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PORTRAYAL OF MOTHERS IN TV COMMERCIALS: CASE STUDY OF NIGERIAN INDOMIE NOODLES CAMPAIGN

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Abstract:

Against the backdrop that we are immersed in a media society and we are inundated with media messages including television commercials from the cradle to the grave, it is important to understand, interpret and critique the meanings that are circulated. Advertisements are produced with a mission to influence what audiences consume, but more than the products promoted in the manifest messages, audiences are led to construe deeper meanings which may influence how they see themselves. This is a way by which society power relations in society is maintained. In this chapter the portrayal of mothers in Nigerian TV commercials using the “Mama you too good” Indomie Noodles television campaign aired on Nigerian television stations 2009 – 2013 will be examined. Examining television commercials from an industrializing society offers an opportunity to revisit roles played by mothers in contemporary times – how far are these from restrictive traditional roles? Specifically, it focuses on roles prescribed for mothers in the domestic and public domains. Using critical analysis of the texts, it examines how the adverts construct mothers, their roles, and what cultural associations have informed these? How empowering are these roles? To what extent do they represent the desired shift for womanhood? These offer some indication of latent messages being offered to a young generation of viewers. The discussion is set against the third millennium development goal which is aimed at achieving gender equality and women empowerment by 2015.

Key Words: *Television advertisement, socialization, role assignment, women empowerment, public/private dichotomy*