond the denotative level of television adverts lie a connotative meaning which may be intentional or unintentional that can shape the understanding of the viewer.

Gillespie and Toynbee (2006), describe the relation between denotation and connotation as relative to time and space. Connotative concepts are not absolute and change from culture to culture and time. Thus, while the meaning of an image may connote happiness in one context, it may connote sadness in another context. Thus, according to (Ambrose & Harris, 2008) communication designers should understand the

denotative and connotative values of visual and carefully select such visuals because the arbitrariness of visuals can lead to confusion and contradiction in the mind of the viewer and in the context of this study audience may not understand the meaning of an advert.

In reference to the works Asa Berger (in Hulle, 2006), Moriarty (1995), Mick, Burroughs, Hetzel and Brannen (2004), Chandler (2003) and Lester (2006) television adverts is a sign with dynamic function. Adverts can serve as iconic sign and may have direct representation of an idea or concept. Again, the

same ident may also be seen a symbolic sign because it may be abstract in nature and may include codes that may be limited by cultural, social and gender dimensions. Television idents may assume the role of indexical sign because it may contain visual element that may have a physical link to the idea or concept they represent.

Moreover, television idents as is an example of condensed codes of complex signs in time and space as suggested by Asa Berger (in Hulle, 2006). It is a collection of various signs that includes video footage, typography, photographs, images etc. It also employs cinematic techniques like camera movement, angles and editing styles, which also add to the complexities and dynamics of television idents as a sign. According to Zettle (in William & Newton 2001, p.76) “these elements are aesthetic structures” and argues that they can affect the construction and interpretation of meanings since the “clarification, intensification and interpretation of visual events are bias towards how communication designers select and apply aesthetical elements.”

Despite the multifunction nature of sign, Reid (2004) in Botha (2000) contended that there are five processes of semiosis that affects how meanings are constructed and interpreted. (See Figure 13) Firstly, at the top of the semiosis process is the sign producer. Beneath the sign producer is a sign, which is the summation of a signifier and signified values. According to Botha (2000) the sign readers refer to stakeholders who are mainly advertisers and viewers. Again, Reid (2004) explains that the sign is received at the fourth level and decoded by the stakeholders. At this stage the sign become successful if the receiver decodes the signs and get the exact message from the sign producer. However, Reid (2004) argue if the receiver fails to get the message

then the sign as failed and becomes aberrant reading which form the fifth level of semiosis according to Reid (2004)

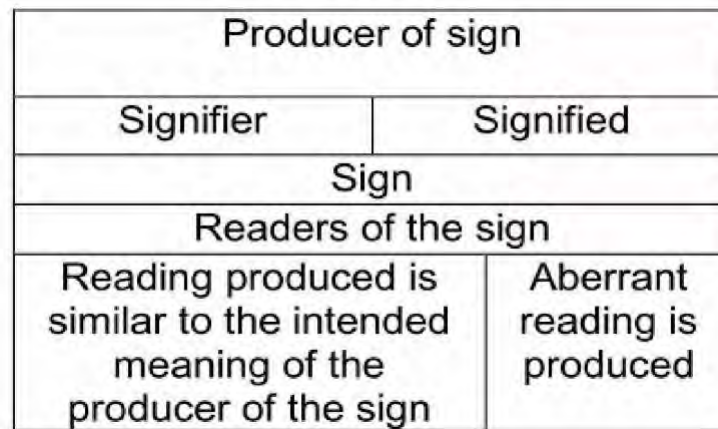


Figure 13: The process of semiosis. (Reid, 2004)

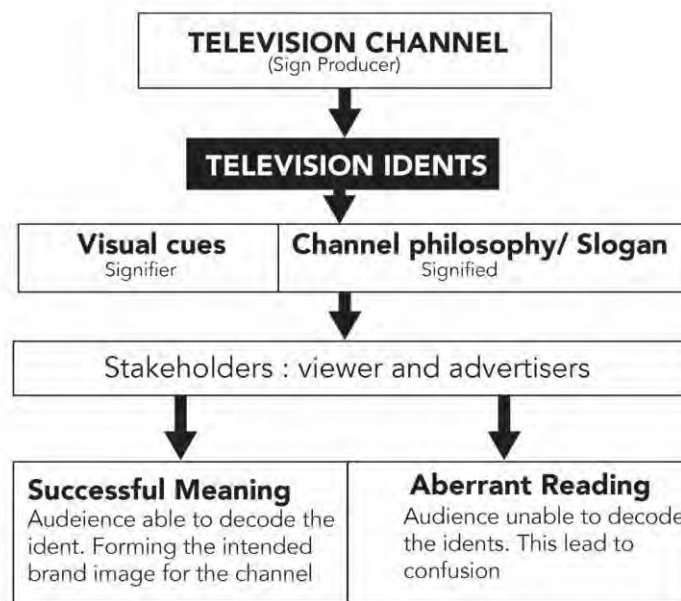


Figure 14. The process of television idents semiosis based on Reid (2004)

(Researcher's representation)

The semiosis processes have been applied to television branding to emphasize that television branding is a communication process that is mediated by sign. Thus, in the case of this study, the producer of sign becomes the television channel and the television idents becomes the sign with signifier and signified values. (See Figure 8) In addition, the television becomes the sign

through which television channels communicate to stakeholders. In reference to the work of Reid (2004), the television ident becomes a successful sign if stakeholder's interpretation of the sign agrees with the television channels. However, there will be aberrant reading if the stakeholders are unable to decode the television ident.

Film Aesthetics and Symbolism

The concept of aesthetics was adopted from the Greek word *aesthesis*, which refers to sensory perception or sensuous knowledge. It is also believed that its modern application might have originated from the eighteenth century philosopher Baumgarten who modified the word to mean satisfaction and fulfillment of the senses or sensuous delight (Hekkert, 2006).

Aesthetics is usually associated with the arts since works of arts are produced to appeal to our sense and emotions. Because aesthetics focuses on the artefact and the value of its perceivable attributes, its effects may vary from one person to another. The World Book Encyclopedia (1994), echoed this point by asserting that aesthetic is an attempt to understand how art is related to what people feel, what they learn and how they live. Similarly, Adenugba (2007), also asserts that aesthetics is the study of beauty and the properties of a system of an artwork with the aim of understanding how beauty and its property systems appeal to the sense. Hence, the concepts of aesthetics in general focus on the branch philosophy that is concerned with components of beauty in an art and how it is received and interpreted by the senses. Again, aesthetics seek to understand the discrepancies in the reception of artwork by studying the interplay of elements within a work of art like film.

Film aesthetics, as a branch of aesthetics, is concerned with the properties of film and how those properties appeal to audiences. According to Sparshott (1971), a film is a series of motionless images projected very fast over a period of time to create the impression of motion in the mind of the viewer. Film therefore is an illusion just like any work of art that appeals and challenges our sensory powers to react towards them by believing their reality. Film, therefore thrives on aesthetics to appeal to the powers of our senses. Thus according Adenugba (2007), film aesthetics are the components of beauty in a film.

These components of film beauty describe all visual and aural elements that are employed in a motion picture production. Thus, in film production, aesthetics play a dual role. First, aesthetics play its fundamental role of making film look pleasing and appealing to the senses. It is aimed at attracting the attention of audiences, driving their attention throughout the film. Secondly, aesthetics add to the story structure and ensure the completeness of a film. The aesthetic elements of film are the drivers of the film's messages and also serve as a subtle means by audiences are released from the anxieties in the story structure (Adenugba, 2007). Aesthetics in film include such filmic elements as storyline, lighting, camera shots and angle, music, scenery, editing and montage.

Tone and Contrast

Film tone and contrast are important film aesthetic properties that influence the presentation of a motion picture. Tonality refers to picture full range of values in relation to dark and light. Contrast on the other hand, alludes particularly to the proportion of dim to light values of a motion picture. These

filmic properties can add meaning to the overall picture and can change how a film is perceived. For instance, according to Krasner (2008), high contrast films rely on low-key lighting to create fearful scenes such as horror film while many motion picture films use low contrast to achieve naturalistic settings especially in drama and comedy movies.

Lighting

Lighting is the level of visibility of objects or characters in a film. It refers to all light sources, both artificial and natural, to achieve some aesthetic or practical effect while illuminating a scene. (EICAR, 2014) Lighting is a one of the most imperative parts of visual narrating element in cinematography and sometimes serve as the basis on which a film story thrives. Lighting shapes a shot's general arrangement and furthermore alters our perception and feelings of objects and characters within a shot (Adenugba, 2007). Again Lighting can be varied to establish different effects. Krasner (2008) explains that Low key to-fill ratios can be used to dull modes. High key-to-fill ratios are used to create dramatic, suspenseful effects. Back lights are used to illuminate foreground elements to appear glowed.

Camera angle and shots

According Krasner (2008), camera angle and shot size control how much scene is presented to audiences and how the elements within a shot are perceived. Therefore altering camera's angle with shot sizes can affect the appearance and meaning and directs audiences' point of view. For instance, a bird's-eye view shot is shot taken above a city and provides a mid-flight perspective scene objects and characters. These shot, according Krasner (2008), create psychological feeling of looking over a subject. Additionally,

high camera angles reduce the importance of objects or characters evoking the feeling of weakness, harmless and vulnerability. Frontal angles tend to flatten three-dimensionality, while three-quarter or profile angles reveal a greater degree of depth. Furthermore, the use of a low angle shot exaggerate a character or subjects and create the impression of height and inspire awe or excitement, making subjects appear larger, stronger, or nobler (Krasner, 2008).

Shot size determines the view of a scene. Shot sizes such long shots, close shots, medium shots, over-the shoulder shots and close-up shots are employed in filmmaking to create an interaction between audiences and characters and objects in a film. For instance, Krasner (2008) postulates that long shot portrays a subject from a lesser distance to establish its world which also suggests how far the subject is from the world of the viewer. Medium and medium-wide shots are often used to frame two and to present their immediate world to audiences. The range of close-up shot are used to get subjects and object closer to audiences. Camera angle and shot are aesthetic elements that affect the way shots are perceived.

Film Editing

Editing is the art of arranging shots over time to make cohesive statements. Editing involves that art of telling a story of a script by arranging film or video footage on a timeline to intensify subtleties, heighten emotions, and blend countless elements of image and sound to create a film (Filmmakers.com, 2014). Thus, film editing determines pace and structure of story. Additionally, editing is also concerned with the impact of one shot upon another in relation to their position in time and space. Its ultimate aim is juxtaposed shots to make meaning and play on the emotions of viewers.

Montage

Montage is a pictorial strategy in which cut-out illustration and photo or parts of them, are creatively juxtaposed and superimposed together to evoke a different meaning.

In film aesthetics, a montage refers to the arranging of related and unrelated shots or objects and characters over a time and often in fast-paced fashion that compresses time and conveys a lot of information in a relatively short period (Cinema, 2014).

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with related literature on important concepts for this study. The chapter shows that television idents are the visual manifestation of a television channel's values, beliefs, mission, vision etc. which culminates into brand philosophies. The study therefore looked at television idents from two theoretical concepts: the concept of branding and semiotics which are all tenets of visual communication.

The study discussed that the use of television ident for channel identity is deeply situated in the concept of branding which involves three process which are brand identity, brand communication and brand image (Chan-Olmsted, 2011; John M.T. Balmer, 2001; Danesi, 2013; Keller, 2005). While the concept of branding may have assumed other meanings from the world of business and managements studies, this study argues that at the core of brand management is the use of visual communications to evoke meaning. Likewise, the use of television idents as branding strategy for television

channels has a similar goal of evoking meaning to create a favorable image for the channel.

Thus, the process of using television idents as a branding strategy starts with philosophies that defines and differentiate the identity of a television channel as brand. The philosophies are then communicated through the television idents. The process ends with stakeholders decoding the visual and verbal cues to cause and action. The aim at this stage is to improve the image of a brand in the mind of stakeholders. The main argument for this section is that television idents irrespective of the form, style and technique employed should reflect the channel philosophies to create a unique identity, which is pertinent to television branding.

The second concept that gives impetus to this study is the concept of semiotics. The section argued that if semiotics is the study of signs and signs are considered as the building block of all communication: then the whole process of branding involves communication. Thus, to brand a television channel through the use of television idents is to assign meaning through carefully selected visual signs to communicate a television channel core philosophies.

Furthermore, this chapter argued that TV idents are film form because they thrive on cinematic conventions and share the same production values with television commercials which are all tools for promoting a product or an institution. In view of this, this study conceptualized television idents as television commercials which share the same best production practices. Hence, all elements used in the designing of television ident must express the brand or corporate personality in clear simple terms. This can be achieved with a clear

theme or message that focuses on the brand personality of a TV channel. Again audiences' demographics and psychographic elements should be considered at an early stage. Film techniques such as camera works, lighting and editing techniques and style should support the central idea to establish channel identity.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The focus of this study was to explore television idents as way of on-screen branding for television channels in Ghana. It sought to explore the philosophies behind television idents and to investigate the extent to which the visuals of the idents reflect channel's brand philosophies. The focus of this chapter is to discuss the various methods used in collecting data to address the research problem. It contains a justification of the chosen methods, and finally discusses the approach, population and sample size, data sources, data collection procedure and data analysis plan.

Research Design

This study has been conceptualized under the interpretivist worldview of research. It is driven by the view that knowledge, truth and reality are subjective, making it a tenet of the interpretivist research approach. This paradigm of research takes the individualistic view and seeks to investigate motives, meanings, reasons, and other subjective experiences of individuals (Anderson, Ozanne, & Hudson, 2014). Additionally, Prasad and Prasad (2002) argue that the interpretivist researcher is focused on the philosophy behind the construction of truth and reality. The interpretivist researcher tries to understand how people construct and interpret meaning in the natural setting.

Because the thrust of this study is to explore the meaning of television idents in relation to the brand philosophies of selected television channels and also to investigate the pattern of meanings, the interpretivist approach of

research design was very useful to the researcher. It helped the researcher to explore television idents as a subjective phenomenon from the perspectives of both television channel and viewers in the context of visual communication design. The study specifically used the qualitative research method, which is a tenet of the interpretivist research approach.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research was adopted for this study because the study sought to explore the extent to which television idents reflect the brand philosophies of television channels. It was also driven by the quest to understand the visual construction and interpretation of meaning which is common to qualitative research. Bauer and Gaskell (2003) claim that qualitative research is concerned with studying and interpreting “social realities” in a society. Similarly, Gray (2011) contends that qualitative research approach is about gaining a profound, concentrated, and holistic impression of a phenomenon from the perspective of individuals, communities and organizations through real world interactions. Thus, the use of qualitative methods for this study helped the researcher to explore the subjective meanings of television idents from both television channels and audience perspectives.

Rather than a surface description of numerical implications of a population, which is the tenet of quantitative research, qualitative research helped this study to reveal range and patterns of beliefs and feelings and perceptions by analyzing materials such as videos and interview data to understand the use of television idents as channel identity (Gray, 2011). In media text research, qualitative research helps researchers to understand how knowledge, values, ideologies and beliefs are encoded and how media texts

shape the perception and understanding of members of a society (Gillespie & Toynbee, 2006).

Hence, the use of qualitative method for this study enabled the researcher to illicit rich data from participants from their natural settings and to discover their experience and perception about television idents as branding tool for television channels, rather a than computation of numerical data to draw a rigid conclusion.

Library Search Activities

Library search is critical to any research study. In obtaining secondary data for this study, the researcher used the following library and online resources: UEW Library, GTV library, Balm Library, University of Ghana; National Film and Television Institute and online libraries.

Population for the study

Population is the total number of possible object or people that are available for a study (Gray, 2004). Two sets of population form the core population for this study. Firstly, the populations include all free to air television channels in Ghana. Free to channels are channels that do not require monthly subscription to access transmission. There are over 21 free to air terrestrial television channels in Ghana as the time this study was conducted. (See Table 1 for detailed information of population for this study) The second group of population for this study are all television viewers who can access transmission from the over 17 free to air terrestrial television channels in Ghana. Free to air terrestrial channels are the most dominant TV reception

platforms in Ghana, and they cover over 80% of the Ghanaian population (Digital Ghana Report, 2010; Television Report, 2013). Thus, all free to air terrestrial channels and all television viewers who can access free to television channels form the accessible population for this study.

Table 1.

Free to air terrestrial television channels in Ghana.

No	Name and Address Of Company	Brand Name	Coverage Area	Language
1	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC)	GTV	Nationwide	English and other local Ghanaian languages
2	TV3 Network Limited	TV3	Nationwide	English
3	Metropolitan Entertainment Television	METRO TV	Nationwide	English
4	Television Africa Ltd	TV AFRICA	Greater Accra, Eastern, Central, Western and Ashanti	English and other local Ghanaian languages
5	Crystal Radiovision Network Ltd	CRYSTAL TV	Greater Accra and Eastern	English
6	Net 2 TV Limited	NET 2 TV	Greater Accra and Eastern	English
7	Independent TV Limited	TOP TV	Greater Accra	English
8	Viasat Broadcasting Ltd.	Viasat 1	Greater Accra Eastern Central Western Ashanti	English
9	Three Angels	3ABN	Greater Accra	English

10	Integrated Media	N/A	Greater Accra	English
11	Multiple Concepts	GH One	Greater Accra	English
12	Smart Multimedia	Light TV	Greater Accra and Eastern	English
13	Centre for Intercultural Learning Talent and Development, AGORO	Coastal TV	Cape Coast	English and Fante
14	Empire Broadcasting Network	N/A	Greater Accra	
15	K & N Investments Limited	eTV	Greater Accra and Eastern	English
16	U 2 Company Limited	UT TV	Nationwide	Twi
17	Top Television	Top TV	Greater Accra	English
18	Great Kosa Company Ltd.	KANTANKA TV	Greater Accra	Twi
19	The Cardinal Foundation For Distance Learning (Cafdil)	CAFDIL	Central Region	English
20	HBATv& Communications Network	N/A	NA	NA
21	City Television	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source:NCA 2015

Sample

To explore the philosophical underpinnings behind television adverts, the meaning of the dominant visual elements and the design structure, the researcher sampled three top television channels out of the accessible population. These are GTV, TV3 and UTV. According to Gray (2011), a good

sample should be a true representation and reflection of the characteristics of a population. The research sample for this study therefore is a miniature of the larger population, which the researcher believed that it shares the same features and characteristics and runs through the whole population.

According to a research on television rankings in Ghana by Geopoll, from June to August 2014, TV3, UTV and GTV were the best three in terms of coverage and viewership. Again, TV3 and UTV has been adjudged best television brand and popular television channel in Ghana by Premier Brand and Ipos respectively (TV3 Network, 2014; The Chronicle.com.gh, 2014). In addition to being part of the top three television channels in Ghana, GTV has been the oldest television channel with a nationwide coverage in Ghana for over 70 years. Thus, GTV, TV3 and UTV constitute the core of the television channels in Ghana and they represent the population of television channels in Ghana. The study focused on creative units and brand or corporate affairs managers of GTV, UTV and TV3. Respondents from these outfits were sampled because the researcher believed that they could provide rich information for the study. In all, four respondents were sampled from each television channel.

To explore the patterns of meanings presented by the selected idents, the researcher sampled 15 general television viewers for each television channels. Each responded confirmed that they have seen the selected idents for at least a year. Again, to discover, the semiotic implications of the dominant visuals, 3 respondents were sampled for each television channel making a total of 9 respondents. Thus, their responses were very useful in exploring the trends of meanings decoded from the selected idents.

Sampling technique

According to Gray (2004), sampling is critical to the success of every research. This same source explained that sampling is process of selecting representative from the target population. Again, a researcher may not use all the target population and may be time-consuming and capital intensive if sampling is not done. Thus, it is prudent to select a controllable size that represent the larger population.

This study adopts the purposive sampling method in recruiting a controllable sample for this study. Participants for this study were deliberately preselected with benchmarks dictated by the research question and objectives of this study (Patton and Cochran, 2002). Additionally, purposive sampling was adopted for this research because the researcher believed that the sampled “population are a true cross section of the population” (Gray, 2004).

As noted by Gray (2004) and Patton and Cochran (2002), regarding purposive sampling, this study directly approach head of creative units and brand managers of the selected television channels because they are likely to have rich knowledge to respond to the researcher’s questions. Additionally, generally television audiences are the main targets of television ident. Thus the researcher relied on the purposive sampling technique to select a convenient sample size that represents the lager populations. This approach was relevant they provided rich source of data for answering research questions of this study (Patton and Cochran, 2002). The table below shows the total number of respondents sample for this study.

Table 2.

Total Respondents for the study.

Televisio n Channel	Creative Departments	Brand managers	General television audience	Total Respondents
GTV	3	1	15	19
TV3	3	1	15	19
UTV	3	1	15	19
Total	9	3	45	57

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Data Collection instruments for this study

This study adopted interviews, questionnaires, and semiotics as data collection instruments. The multiple data collection approach allowed the researcher to gain an indepth understanding of the use television idents as channel identity. Qualitative research methods allow the use of such multiple data collection instruments in studying multiple cases (Yin, 2003; Creswell, 2013).

Interview

Interviews are ways of inquiring into an issue or phenomena to gain a deeper understanding through questioning and follow up questions. Again, interview is a data collection technique that allows the gathering of data from one person at a time by making use of flexible variables as question to interrogate issues (Curtis and Curtis, 2011). Similarly, Sproull (2002) asserts that interview is a data collection approach that allows an interviewer to question respondents to their opinions, attitudes, values and experiences. Interviews can be face-to-face conversation, telephone interview or via social

media networks. Interviews take the form of conversation, however it is done in a manner that ensure that all data collected are reliable, valid and meet the objectives of what the researcher, rather than reflecting the bias of the researcher, very non-conforming (Patton & Cochran, 2002).

Interview in a qualitative research therefore allows the researcher to investigate issues thoroughly in natural settings. Through interview, the researcher gets the opportunity to understand the participant through mannerisms, facial expressions and body movements. In addition to the answers, these elements give a deeper understanding and allow the researcher to collect rich and deep data.

Question used in interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured depending on the variables under study. Structured interviews consist of the same questions and allow participants to answer the same questions. These types of questions are predetermined and follow a “tightly structured schedule of questioning. On the other hand, Semi structured interviews or focused interviews involve a series of open-ended questions based on the topic areas the researcher wants to cover. The open-ended nature of the questions contextualized the variables under discussions and concurrently created a conducive atmosphere for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss variables of the research questions in more detail (Hancock, 1998).

In answering the research questions the researcher adopted the semi-structured and structured method on interviewing. According to Sproul (2002), apart from eliciting rich responses, semi structured method approach give the researcher the opportunity for probing to further insight and understanding

about the position or views participant. In addition, semi-structured interview allow for clarification of answers and also for the explanation of complex ideas. By using this approach, the researcher was able to collect data through the use of cues, follow up questions. It also enabled the researcher to ask for clarification on answers that were clear.

Questionnaire

The researcher used open-ended questions as part of the data collection tool. Questionnaires were useful in collecting data about stakeholder's opinions on the selected idents. It also enabled the researcher to have respondents to answer the same questions on the subject matter. According to Thomas (2011), questionnaires are written forms of questioning to elicit answers about research case. The researcher used this method because the researcher wanted respondents to answer the same set of questions to determine the meanings they make from the visual of the idents.

Semiotic Analysis

This method of analyzing images was useful to the researcher because it enabled the researcher to critically study the visuals of the idents to understand their semiotic function. According to Rose (2012), semiotic analysis has become a central qualitative method for investigating the meaning of visuals. Unlike content analysis that merely, dwells on quantitative numerical importance, semiotic analysis provides scientific tools for dissecting complex images apart and tracing how meaning are constructed and interpreted in a society.

The context and focus of this study, which sought to explore how meanings are constructed and interpreted through television adverts, makes it appropriate to use semiotic analysis

Data collection Procedure

Interviews

The researcher booked appointments with GTV, TV3 and UTV on different dates through formal letters. Interview and documents search was conducted from December 2014 to February 2015. The interviews were in two sessions. First, interview was conducted with corporate affairs or brand officers, and heads of creative departments of the selected channels. After a brief explanation of the focus, aims and importance of the research, interviewees were encouraged to discuss a number of themes relating to the research questions. Conversation was open-ended and was done in relaxed mood. Each interview lasted between one to two hours per interviewee. The researcher used the semi structured interview approach, which enabled him to follow up with other questions to clarify answers that were not clear.

Questionnaire

The researcher administered questionnaires to 15 respondents for each television advert making total number 45 respondents at the Accra Mall, specifically at the food court where people were in a relaxed mood. After a brief explanation of the focus, aims and importance of the research, the researcher showed the selected adverts to viewers using a tablet device after which viewers answered open-ended questionnaires. Out of the 60 respondents contacted, 45 agreed to see the advert and respond to the questionnaires.

All questionnaire were administered in a relaxed mood. This allowed the participants to express their view on the seen idents.

Semiotic Analysis

The researcher adopted the approach of Otubanjo and Melewar (2007) in conducting collecting data from the television ident through observation. At the first stage, the researcher identified and described the selected television idents. The intention was to give a clear description of the all elements to enhance audience recognition and also to determine the nature of genre. Next, the relation between the sign and the vehicle and the purpose of the analysis was discussed. At the third stage the researcher identified individual signified elements and their importance. Finally, the researcher discussed the signifiers and the signified in the television idents to determined possible connotations in relation to the philosophical underpinnings of television channels.

Types of Data Collected

The researcher collected both primary and secondary data. Data gathered for this study was non-numerical, obtained through interviews, questionnaires, semiotic analysis, observation documents and videos searches. Data collected were in the form of pictures, video recordings as well as writings from field notes and related literature from empirical studies.

Primary Data

Primary data collected by the researcher from GTV, TV3 and UTV and audiences were in the form of field notes, recordings and videos through interviews and document and video search. These data enabled the researcher to draw conclusions from the research findings on the meanings of the

selected TV idents as branding tool and how stakeholders perceive these the television channels through these idents

Secondary Data

The researcher also gathered data from online repositories, journals and from individual authors in the field of television channel branding, television ident, and semiotics. These data helped the researcher to make out what are the gaps and deficiencies and what additional informational needs to be collected. Secondary data also provided bases for comparison for the data collected during data analysis.

Methods of Data Analysis

This study employed both thematic and comparative approaches in analysing the data collected from interviews, questionnaire and documents searches. First, data collected were categorized into themes and interpreted according to relational factors of the subject matter. The same procedure was followed for each television channel taking the objectives of this study into consideration. Next, the researcher conducted critical synthesis of the data to explore meanings from the subjective accounts and interpretations of participants on the use of television idents as a communication strategy. The researcher followed the same approach for all three channels. This enabled the researcher to present and discuss data on each channel and to arrive at the underlying objective of discovering the extent to which television idents reflect the philosophies of the selected television channels.

Next, a comparative analysis was done on the collected data among the three channels following the thematic coded data. This approach helped the researcher to explore patterns, differences and similarities in the use television adverts.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

The thrust of this study is to explore television idents as a brand communication strategy for television channels in Ghana. This chapter presents results and findings from the data collected. Findings on all television channels have been categorized according to themes that emerged from the research. Findings from interview with television channel on the philosophical underpinnings and how such philosophies have been encoded visually through television idents were presented along with snap shots of each television idents. Secondly, findings from questionnaires and semiotic analysis on the pattern of meaning emanating from of the television idents were also presented. Next, analysis and interpretations derived from the findings were presented in relation to the reviewed literature by the researcher.

Philosophical underpinnings of television channels

Ghana Television (GTV)

GTV was established as part of Ghana Broadcasting Corporation on July 31, 1965 when the Ghana Government approved a white paper recommending the establishment of a television network in Ghana. In an address to parliament in 1963, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, tabled a motion for the acceptance of a proposal for the establishment of television service in Ghana. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah stated that the establishment of GTV will be used as a supplement to Ghana's educational programmes. Thus, GTV was tasked to inform and educate Ghanaian people about the world.

Furthermore, GTV has the paramount objective of providing content for all Ghanaians. For many years, GTV enjoyed media monopoly until mid-1990s when two private stations began competing with GTV. Currently GTV is among the top most watched television in Ghana.

Ghana television is structured as the national broadcaster and has the mission of being the most authentic and trustworthy voice of Ghana when it comes to media in Ghana. Additionally, their vision is to be the leading television broadcasting channel in Ghana by providing television contents that will promote the developmental and cultural aspirations of Ghana. The target audiences are the people of Ghana, which include literate, illiterate, children, women, men and rural folks. As a national broadcaster, GTV believes that its mandate is to use “television to inform, educate and entertain the people of Ghana and that includes everyone Ghanaian.”

Furthermore, as a the premier television channel in Ghana and a national broadcaster, GTV shares brand values like nationalism, authenticity, trustworthiness and professionalism. The channel’s operation is guided by the principle of promoting national values and projecting the rich Ghanaian cultural heritage. The current channel slogan was adopted to emphasize the mandate, the vision and the mission of the channel. This was emphasized by the head of creative unit that:

...When we say that we are the most trusted and authentic voice of Ghana, we mean that you can rely and trust the information we are giving you when it comes to education, news and entertainment”

TV3 Television Channel

TV3 began operating as a private television channel on October 1, 1997. But it originally was licensed on August 29, 1996. TV3 received its Certificate of Incorporation under the Companies Code, 1963, (Act 179), as a limited liability company. Additionally the company was granted certificate to commence business on September 19, 1996 due to a merge agreement between the Government of Ghana, Gama Media Systems, Gama Film Company and Sistem Television Malaysia. Furthermore, TV3 was later taken over by Media Prima Berhad of Malaysia in March 2005, when TV3 Malaysia transferred its shareholding in Gama Film Company to it. Finally in September 2011, TV3 was acquired and taken over by Media General Ghana Limited.

Since then, TV3 transmission has grown gradually starting from Greater Accra Region, parts of Central, Eastern and Lower Volta. Coverage was later expanded to the Ashanti Region and Western region from 2000 to 2005. In 2014, Premier Brands Ghana adjudged TV3 the best television brand in Ghana. TV3 programme content covers all aspect of Ghanaian live and it includes a variety of television programs such as drama, reality entertainment shows, sports, current affairs and documentaries. However, English-speaking audiences remain the target for the TV3 channel.

The vision of TV3 is to be the best television channel in Ghana, Africa and beyond. The channel also has the mission to develop, produce and broadcast innovative and quality television content for Ghanaian families. The target audience is categorized into four groups targeting all ages. These are

women, men, young men and women, and children and others. TV3 believes that these groups of audiences are the cores of their target audience.

Again, the channel is positioned as the first and best in news and entertainment for Ghanaian families.

According to an interviewee at TV3, the tagline “Best in news. Best in entertainments” was adopted in 1999 because of an event that TV3 telecast from Takoradi before even GTV was able to telecast it two days after the event. This was significant because former president Jerry John Rawlings was happy for the live and swift telecast of the event on TV3 channel. Since then the slogan has become part of the core philosophies TV3 communications. Additionally, TV3 is built on values like truthfulness, family television, honesty and straightforwardness.

United Television (UTV)

United Television was established on July 27, 2012 by U2 Company limited. The channel was established to focus on Twi speaking viewers. The channel is based on the philosophy that television content must be presented in the local language for many Ghanaians who speak Twi to enjoy. The channel was to move away from the trend where many television channels present television contents mostly in English. UTV covers many regions in Ghana providing family entertainment and news in Twi.

According to an interviewee at UTV, the current slogan “It’s all about you” is a true reflection of the spirit of the channel, which seeks to provide content for the populace. The channel’s vision is to be the best television channel for local Ghanaian families and has a mission of providing quality local content for the local people.

Again, UTV as a brand operates on values such as trust, tradition and truthfulness. The channel brand personality is local Ghanaian family entertainer.

Television Channel philosophies and television idents design

Ghana Television (GTV)

GTV's television ident is the main brand identity and it defines how GTV wants to be perceived by members of the public on television screen. It was designed and produced in-house by the creative department of Ghana television. The purpose is to help the audience to know that they are watching Ghana television. The ident has been in use for the last three years.

At GTV, the creative department explained that the idents is a manifestation of GTV's mandate as a national television. This is expressed through dominant visual elements. The creative department again explained that the dominant visual elements in the ident are shots of Nkrumah Circle, Nkrumah Mausoleum, Markets and Independence Arc. The rest are Oilrigs, Cocoa and Gold, Akosombo dam, Security agencies and the channel (see below Figure 15 – 30).

Snap Shots of GTV Ident



Figure 15 Shots 1.



Figure 16 Shots 2.



Figure 17 Shots 3.



Figure 18 Shots 4.



Figure 19 Shots 5.



Figure 20 Shots 6.



Figure 21 Shots 7.



Figure 22 Shots 8.



Figure 23 Shots 9.



Figure 24 Shots 10.



Figure 25 Shots 11.



Figure 26 Shots 12.



Figure 27 Shots 13.



Figure 28 Shots 14.



Figure 29 Shots 15.



Figure 30 Shots 16

Furthermore, the creative department explained that the shots of Nkrumah circle and Nkrumah Mausoleum signify Dr. Kwame Nkrumah as the first president of Ghana and as such the shot is a reminiscence of the glorious past. The shots of Kaneshie market signify the hardworking Ghanaians and the people of Ghana. The oilrigs, cocoa and gold signify the natural resources of

the nation. The shot of the Akosombo dam is a reflection of our source of energy. Additionally, the shot of securities agencies both on land and at sea represent the nation's readiness to defend herself. Again, interviewees mentioned that Ghanaians as free and peaceful people are expressed with shots of people at beach and other recreational sites. The logo does play a denotative function rather than connotative function according to interviewees at GTV.

In answering a question on the essence of the editing style to the ident, an interviewee at the creative department answered that he shots were aesthetically arranged to communicate the identity of Ghana television. The editing was mainly fast cut and dissolves devoid of effects. According to an interviewee, this was intentionally done to allow the narrative to flow to avoid confusion. Additionally, the editing style was adopted because GTV targets varied audiences. The movement of the red, yellow and green ribbons were used for “aesthetics reasons so that the ident will not look ordinary,” says an interviewee at GTV's creative department.

The tagline “The Authentic and Trusted voice of Ghana” is very key to the whole branding strategy. It was used to summarize all the philosophies that guide the operation of Ghana television. An interviewee believed that this tagline positions GTV better, given the current changes in the television industry in Ghana. Generally, the ident is a sign of nationalism, unity and a projection of national identity. In answering a question on how GTV want to be perceived in terms brand image, interviewee at GTV explained that they want to be perceived as the most trusted source of information in Ghana.

When the researcher asked how the visual elements, techniques, and aesthetic elements augment the branding strategies of the channel, an

interviewee at GTV mentioned that the ident is not strong in terms of branding and this is under discussion at management level to look at a complete branding strategy not only for GTV but also for its affiliate channels. He, however, stated that these visuals are significant because they wanted to showcase Ghana. So they chose pictures that will speak about Ghana at a glance.

Explaining how the ident was designed, an interviewee stated that the idea came from the former director of television. The idea was verbally discussed with one of the designers. Based on the shots that were chosen, the ident was edited to the music in adobe premiere. An interviewee also stated that he personally gave some suggestions to improve on the design. Again, an interviewee answered that the ident is a montage of the various shots of Ghana. The editing is fast cut and very quick. The technique was used because they wanted to show Ghana in quick succession. Finally, when the researcher inquired whether brand manual and creative brief were consulted during designing of the ident, Interviewee conceded that no and that briefs are normally oral. Again interviewee answered that currently GTV does not have a brand manual. But he stated the brand manual is in the pipeline.

TV3 Channel

The creative service unit, which is under brands, manages the soul identity of the TV3 and the image. The unit promotes and protects the brand image of TV3 by designing promos and station idents to create awareness for the channel and its programmes. The ident has been in use for over two years now and serves as the main identity of the channel. It is, thus, played two times

during every programme. The main objective is to help project the brand and let the public know TV3 as the “first in news and best in entertainment”.

Interviewees commented on the purpose of the ident by stating that:

This ident is very important. Without it people will not know the television channel they are watching. And if they like the programme we show they may not know. But when we play the ident it helps them to know that it is TV3.

An interviewee at TV3 identified three key visual elements as the dominant visuals that give identity to the channel. These are Africa map, TV3 logo, lines and dots. Interviewee continued by explaining that the map signifies that we want to go international and become world-class television channel. The highlighted African map means that TV3 is in Africa. The abstract logo shows how important the eye is for information (see Figure 31-39).

Snap Shots of TV3 Ident

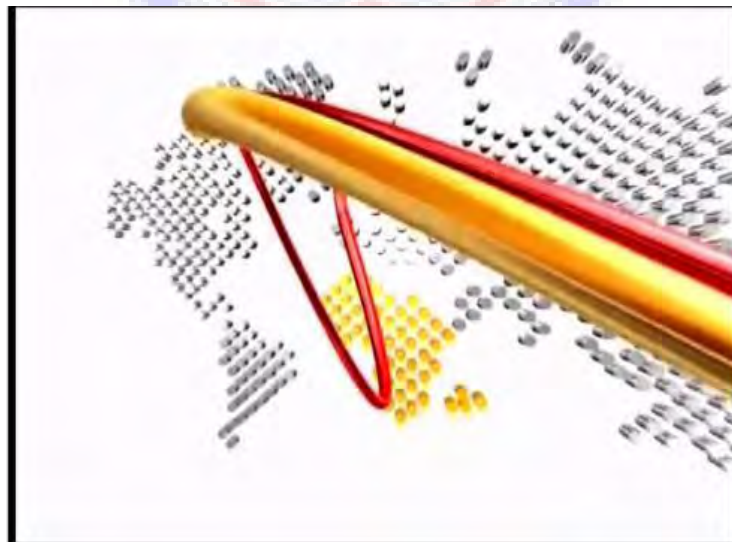


Figure 31 Shots 1.



Figure 32 Shots 2.

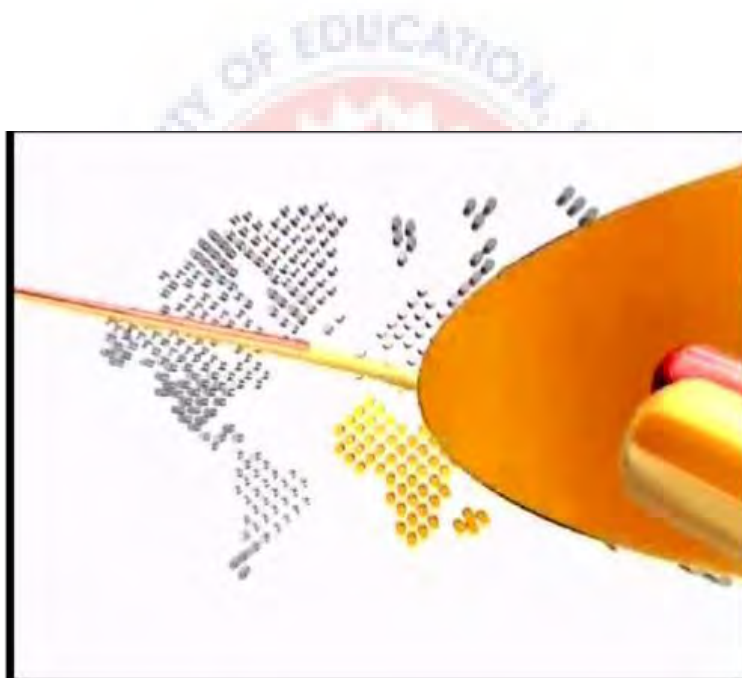


Figure 33 Shots 3

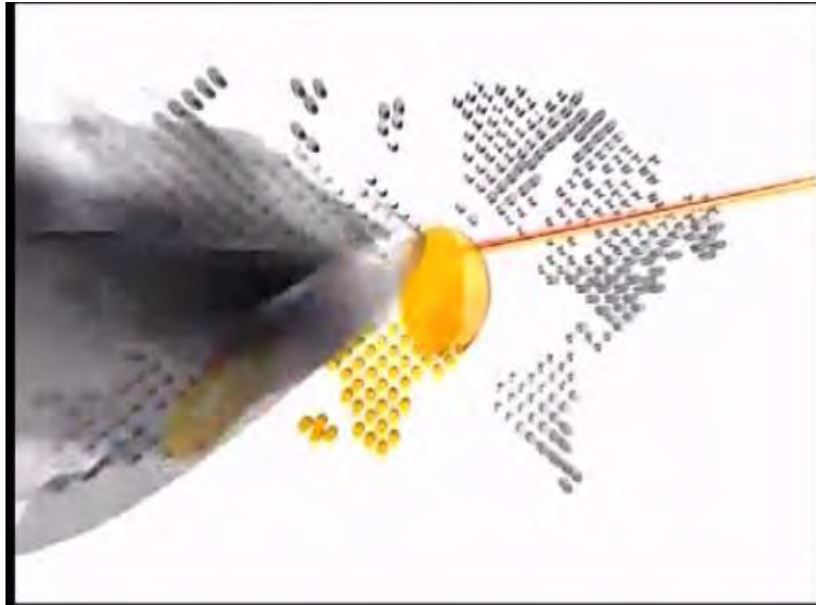


Figure 34 Shots 4.

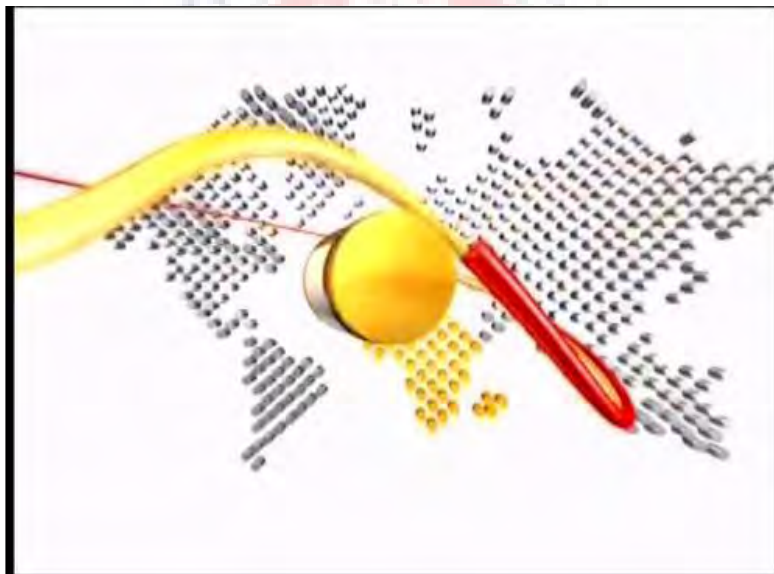


Figure 35 Shots 5.



Figure 36 Shots 6.



Figure 37 Shots 7.

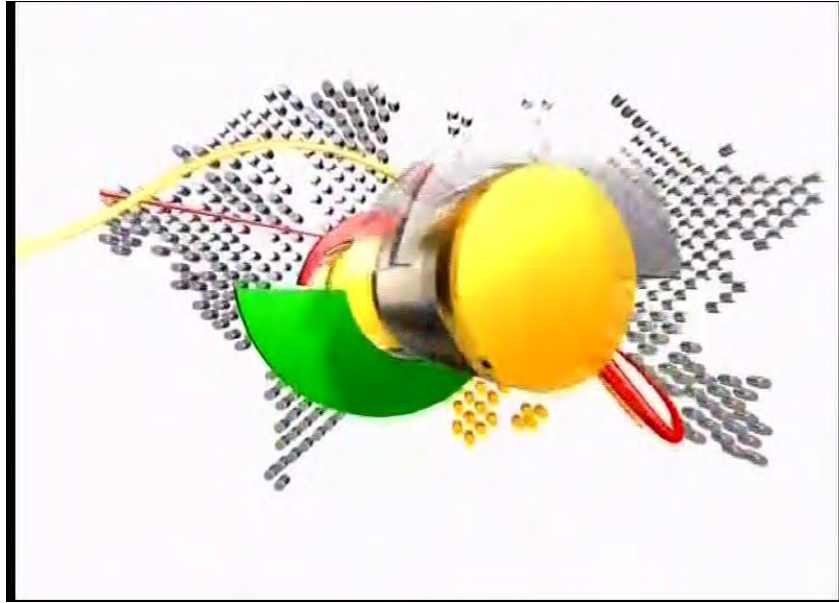


Figure 38 Shots 8.



Figure 39 Shots 9.

When the researcher inquired of the brand philosophies that motivated the use of these elements, an interviewee at the creative department asserted that he does not know much about the corporate philosophies and ideologies.

According to an interviewee, they have a legal department that handles the corporate philosophies and legal issues on TV3. However, he reaffirmed that the ident was designed to promote the TV3 brand to the public so that people will like and patronize their channel.

Again, an interviewee at the creative department of TV3 stated that the idea of the dots and lines was to do something different from what are normally seen on television. The motivation was to show how the creative unit of TV3 could use simple lines and dots to create fine animation to promote the brand. The ident is targeted at the youth and carries the message that TV3 is the first and best in news and entertainment when it comes to family television in Ghana. According to the interviewee at TV3, the technique of 3D animation was chosen because of the people they are trying to attract with the ident. He adds that the trend is animation technology and the youth understand that medium better. They love the 3D animations. Interviewee continued by saying that:

If you have the youth to like your idents and talked about it then it is good. So the idents speaks to the youth. The 3D animation helped us to bring these elements together. It will be difficult to do this with video you see. So we use the 3D animation to project the image of the channel.

Explaining how the ident was designed, an interviewee at the creative department stated that the request came from brands. His unit then brainstormed and came up with some ideas. One person was assigned to produce the ident. The use of creative brief and brand manual is not a common practice. According to an Interviewee at TV3, the nature of the work does not

allow them to use briefs. On the issue of brand manual, interviewee stated he was not sure. But even if they have it will be the head of brands.

United Television (UTV)

At UTV, an interviewee explained the creative section is concerned with the corporate image of the television channel. They produce graphics works for the station and designed corporate identity materials to project the image of UTV. The major way of managing the image of UTV is through the use the generic ident that is played at the beginning and end of each programme. An interviewee at UTV continued that the ident has been in use since the inception of the channel and has remained the main on-screen identity for over three years and also serves as the main identity of the channel. The main purpose of the ident is to identify and remind audience of UTV. An interviewee expressed the intent of the ident this way:

As a new channel we wanted to create something that will create memory in the minds of our listeners and to remind our viewers that they are watching UTV.

UTV channel ident is a 2D animated photo and composited in 3D space with computer generated images. The ident is a long take and single shot with no transitions. There is subtle camera movement from right of screen to left. The dominant colour is green. The shots of trees and leaves move gradually to reveal the UTV logo. According to an interviewee at UTV, the ident is symbolic. He identified the dominant visual elements of the ident as trees, leaves, river and UTV logo. The trees and the leaves stand for freshness and the river stand for serenity. Interviewee at UTV again explained that, the ident signifies the channel as new and fresh and also portrays natural, greenish and the newness

(see Figures 39 - 46). These visual elements were used because the channel was new and they wanted something that signifies newness.

Again, an interviewee stated the he does not know the meaning of UTV logo because he was not at post when it was designed. However, the logo was used to identify the channel. When the researcher asked a question to discover the meaning of camera movement that reveals UTV's logo, an interviewee at UTV answered that it is just for aesthetic reason and it has no special meaning.



Figure 40 Shots 1.



Figure 41 Shots 2.



Figure 42 Shots 3.



Figure 43 Shots 4.



Figure 44 Shots 5.



Figure 45 Shots 6.

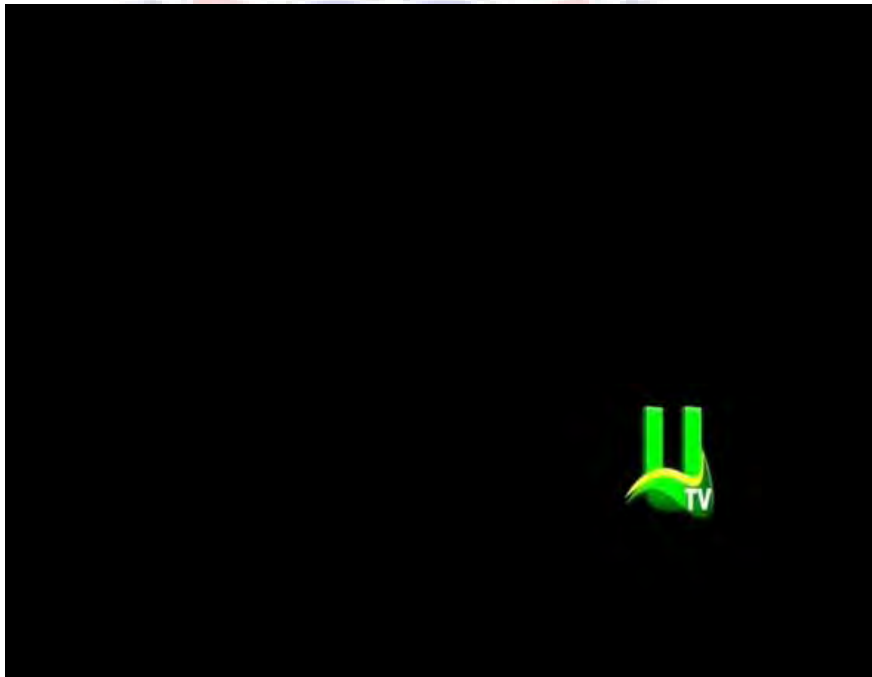


Figure 46 Shots 7.

On the question of what philosophical underpinnings guided the design and production of the current ident of UTV, an interviewee expressed his ignorance of the philosophical underpinnings of UTV by stating that he does not know much about the brand philosophies. However, he stated that they designed the ident just to promote UTV.

Furthermore, the ident is targeted at local Ghanaians who speak Twi. An interviewee emphasized the message and targeted audience of the ident by stating that: We are just drawing their attention to the stations. The message is that UTV is all about the local people. We are there for them and that is how we want our audience to see us.

In explaining how the ident was designed, an interviewee explained that as an artist and an animator and graphic designer he brainstormed for ideas. He later made sketches and started the modelling process using Cinema 4D. Next, the modelled forest was imported into Adobe after effects for compositing. Sound and other elements were added and were shown to the General Manager. The ident was approved as the main identity of the channel after some few corrections were done.

Again, an interviewee at UTV asserted that the techniques used was 3D and they used Cinema 4D to create the forest scene. According to the interviewee, the 3D enabled them to create the forest easily and that animation 3D software makes it possible to create impossible things. Answering a question on the use of creative brief and brand manuals, interviewee answered that he does not know what it is and that they do not have one currently.

Interviewee however, answered that they don't use creative brief and brand manual because they are experienced and have been working for many years without creative briefs and manuals.

Pattern of Meanings

Ghana Television (GTV)

Ghana television ident was described as exciting, informative and very engaging though respondents mentioned that it is very long. All 15 respondents said that the ident describe Ghana at a glance and covers every aspect of Ghana. For many of the respondents it is a short video that "summarizes Ghana within two minutes". Respondents identified the dominant visuals of the ident as the Kwame Nkrumah statues, Castle, Cocoa, Gold and Oil rigs. The rest are beaches, Kwame Nkrumah circle and Kaneshie market, colours of red, yellow and green and GTV logo.

Interviews with general television audiences revealed that the shot of Kwame Nkrumah reminds them of the role Kwame Nkrumah played in leading Ghana to independence. Thus, the shots of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah signify freedom and liberation.

The shots of Gold, Cocoa and Oilrigs connote the richness and abundance of Ghana's natural resources. Others also answered that these shots signify God's blessings on the nation of Ghana. Regarding the shots of Kwame Nkrumah circle and Kaneshie market, respondents mentioned that they get the impression that Ghanaians are hardworking people and are united. Generally, respondents identified the flag of Ghana as being the red, yellow and green colours. However, when the researcher asked if the logo of GTV has any special meaning to them, 10 out of the 15 respondents answered that

there is no special meaning except the fact that it identified GTV as a television channel. All 15 respondents expressed the connotative meanings of the GTV logo. They mentioned words like connection, linkage, association and togetherness.

On the question of how audiences relate the meanings from the ident to GTV as channels, responses from interviewees revealed that GTV ident is seen as promoting Ghana as rich and peaceful nation with hardworking people. It also became evident that some respondents were confused as to whether the ident is promoting Ghana or GTV as a channel. Others also mentioned that they find no connection between the ident and the work of GTV as a channel. According to respondents all the pictures are about various sites in Ghana and Ghanaian people and as such they get the impression that the ident is promoting tourism in Ghana. However, some respondents also claimed that because GTV is a national television, there is a connection between the ident and GTV because the visuals are promoting the national identity as Ghanaians.

When the researcher asked respondents what they want to see to improve the ident, respondents answered GTV should add visuals that will show their work and show how different that are as a national television channels. They mentioned visual such as, the old GTV drum player, journalism symbols, television studios, and cameras.

TV3 Channel

TV3 television ident was described as 3D animation and professional branding. Others described the ident as nice and appealing. Interview with respondents revealed that the most dominant visuals are the world map and the African map, lines and logo with red, yellow and green colours of Ghana. Interaction with the respondents revealed that they don't understand what TV3 ident tries to present, though they generally agreed that the ident identifies TV3 channel. However, respondents mentioned that the map connotes the meaning that TV3 is a world news broadcaster. The map also gives the impression that they cover the whole world in their news presentation. Again, the moving lines signify the travels and movements in getting news stories. Respondents do not ascribe any meaning to the logo.

In responding to a question on what the ident is promoting, respondents answered that the video is promoting TV3 as an international television channel. Generally, TV3 ident was described as a sign that connotes international news broadcasting channel. Respondents suggested that they want see more Ghanaian symbols and pictures that will show what they do and stand for as a channels. They mentioned visuals such as news centers, news reporters, people, and different places of Ghana. The rest are studio shots, the horn blower, and indigenous symbols.

United Television (UTV)

Outcome with Interviews with respondents revealed that, UTV ident is abstract and conceptual. The forest, river and UTV logo were identified as the dominant visual elements. According to respondents the forest signifies, health, nature, tranquility rainforest, preservation, green environment and

national geographic. Again, natural and untapped resources were also used to describe the ident. When respondents were asked to explain the meaning of the ident, respondents answered that the ident is about nature and environments.

In relation to UTV as channel, respondents expressed that the ident signifies UTV as channel concentrating on nature and environments. Again respondent claimed that the video is promoting UTV as channel that promote nature conservation. To improve the ident respondents suggested that UTV should use more visuals that show that they are local television channel in Ghana. They mentioned drums, news equipment local people, landmarks of Ghana and indigenous communication symbols.

Semiotic Implications of the selected television idents

Ghana Television

The ident is one minute, 30 seconds video shots of various landmarks of Ghana. It also includes shots of market scenes, people and workers, security agencies and the military. The purpose is to promote Ghana television as channel to audiences.

In the semiotic analysis, 23 signifiers and corresponding signified were identified. With the shot of the independence arch, it signified the independence of Ghana. Additionally, it also connotes struggle for freedom. Again, the black star that opens the shot also connotes guidance and the leadership role of Ghana in the struggle for total freedom for Africans.

The shot of Nkrumah Circle signified the central business hub of Accra and generated connotations like business, traffic, and central point for travelers.

The analysis also revealed that the shot of legs walking toward camera are signifiers, which signified, going to work, free people and workers. However, the shots also have connotations of congestion, hectic lifestyle of Ghanaian people. Again, the shot of school children in the class with laptops signified computer education and carry the connotations that government of Ghana has made ICT education accessible to basic education school children. The hand of the potter is a sign that creates the concept pot making and poetry. However, a second signification of the shot also connotes skills, hardworking and naturalness.

The shots of forest, waterfalls, and oilrigs, the Volta Lake, cocoa and gold are related signs that signify natural resources and God's blessing. At the connotative level these group of shots give the impression of wealth, hope of prosperity and economic growth. On the other hand, the shot of the Kakum National Park as a signifier in the ident signifies tourism, sightseeing, holiday, and adventure. The shot may connote lifestyle of rich people and pleasure. Furthermore, the shots of the castles and forts are signs that signify colonial presences and authority and have connotations of slavery, struggle, oppression and tourism. The shots of security agencies create the concept of Ghana security. On the connotative level, the shots may connote safety and national security. The shot of cargo ship signified Tema and Takoradi harbours and connote trade, commerce, export and import.

Finally, the statue of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah with the superimposition of GTV logo is signifier. At the level of signified, the statue gives a concept of Ghana's independence. At the connotative level, the statute connotes freedom, leadership, perseverance, and development. The GTV's logo

signified Ghana television as a channel. However, the superimposition in the shot created a third sign, which give impression of a relation between Dr. Kwame Nkrumah statute and Ghana television.

TV3 Channel

TV3 ident is a 10 seconds video of 3D animation of lines, dots and TV3 logo. The lines move across screen superimposed over dots that give impression of a world map. The ident is a single shot in a white background. The map has less motion with African map highlighted with golden colour. The motion lines converge into the TV3 logo and move out of screen. The various parts of the logo settle on screen and form a complete TV3 logo. This ident contains four signifiers with four corresponding signified. First, the world map with the highlighted African map signified international, global coverage and Africa. Collectively, these signs may also connote international news. The second signifier is the line that moves across the screen. This sign may create the impression of movement, direction and guidance. At the connotative level motion line creates the notion of swiftness, dynamism and progress. The third signifier is the combination of dots that create the impression of a map. While this sign may give the concept of proximity and closeness, it may also connote togetherness and creativity. Finally, the logo as signifier identifies TV3 and evokes TV3 as a Ghanaian television channel to mind. It may also bring to mind the tagline “First in News. Best in Entertainment” The sign may also have corresponding connotations such as news, soap operas, and sports.

United Television (UTV)

UTV ident is a single shot video of 12 seconds of a forest scene. It contains trees in the background and a river in foreground. Camera dollies out slowly to reveal UTV logo, which is masked by leaves of trees and plants in the foreground. UTV logo moves to shot and the forest scene fades out into black leaving UTV's logo at the right lower third part of the screen.

Three main signifiers and three corresponding signified were identified in this ident. The first are the trees in the mid-ground and the background. The sign gives a concept of health, afforestation and wild forest. At the connotative level this sign may also evoke health, rich and untapped resource. The second sign identified in this ident is river. It may signify natural resource, fish and water. The sign may also generate connotations like source of life. The third sign is the logo, which signified UTV as television channel.

Discussion

Philosophical underpinnings of television channels in Ghana

The research sought to discover the philosophical underpinnings that drive the operations of the selected television channels. Data collected on GTV, TV3 and UTV indicate that these channels are deeply steeped in philosophies. According to Johnson (2007), television channels are built on ideology or philosophies and are expressed to predefine audiences. Similarly, Blandford and Mcelroy (2009) also claim that television channels have become hubs for cultural and ideological productions.

Findings on GTV suggest that the channel is guided by the philosophy that television must serve national interest and thus the need to supplement

Ghana's educational programmes to inform, educate and entertain the people of Ghana overrides the need for profit making. In a contrast to this, findings from this research suggests that TV3 channel is guided by the philosophy that television must serve the need of specific audience and that must be done with urgency. Again, TV3 channel is motivated by the need of satisfying specific audiences and as such they present what audiences would want to watch. Furthermore, TV3 channel's philosophies are based on purely marketing motivations and goals and not to necessarily promote national agenda. However, findings on UTV suggest that their philosophy is motivated by the need to make profit by meeting specific neglected media audiences that form a core part of the Ghanaian population. Whiles GTV philosophy coerced it to broadcast in many Ghanaian languages apart from English and TV3 focuses partially on English speaking audiences, UTV is solely focuses on Twi speaking audiences.

Thus, these findings also suggest that GTV has a national philosophical disposition and as such use television to serve national and governmental interest, irrespective of differences in the demand or desire of members of the public. TV3 and UTV, on the other hand, have different philosophical views that are based on purely marketing motivations. Thus, while the operation of GTV will be guided by what will be in national interest, TV3 and UTV operations to a large extent will be guided by what will appeal to audiences.

During the analysis of data, it also became evident that the three television channels claimed that their tagline or slogan is a summation of their vision, mission, history and values as television channels. GTV slogan is the expression of a national vision of using television for cultural

development. UTV slogans express their values, vision and mission which seek to provide television content to Ghanaians through local language. Other hand, TV3's slogan was couched from an historical event that may have changed the initial philosophy of the channel. These findings are consistent with literature because according to Johnson (2007) and Jun and Lee (2007) tagline or slogan should express the values, history, mission and vision of a product or an organization. Hence, these findings suggest that the slogans of the selected ident to a large extent reflects their core philosophies.

Meanings of dominant visual and aesthetic elements in relation to channel philosophies

This section sought to explore the meaning of dominant visuals and aesthetic elements used by television channels and to discover the significance of such meaning in communicating television channel' philosophies. Findings on GTV, TV3 and UTV suggest that all three channels considered television idents very important for their communication strategy. Again, the findings indicate that all three channels use their ident as means of identifying their network to their audiences. This practice at GTV, TV3 and UTV are in consistent with the use of television idents. Literature that indicates that television idents are used as onscreen identity by television channels to remind their viewers of the channel they are watching (Johnson, 2007; Meech, 2010; Oba 2011; Brownrigg & Meech 2015). This finding therefore presupposes that the channels are aware of the importance of television idents in television branding.

In spite of these findings, there are other uses of television idents that the research did not discover in his findings on GTV, TV3 and UTV.

According to Grainge (2007), Eastman *et al.* (2006), Johnson (2007) and Meech (2002), apart from the basic and banal function of television idents as on-screen identification strategy for television channels, television idents have evolved into mini stories that seek to create relationship between audiences by playing on emotional appeals. Thus, while findings indicate GTV,

TV3 and UTV are aware of the primary function of television idents, it also clear from the findings that they have not come to appreciate the current trend of television idents in the television industry.

Perhaps the reason for this lacuna in the use of television idents could be traced to the fact that all the television channels claimed that they have in-house design units or departments that handled their channel's brand image. However, findings from this study suggest that most of these designers at these design departments lack a clear understanding of the dynamics of design and communications because they perceived the designing and production of television idents as a purely artistic venture. However, such views does not commensurate with current practices in the designing and production of television idents because current literature indicate the amalgamation of film practice, graphics design practice and marketing (Eastman et al., 2006; Meech, 2010). In view of these findings, it is appears that GTV, TV3 and UTV approach to television branding is inconsistence with industry practice and television branding literature.

Analysis of data collected on the meaning of dominant visual, design structure and the aesthetic elements of GTV, UTV and TV3 idents indicate

inconsistency in creating synergy between channel's philosophies and communication design elements.

Findings on GTV's ident suggest that the visual elements, design structure and channel philosophy as presented through the slogan do not support each other. The visuals suggest nationalism, patriotism and national heritage and present Ghana as one, secure and free people. The logo was used for identification purposes and therefore has no significant meaning to their philosophies apart from the colours that identify the channel with Ghana. GTV rely on their slogan to communicate the core philosophy of the channel as the voice of Ghana by presenting truthful, trustworthy and authentic information, education and entertainment to all Ghanaians. Thus, while the visuals and the design element communicate Ghana's identity, the slogan communicates the core identity of Ghana television as the voice of Ghana. The finding proves this assertion that the reasons for selecting such visuals were motivated by the need to communicate the national identity rather than the identity of the channel.

Similarly, findings on UTV's ident indicate that the visual elements are symbolic. However, there is a disconnection between the elements of the ident. The dominant visuals have been presented as freshness and newness. The logo was used to identify the channel. However, the slogan typifies UTV as the channel that is focused on the local Ghanaians. Again, the decision to use 3D modelling and animation were not selected to support the core identity of the channel. The researcher found that the 3D technique was used because of its popularity, availability and convenience. The logo was used for identification purpose.

Thus, while the philosophy state that they serve Twi speaking audiences that have been neglected by other channels, the visual element, and design structure indicate that there is a disconnection between the ident and their philosophy.

Also, findings on TV3 ident suggest the channel's philosophies were not the motivating factor behind the choice and selection of visual images, techniques and style. The selections of the dominant visuals were motivated by the trend in the design. Thus the visual elements of the idents are very abstract. Again, data collected on the reason for the techniques and style of presentation suggests that they were not selected to augment the theme and core philosophies of the channel. Moreover, the designing of the ident was driven by technology and form rather than a communication of channel philosophies. Thus, while their core philosophy suggest that they are targeting average Ghanaian families, the abstract nature of the visuals, the techniques and design structure of the ident did not reflect the kind of audiences they want to attract.

Comparatively, findings indicate a trend between GTV, TV3 and UTV idents. Visual and aesthetic elements are used to communicate an arbitrary message, which is exciting and engaging and may not necessarily express the core philosophies clearly. On the other hand, slogans were used to restate the philosophy of the channel clearly. This practices suggest that GTV, TV3 and UTV may be identified with their idents because of consistent exposure to viewers and not because they clearly express the philosophies of the channels.

While this approach has emerged among the three channels as indicated by data, it is imperative to note that such approach may not work for television because it contradicts the nature of television as visual rather than textual (Mirzoeff, 2009). Again, such practices contrast related literature in corporate

and communication design and best practices on television idents design. As indicated by literature all elements used in communication brand messages should present a unified concept and support one main theme that clearly communicate core brand or organizational philosophies. Again, slogan or tagline cannot be used in isolation because they are communication design elements that must marshal together to present messages to audiences in a clearly and simple approach (Krasner, 2008; Eastman et al., 2006; (Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006).

Additionally, findings from this study suggest that channels did not consider the audiences as determinants in the production process. As indicated by data, the reasons behind the selection of visuals, choice of techniques and styles rarely reflect the physiognomies of the target audiences they hope attracting. In contrast to this, literature suggests that for a good corporate image to be achieved there must be coherence in the visual element used in relation to the corporate personality and must be presented in way that target audience can easily respond to. Again, in designing of corporate identity element like television idents to promote television channels image, design and production decisions should also be influenced by a good understanding of how a company is perceived by its stakeholders. This can be achieved if the targeted audience are considered (Hynes, 2009; Roper & Fill, 2012).

However, findings on GTV ident indicate that the choice of editing style and the presentation technique adopted were influenced by the nature of audiences they hope to attract. The editing was simple cuts and dissolves as transition devoid of many effects which makes it easy to concentrate on the visuals. According to Krasner (2008), techniques, form and style of

presentation should augment the core message of television adverts. Evidently, differences in literacy level of the heterogeneous nature of GTV's audiences are core reason behind such editing and presentation style, which is devoid of effects and visual effects. This indicates that the audiences were considered as part of the design process.

Patterns of meanings in relation to Television Channel Philosophies

This section sought to explore the patterns of meanings from the selected adverts and how they relate to the core philosophies of GTV, TV3 and UTV. Analysis of data collected through interviews of television viewers indicate that GTV advert is expressing Ghana as a free and secure country with rich cultural heritage. Again, the advert is expressing national identity, tourism, freedom, liberation, and awareness of the Ghanaian identity and a brief summary of Ghana. Thus, it emerged that audience were confused as they could not link the pattern of meanings from the advert to the core identity to GTV as a channel because analysis of their responses suggest that they perceived the advert as promoting Ghana. This finding is further proved by the list of visuals that were suggested by audiences as visuals they want to see to enable them relate the advert to the core philosophies of the channel. In view of this, the advert does not clearly express GTV philosophies to audiences.

Additionally, semiotic analysis indicates that the advert is a complex sign with symbolic expression that promote Ghana as a state rather the identity of GTV. Findings indicate that the advert produces four major signified or concepts about Ghana. Firstly, Ghana's cultural and political heritage, second, Ghana's natural resource. The people of Ghana and their socio cultural lifestyle are presented as the third signified concept. Fourthly, the advert also generated

meanings that signified the security and safety of the state of Ghana and her people. These findings suggest that the dominant visual elements were used to symbolize GTV as the “visual voice” of Ghana. Thus, the ident is highly symbolic sign that connotes the promotion of Ghana rather than GTV.

Similarly, data collected through interviews on TV3 ident indicate that their ident is perceived as professional. However, it emerged that the ident is promoting TV3 as an international news television channel. Findings from the semiotic analysis indicate that the four signified connotes the meaning of a dynamic and progressive international news broadcasting channel that is based in Africa. Thus, while the visual elements and the design structure at denotative level identify TV3 because of association and long exposure to the ident as media text, at the connotative level the ident connotes a news broadcasting channel. This finding contrast their philosophy that they want to be perceived as first in news and best in entertainment channel when it comes to family television.

In reference to UTV, data collected from both interviews and semiotic analysis indicates that there is inconsistency between that visual element used and the core channel philosophy. Findings from interview indicated that UTV ident is describe as channel concerned with wildlife programmes. This was due to the dominant visual of the wild forest.

Thus the channel is identified by the iconic nature of the visual. However, the symbolic meanings of the iconic signs do not relate the core philosophies of the channel.

Comparatively, the findings on all three channels suggest that the television idents are sending contrasting or wrong messages to audiences. The

reason for these finding as confirmed by literature is that communication designer's inability to select and use inappropriate visual cues to communicate their corporate identity to their audiences will send conflicting signals and will require extra efforts to rectify such wrong signals (Hynes 2009). Again, these findings also accentuate some key theories in semiotics literature which suggest that signs are arbitrary and that a sign only becomes meaningful only if it conforms to the experiences of the viewer because signs require that the viewer taps into cultural codes and conventions to provide meanings (Berger, 2004; Gillespie & Toynbee, 2006). Thus, while designers of the television idents from all three channels claimed sending a particular message to audiences, results imply that the visuals used did not serve the purpose of projecting the channel philosophies because audience indicated different implications.

Again, aligning the findings on all three channels to the five process of semiosis for brand identity design proposed by Ried (2004), shows interesting results. Ried (2004), suggests five processes of semiosis that affects how meanings are constructed and interpreted in brand identity design. At the top of the semiosis process is the sign producer. Beneath the sign producer is a sign, which is the summation of a signifier and signified values.

The sign is received at the fourth level and decoded by the stakeholders. The process becomes successful at the fifth stage if the interpretations of audiences of the complex signs commensurate with the encoded meanings at level two.

Comparatively, findings from this study confirm the four levels of semiosis by Reid (2004). However, the fifth level was not confirmed by this study because audience's response and results from semiotic analysis produced abnormal readings from the signs.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This study sought to explore the extent to which television idents, which have become very popular in Ghana in recent times reflect the core philosophies of television channels. This chapter deals with summary of findings and general conclusions reached in the study. The section also includes recommendations and directions for future research.

Summary

Television branding has become increasingly important practice in the Ghanaian television landscape in recent times. A close observation of Ghanaian television idents from both experts and laymen point of view suggest that the visual elements do not reflect channel philosophy. Besides, the design structure and aesthetic contents seem to lack the expected commensurability with the core philosophies of television channels in Ghana.

Thus, the aim for this study was to investigate the extent to which TV idents express the brand philosophies of GTV, TV3 and UTV. The study was driven by three core objectives. First is to explore the philosophical underpinnings of selected television idents in Ghana. Second, to investigate what meanings are encoded through television idents in relation to the philosophical underpinnings of the selected channels. Third is to explore the patterns of meanings emanating from the dominant visual elements of the selected television idents; and finally, to investigate the semiotic implications of the ident visuals in relation to channel philosophies.

The study argued that television idents are more visual and that their construction and deconstruction are visually biased rather than textual and rest in the realms of visual communication concepts (Mirzoeff, 1999; Botha 2000). Thus, the research reviewed related literature on concepts such as television branding, branding, television idents and design elements. Others are best design practice for television idents, semiotic theory and film aesthetics.

The study was conceptualized under the interpretivist worldview of research. Thus, the study was driven by the view that knowledge, truth and reality regarding the construction and deconstruction of meanings are subjective. In view of this, the qualitative research approach was employed to investigate motives, meanings, reasons, and other subjective experiences of television channels, visual communicators and audiences regarding the use television idents as brand identity (Anderson et al., 2014).

Using the purposive sampling technique, the researcher sampled GTV, TV3 and UTV, which form the three top television channels out of the accessible population of 21 free to air television channels in Ghana. The aim was to explore the philosophical underpinnings behind television idents and to investigate what meanings are encoded through dominant visual elements and design structure of television idents in relation to their respective philosophies. Again, to explore the patterns of meanings presented by the selected idents, the researcher sampled 15 general television viewers for each television channels. Additionally, semiotic analysis was conducted with 10 visual communication designers to discover semiotic function of dominant visual, design structure and aesthetic elements of each television ident.

Generally, the study used 65 respondents to collect data through interviews, questionnaires, and semiotics. Additionally, the study used document search and Internet archives to collect secondary data.

The study revealed that the selected channels have strong philosophies and these are reflected through their vision, mission history and values. The research revealed that GTV's channels philosophies are based on the belief that television must serve the national interest of educating Ghanaians through television and that they have the mandate to serve the interest of all Ghanaians. For TV3 their channel is motivated by the philosophy that television must serve the needs and desire of specific audiences. Again they also believed that as a commercial service they are first and best in providing news and entertainment for Ghanaian families. Furthermore, the study also revealed that UTV philosophies are based on the belief that television content must be presented in the local languages to Ghanaians. Thus, they focus on Twi speaking language and target audience are all Twi-speaking Ghanaians. Though there are differences in their philosophies and the nature of audiences they claimed to target, this study has discovered that all three channels share a common philosophy of using television to inform, educate and entertain Ghanaians.

The popularity of television and its importance in brand communication for television channels was confirmed as all three channels affirmed that their idents are very important to the management of their identity on screen. Again, all have in-house creative units or departments that manage their corporate image through the use of idents, thus all the idents that were used for this study were designed in-house by the channel.

Through this study, it also became evident that the three television channels claimed that their tagline or slogan is a summation of their vision, mission, history and values as television channels. GTV slogan is the expression of a national vision of using television for cultural development.

UTV slogan is the expression of their values, vision and missions which sought to provide television content for Ghanaians through local language. TV3's slogan was couched from an historical event that may have changed the initial philosophy of the channel. Despite these positive revelations that the selected television channels are deeply steeped in philosophies as being important to television idents, the study revealed that there is a disconnection between the visual element, the techniques and styles of presentation of idents and the philosophical underpinnings of the channel. Visual elements, design structure and aesthetic were not consciously selected to express clearly the philosophies of the channel, though there were some attempts to use the slogans to express the philosophies.

This study has revealed that visual and aesthetic elements were used to communicate arbitrary messages, which are exciting, engaging and conceptual. However, the visual do not necessarily express the core philosophies clearly. It emerged that GTV ident generated the meanings that the channel is presenting and promoting Ghana as a free and secure country with rich cultural heritage. Again, its ident is expressing national identity, tourism, freedom, liberation, and awareness of the Ghanaian identity and a brief summary of Ghana.

However, the study discovered a trend among GTV, TV3, and UTV where channels rely solely on slogans or taglines to present their philosophy as a television channel. Thus, the idents are identified with the channel not

because of meanings but due to long exposure of the idents to audiences. Finally, this study has also revealed that meanings generated by the visual element of the ident do not match with the channel's intended message.

Major Findings

Objective one was to explore the philosophical underpinnings of some selected channel in terms of television channel branding. Reviewed literature on television channel branding, corporate branding strongly suggests that like any other institution, television channels must be deeply steeped in brand philosophies since these philosophies will define how they operate as a channel (Johnson, 2007; Meech, 2010). The study has brought to light that the selected channels have unique philosophies that underpin their operation. GTV operation is based in the philosophy that television must serve national interest of informing and education Ghanaians to improve the social cultural developments of Ghanaians. Thus they want to be perceived as the authentic and trustworthy voice of Ghana. TV3 network is driven by the philosophy that must serve meet the need, desire and aspiration of specific audiences. Additionally, TV3 believe that their channel is the first and best when it comes to news and entertainment television in Ghana. Finally, UTV network is built on the philosophy that local Ghanaian people must enjoy television content in their local language. Thus, UTV wants to be perceived as a television channel serving the needs of local Ghanaians especially Twi speaking audiences.

Objective two sought to investigate what meanings are encoded through dominant visual design structure and aesthetic elements in relation to their channel's brand philosophies. Reviewed literature posits that visual

element, aesthetic element and design should selected to overtly express a clear message that simply present the core philosophies of television channels. Again, slogan or tagline cannot be used in isolation, but rather must augment visual elements to present unified thought about core message or philosophy. Furthermore, the television idents have evolved into sophisticated mini commercial stories sharing production values like television commercials (Grainge, 2007) Eastman et al., 2006; Johnson, 2007; Meech, 2002). This study has revealed that the meanings encoded through the visual elements by the selected television channels do not clearly and simply express their core philosophies. The design structure and aesthetic elements were not motivated by the need to express the core philosophy of the selected channels. However, channels dwell on their slogans and tagline to connect the express their philosophies.

Objective three sought to explore the pattern of meanings and the semiotic functions of dominant visual elements of the selected idents in relation to the channels philosophies. Reviewed literature states that communication is successful if audiences' deconstruction of corporate identity signs commensurate the intended message from sign producers. Again, literature state that when inappropriate visual sign are used to communicate or send visual messages to audiences, it results in sending conflicting signals to audience due to the arbitrariness and the signification process of signs (Ried 2004; Hynes, 2009). The study revealed that the meanings emanating from the ident and the semiotic functions of the dominant visual elements do match the intended messages from the television channels. Again, the study brought to light that signs selected for

the selected idents were inappropriate because there were aberrant response from audiences and the semiotic analysis conducted on the meaning of the visual elements.

Conclusions

It can be adequately concluded from the study that television channels in Ghana are philosophical. Their philosophical dispositions are the reflections of their history, beliefs, visions, missions and values. GTV perceives itself as the national broadcaster and believes that television must serve the national interest of education and socio-cultural development. In contrast, TV3 and UTV philosophies are based on the need to serve the needs and interest of specific Ghanaian audiences at a premium. TV3 perceived herself as the best in news and best in entertainment for when it comes to family television. UTV believes that television content must be consumed by local people in their own local language. Thus, they perceive their channel as the channel for the local people.

However, designers at GTV, TV3 and UTV lacked knowledge of their own channel's philosophies. This is due to the lack of brand manual that stipulates the philosophies of the channels how such philosophies should guide communications.

In spite of the fact that Ghanaian television channels are philosophical, the study however has revealed that the dominant visual elements, design structure and aesthetic contents of the selected idents do not commensurate with the philosophical underpinnings of the broadcast channels, as exemplified in GTV, TV3 and UTV idents. Instead, Channels

use their slogans to present their philosophies rather than visually explaining such slogans with visuals through cinematic language.

Again, it can be concluded from the findings that, all three channels do not follow good creative design practices. This is evident in the absence of brand manual or visual language and creative design brief and tools. Additionally, design decisions and choices were motivated by trend, technology, intuitions and feelings rather than brand communication needs.

Finally, the study concludes that, the selected idents were not successful in communicating channel philosophies because there was aberrant reading from audiences. Generally, the study concludes that there is a disconnection between the philosophical underpinnings and the visual elements of the television idents used by television channels as on screen brand communication.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions as aligned to the objectives of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

Though this study has revealed the philosophical underpinnings of selected television channels in Ghana, there is need for television channels to have television channel brand manual or guide. Brand manual or guide is very important because it will clearly stipulate the brand's philosophies and its applications in communications. Consequently, designers could follow the brand manual as a guide when designing and producing television idents. This will help designers to create synergy between idents and core philosophies.

Again, GTV could improve on its ident by focusing on visuals that express the slogan "Authentic and trustworthy voice of Ghana" rather than

relying on text to communicate channel's philosophies. Similarly, TV3 could rework on its ident and select visuals that will reflect the nature of audiences they are targeting. Because they are targeting families, their ident must appeal to all members of the family. Rather than using abstract visuals, TV3 could use iconic signs that will simply express how they try to be the first in news and best in entertainment. On the other hand, UTV could express its philosophy through simple visuals that resonate with their target audiences. By the nature of their audience, they need to avoid conceptual and symbolic signs. Iconic signs that will explain their position as a channel will be useful because most of their target audience may not be able to decode high symbols and indexical signs.

Designers at GTV, TV3 and UTV could adopt good creative design processes for television commercials since literature has shown that television idents and television commercials share common production values. Thus, creative design brief must be applied rather than solely relying on intuition and feelings.

Additionally, designers at GTV, TV3 and UTV could be helped to acquire knowledge on semiotics and the functions of signs on communication through workshops, seminars and short courses provided by some reputable schools in Ghana. This will help them to communicate effectively with visual signs.

Furthermore, television channels could reorganize their creative units or department to reflect current creative design departments because literature shows that television idents and television commercials share the

same production processes. This will enable creative departments to produce television idents that will reflect brand philosophies.

Moreover, further research on visual communication strategies for producing television idents as a brand identity for television channels could be conducted to augment the practice of television branding in Ghana.



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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Part One

1. Why was this channel established?
2. What is your focus?
3. Who are your target audience?
4. What philosophy/ideology drives your operation as a television channel?
5. What are your values
6. What is your mission and vision
7. Is there any significant history behind your philosophy
8. In terms branding what is your channel's position
9. How do your philosophies affect your operations as a television channel

Part Two

10. How long have been using this ident?
11. What are the dominant elements? What are the functions of the aesthetics content
12. What are the meaning behind these elements? Logo, video, slogan
13. What is the technique and how does it support your concept.
14. What is the significance of the editing style to the ident
15. What is the relationship between these elements and your corporate personality or ideology
16. How does this ident project your channel's corporate personality/ideology
17. Was it created in house or subcontracted?
18. What factors were considered before the production?
19. What processes or stages did you go through during the designing of this ident?

20. How do you apply your channel's brand manual?
21. Are there any corporate ideologies that dictate how your channel idents should be designed?
22. What kind of message are you sending through these idents?
23. How do you want to be perceived by the use of these elements?
24. Have you received any response from audiences on these idents?

Part Three

1. Can you identify this video?
2. What is it about?
3. What visual elements do you remember seeing?
4. What meaning(s) do you get from these visuals?
5. What does the slogan mean to you?
6. Why do you think they play this video?
7. What do think is the purpose? (Peter, 2014)
8. What do you like about this video? Please explain briefly
9. Anything you don't like about this video? Please explain briefly
10. What visuals do you want to see to improve the ident?
11. What is your general impression about this video

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am Emmanuel Joel Ayu Nyarko, M. Phil (Arts and Culture) final year student of University of Education, Winneba. I am writing a thesis on the topic “Television Branding in Ghana: A Critical Study of Television Idents”

Please I will be grateful if you could respond to the following questions.

I assure you of the confidentiality of any information provided.

Can you identify this video?

.....
.....

What visual elements do you remember seeing?

.....
.....

What meaning do you get from these pictures

.....

What does the slogan mean to you?

.....

Why do you think they play this video?

.....
.....

What do think is the purpose

.....
.....

Is there a relation between the slogan and the pictures? Yes or No.

If yes explain

.....
.....

What do you like about this video? Please explain briefly

.....
.....

What is your general impression about this video

.....
.....

What do you think can be done to improve the video?

.....
.....



SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

Based on the Method of Otubanjo and Melewar (2007)

Stage 1: identify and describe the text.

Stage 2: examine the nature of the Ident and its message

Stage 3: discuss the relationship between signs and the form of the ident

Stage 4: discuss the reasons or the importance of the signs

Stage 5: Discuss the signifiers and the signified and their possible connotations

