Towards a Ghanian Identity in Commerce: Promoting Cultural Identity Through Packaging

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Abstract
This article is part of an ongoing research on Ghanaian cultural identity in commerce which is aimed at promoting Ghanaian cultural identity through packaging design. The goal is to use packaging design as an intervention to stem the depletion of sources of cultural identities by designing package labels which depict the Ghanaian cultural identity. Cultural-Oriented design model was used as a guide for designing labels for an orange juice product. Research instruments such as informal interviews and questionnaires were employed to solicit the opinion and reaction of consumers. The study found out that consumers are more likely to purchase culturally oriented designed products over ordinary products when appropriate features are inculcated into the design.

Keywords: Globalization, Cultural identity, Ghanaian identity, Culture-oriented design.

Introduction
In the 21st century world, almost every sphere of life, culture, country and race is radically affected by globalization, with the enhanced processes of exchanging goods and services from all parts of the world. This has brought about the interdependency of countries, and thus, the homogenization of cultures. As a result, the developed countries benefit from globalization, while it is overwhelmingly disadvantageous to the less developed countries. For example, because of the political and social instability of African countries, it has become rather difficult for them to develop and preserve their culture (Ibrahim, 2013). However, these activities of globalization, though seen as modern, do not in any way guarantee the preservation, protection and promotion of cultural diversity (UNESCO, 2009). According to researchers, the latest phase of globalization, which was triggered in the 1980’s up to date is characterized by Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) fuelling growth in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), technology and transport innovations, global media, and branding (Brooks, Weatherston, & Wilkinson, 2011).

The branding characteristic aspect of this phase of globalization, which involves packaging of cultural goods and services from one country to another, is the interest and focus of this study. The process of branding products for consumption at any level and for any purpose strongly requires the use of packaging, which serves as a sole vehicle of carrying vital information about the product and its origin to the consumer, inducing desire for the product and to sell it (Agariya, Johari, Sharma, Chandraul, & Singh, 2012). However, globalization has managed to create an existing international consumer taste where people of different countries and cultures
Design as solution

According to Mrak (2000), the process of Globalization is a forceful one, and is highly unlikely to be reversed. He therefore advocates for interventions for countries who find themselves in a global economy with free trade of goods and services and improvement of communication and skills among others. Further, he states that in spite of the significant differences among countries in the world, “there are convincing arguments that call each region to design its own strategy on how to cope with the challenges of globalization” (Mrak, 2000).

Papanek (2005) also suggests that design is a possible tool for addressing such socio-cultural issues, in that, the scope of design has progressed steadily into new areas. Its social benefits and commitments to improving human life have paved the way towards a new kind of practice, which is geared towards socially responsible behaviour. This new standpoint in design has confronted and challenged designers to be more responsible and has caused changes in society. It is also necessary for designers to recognize that people are cultural beings and the process of integrating cultural factors in their practice should be emphasized. Design is firmly embedded in a user’s culture: it does not take place in vacuum (Margolin, 2002).

Packaging Design as a tool for Intervention

It has been discussed and agreed by researchers that design serves as a filter through which much of our communication is disseminated. Graphic designers find themselves in the unique position of being gatekeepers of information as well as providing a mirror that reflects contemporary culture (Moalosi, Popovic, & Hickling-Hudson, 2007). One aspect of design that can enormously confront the situation is the art of packaging design, which is one of the direct ways in which people come into contact with design. Moalosi (2007) argues that consumers tend to buy goods that depict their social practices, emotions and values among others (Moalosi, 2007) products which are localized are more appealing as compared to globalized products. Designers as a result of inadequate research have not yet been in the position of intentionally inculcate cultural factors into design as they have done with physical and cognitive human factors successfully. A theory is advanced by Jensen (1999). Now this implies that in order to successfully confront globalization designers must intentionally inculcate cultural elements into packaging of products. This then may become a strong and direct way of confronting the negative effects of globalization and restoring the identity of Ghana with regard to its locally made products.

Culture, they say, is enormously important; yet there is little, if not no effort, that is being put into the preservation or the promotion of the Ghanaian culture in the face of the radical activities of globalization. Therefore, this study sets out to find out ways to promote and preserve the Ghanaian culture through packaging design.
Research Framework
Cultural-oriented design model

Key
Socio-cultural factors
SPF – Social practice factors
MTF – Material factors
Integration phase
MDT – Mediation
SNF – Signification
Cherishable culturally orientated products
NDC – Novel design concepts
PAC – Product acceptance

Fig. 1 Model used for the research

Objectives
• Identify various cultural elements and art forms that can be used as a representation of the Ghanaian culture and integrate the art forms and cultural elements into developing Ghanaian looking packages
• Find out consumers’ perception of the design.

Research questions
• What are the available art forms or cultural elements that can be used as a representation of Ghana?
• How can the art forms and cultural elements be integrated into the designing of cultural oriented packages?
• What will be the reaction of consumers towards packages with Ghanaian cultural elements?

Methodology
The researcher employed the pragmatist approach, also known as mixed method research approach in investigating the findings. The mixed method is basically characterised by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data to explain certain occurrences (Creswell, 2009). This was used in order to gain a deeper and more authentic understanding of the findings.

Population of the study
The population of the study was consumer students and workers of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). KNUST is situated in Kumasi, in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It has a student population of 23,591. Shoppers at the Ababio Express supermarket were specifically used as the sample for the study.

Sampling
The sample for the study was chosen using the purposive sampling for the interview participants and simple random sampling method was used for the questionnaire respondents. 13 consumers were interviewed out of the population. 120 students were also sampled randomly for the questionnaire.

The sample for the interview was done at the Ababio Express supermarket, at the Jubilee Mall, KNUST, where the interviews were conducted. Consumers who came to buy orange juice were chosen as sample.

**Data collection methods**

**Interview**: Informal interviews were conducted using approved protocol. The interview was used to establish a deeper relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee, and also to gain trust in order to get a deeper level of knowledge.

**Questionnaire**: Self-designed questionnaires were administered to be able to understand the reaction of respondents. Out of 200 questionnaires 120 were returned. A 5-point Likert scale was used for the questionnaire, with 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. The numerical data from the questionnaire was used to authenticate the interview data and support the analysis.

**Data analysis**

Thematic analysis was used for the interview data. The information was organized by first transcribing the recorded data, and then breaking them into reasonable parts and looking for themes or patterns that exist between responses. The questionnaire data was analysed using SPSS (16) software.

**Results**

1. To meet objective one, “Identify various cultural elements and art forms that can be used as a representation of the Ghanaian culture and integrate the art forms and cultural elements into developing Ghanaian looking package,” a mini survey was conducted based on aesthetical appeal. The survey resulted in the selection of the Asafo flag and Sirigu wall paintings as the most appealing ones.

The researcher then used Adobe Illustrator software to mediate the two art forms into a label design for an orange juice product as appears in Fig.2.
2. Objective two was answered using the analysis of the interviews and questionnaire data. The information retrieved from the informal interviews and questionnaire data was categorized under central themes using an inductive research approach of analysing data.

(a) Awareness of cultural oriented products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table the researcher sort to understand the knowledge of participants on the appearance of made in Ghana products that are commonly known, whether they look Ghanaian or have any cultural reference. This was to help the researcher to know if there are any culturally oriented designed products on the market.

(i) The necessity of inculcating cultural identity into packaging

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>27.5</td>
<td>88.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>97.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3. Branding an orange juice package with Ghanaian cultural elements will promote culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>76.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In tables 4.2 and 4.3, the researcher intended to understand the implications of inculcating culture into the designing of packaging. This is to enable the researcher to understand the importance of why culture should be employed in the designing of packages. From the Tables above, respondents agree that branding packages with cultural elements has the ability to both promote culture and sales. This is in agreement with literature. Some longitudinal studies in the area of culture posit that the purchasing activities of consumers can directly be linked to their cultural affiliation (Moalosi, 2007) products which are localized are more appealing as compared to globalized products. Designers as a result of inadequate research have not yet been in the position of intentionally inculcate cultural factors into design as they have done with physical and cognitive human factors successfully. A theory is advanced by Jensen (1999). It also shows that products which are localized are more likely to be more appealing than internationalised products. This also has the advantage of sustaining culture.

(i) What informs their purchasing decision

Table 4.4: I buy because of the origin of the product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7: Price is a major reason for my purchasing choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In tables 4.4 – 4.77, the reasons why participants purchase products were explored. The researcher intended to identify whether cultural familiarity is a reason for purchasing rather than other factors such as price of the product. This was to allow the researcher to determine whether cultural-oriented design has the capacity of increasing sales or not. Considering the factors above, one major reason for purchasing is familiarity of product. 77.5% of respondents indicated that they buy because of familiarity. Therefore, it can be deduced that the more people become familiar with a product they more they gain trust in purchasing it. Thus, proper branding is important in influencing the decision of buyers (N. Novemsky et al, 2007).
(b) Culturally oriented designed orange juice label (intervention)

These sets of questions were solely based on the orange juice product that was designed as an intervention. The researcher wanted to find out:

(i) Whether participants identify and accept the product as Ghanaian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.8. The label on the orange juice looks more Ghanaian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 4.8 the researcher sort to find out the Ghanaian looking appeal of the label. Participants were asked questions that would determine whether the label looks Ghanaian enough to them, or whether it looks African in general. The table shows that respondents agree with the fact that the label looks Ghanaian. At least, 55% of the respondents agree that it looks Ghanaian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.11. I am familiar with the illustrations on the label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In tables 4.11 and 4.12, the ability of participants to relate, that is their being able to understand the label on the product, was examined. The results depict that participants have the ability to react positively to the cultural oriented design. Majority of respondents forming a percentage of 62.5 can at least relate with the design even though they may not have seen the symbols/illustrations before. This agrees with moalosi’s assertion that consumption practices are not only economical but cultural as well.

**Discussion of Interview Results**

The following themes emerged from the interview data. They are discussed in comparison with the questionnaire data.
Cultural Preservation and Promotion

Most participants thought that giving a product a local name will go a long way to promote culture. They also iterated that giving a product a local name makes it friendlier, safer and familiar for consumers. In other words, consumers are able to identify with it. Some of their views included the following comments:

“English products have English on them, German products have German on them, so local language should be written on it.”

“I think Twi is the commonest language in Ghana so then if there is a little bit of some Twi aside the “Ekutu” because I mean foreigners can write “Ekutu” the Chinese, for instance. So a little bit of Twi will also make people know it’s Ghanaian.”

From the parameters of the above comments by participants, it can be deduced that vernacular use in packaging design is key to preserving as well as promoting culture. This phenomenon, specifically tends to be important to the safeguarding of local language as it is a major component of culture. In UNESCO’s 2009 report, it is said that vernacular is seen as being specifically at risk, apparently from the ongoing expansion of the English language, and also from the spread of other languages such as Arabic, Hindi, Spanish and Swahili (UNESCO, 2009). This confirms the importance of the use of vernacular in packaging in a country that has lost her cultural identity.

This notion can be related to the localization campaign method which was adopted by the Coca Cola Company. The campaign, which was based on self-expression and sharing in an emotional way made use of popular names of the local dialect of particular cultures by directly writing them on the products. The campaign achieved greater success levels among many countries (Hepburn, n.d.; “No Title,” 2014). This phenomenon can also be linked to a comment made by a participant that, “people will not feel comfortable trying something they don’t understand.”

In other words, when products carry with them cultural meanings, it makes it more comfortable and meaningful for customers to purchase, simply because they can relate with it.

Comparing this to the questionnaire, when participants were asked whether branding a product with Ghanaian cultural elements will promote culture, 92 out of 120 respondents, making 76.8% of the total number of respondents agreed. A comparison of the two results reveals a strong correlation between the responses from the interview which indicated that giving a product a local name will promote the Ghanaian culture.

Design Elements that give a Ghanaian/African Looking Impression

Although it appears design has not yet gained widespread objective acceptance in some parts of the world (Heskett, 2002), especially in Ghana, its subjective acceptance is quite present. In the essence of design shot up as a concern and a requirement for purchasing. Meaning?????

Considering the preference of participants for culturally oriented products, some of the issues most of them raised are categorised under aesthetics which is in a broader sense the theme of design. Even though participants were not designers, most of them were expecting the aesthetics of the product to be the first point of attraction. Some participants remarked:
“When I see the bottle, like this bottle, is catchy, I would definitely buy it. You see if you see fandango for the first time and if you see this one for the first time you would definitely pick this one first. Yeah. Me, for instance if I see this and Fandango there is no way I would pick Fandango.”

”... it’s cool, it’s really nice why do you think I stopped? (Bursts into laughter) no, seriously I was walking past right? Yeah it’s cool. Are you serious, so then where is your outlet?”

During the interviews, participants opined that what makes them feel that the product is Ghanaian is the use of Geometric and irregular or organic shapes in the illustrations. Some participants specifically mentioned that seeing zigzags, irregular shapes and curves gives them an African idea or impression. Some of their comments included:

“The zigzag makes it African”, “Zigzag makes it look Ghanaian”, “A lot of curves makes it look Ghanaian”, and “Zigzag represents a lot in South Africa.”

The geometric shapes and curves are able to suggest or give a Ghanaian/African impression when applied well in design. This idea of geometric shapes might be compared to the art of Cubism, which is mainly characterized by the complex abstractions of the human figure and geometric shapes. According to researchers, the gurus of Cubism such as Pablo Picasso and the likes were influenced by African art which was transported into the western countries as a result of colonization, suggesting that African art existed in its cubic forms before the Cubism movement commenced. This suggests that the phenomenon of Cubism can be employed in packaging design to enhance the creation of an African or Ghanaian identity in commerce since its origins are purely African. The art of carving in Ghana is one of the areas where cubism is highly depicted. Even though it seems tourists are attracted to Ghanaian carvings for their aesthetic qualities, in indigenous Ghanaian society it is also valued, but for its utilitarian purposes (Boateng, 2016). This, however does not mean that aesthetics should not be the key reasons for inculcating African art forms into packaging design. Rather, it is accepted among researchers that for a particular art form to be popularised it must first be appealing. This is consistent with literature. It also implies that in pursuing a Ghanaian identity in commerce, aesthetic or creativity must be considered over functionality. This argument is supported by Boateng (2016) in his discussions on wood carving in Ghana:

The more creative one becomes the more vocal and attractive the productions become… The interesting aspect of the carving industry is that it is gradually dissipating itself from that static poise which has characterized the profession since time immemorial. A new era has dawned on the profession where creativity signifies the key to success. (Boateng, 2016)

The researcher agrees with the consistency of this in literature in the sense that one would not necessarily know and appreciate the meaning of a symbol used in any context unless it is intentionally explained, yet its aesthetics could be appreciated by anyone in any context. That is to say the meaning of a symbol is subjective while its aesthetical values are purely objective.
This knowledge also emerged from the questionnaire data, showing a strong correlation between the interviews and the questionnaire when the researcher inquired about how well participants can relate with the design. While 10% or the respondents disagreed, 62% at least agreed that they are able to relate with the design and are attracted to it. One may ask, “On what basis?” This could be deduced from the idea that since participants may not understand the meanings or may not know the origin of the illustrations it is only by aesthetics that they can appreciate the products. Participants were also asked whether the product looks Ghanaian. 55% at least agreed that it looks Ghanaian, while 23% were indifferent to it, and 21% disagreed. This then proves the fact that the product looks Ghanaian.

Turning now to the experimental evidence on the quantitative data, a substantial number of respondents, making 60.8% agreed that illustrations on the orange juice label looks more African, while 55% of the total number of respondents also felt that the label rather looks Ghanaian. This however, does not indicate a discrepancy between the two answers. It rather affirms Gyekye’s (1987) essay on African philosophical thought in which it was reported that Africans have common, if not the same, symbols that are the same but may have different meanings altogether (Gyekye, 1987).

**Benefits of Culture-Oriented Design**

“The measure of a civilisation is the strength of its culture, and this is personified in the signification of its cultural identity and cultural objects (Carlson & Richards, 2011) which is in a
ger a state of flux and rapid change. There appears no time to allow for new forms of culture to grow, to

One of the research questions was:

What will be the reaction of consumers towards packages with Ghanaian cultural elements?

During the interviews, most participants thought that inculcating culture into product design will be a way to **promote sales, promote industries, and improve tourism**. These are discussed as follows:

**Promotion of sales:** It was found out that participants who were not retailers or traders are concerned about increasing sales. They explained that when cultural elements are included in designing products, it makes it easy for consumers to identify with it since it attracts them. Their personal reasons which were very significant to this research were that people are now becoming more conscious of “Africanizing” products, and that is what is trending. The participants explained that trends are what lead to increase in patronage, therefore if designers are able to culturally identify products it will be a way of setting a trend, which will lead to sales promotion. This phenomenon could be supported by Moalosi’s statement as discussed in the introduction that:

> Consumption practices are cultural phenomena and not simply economic phenomena. This is because the consumption practices always tend to have an identity value as well as a function value.
(Dant, 1999) as cited by (Moalosi, 2007) products which are localized are more appealing as compared to globalized products. Designers as a result of inadequate research have not yet been in the position of intentionally inculcate cultural factors into design as they have done with physical and cognitive human factors successfully.

A theory is advanced by Jensen (1999). This statement explains the attraction of consumers to a culturally oriented design. It suggests that the identity value in consumption practices is as equally important as the functional value. It also suggests that even though consumers purchase (in most cases) for functional reasons, it is the identity factor that may lead to purchase, rather than the functional factor.

Combing the evaluation of the notions of participants’ and Moalosi’s statement, it can be concluded that in commerce, inculcating culture (that is identity value) into design supersedes functional value as it leads to promotion of sales. Apparently, the idea of sales promotion is what matters most to every business company or producing company but not necessarily the functional needs of consumers. This can be well understood by Adam Smith’s popular quote:

**Promote industries:** Participants opined that the inculcation of cultural elements into designing of products will benefit industries as well. Since cultural oriented design has the capacity to increase sales it will go a long way to expand the industries.

**Tourism:** Some participants suggested that inculcating culture into product design will benefit industries in Ghana. For example, one participant indicated that:

*To promote the industry and then to also help growth because if it’s a made in Ghana product and the label is depicting foreign culture it’s kind of you are lying. And with the symbols of the drink I think it will also help to promote it because what I know about tourists that come to Ghana is that when they see the symbols of the products and all that, they are really attracted to it. You see they really purchase the beads and all those things because of the symbols on them. So, I think those being on it will give a little boost.*

However, these benefits cannot be arrived at without satisfying the principles of good design. Consumers ultimately iterated that they will buy a product if it looks good to them. Therefore, aesthetics must highly be considered when making cultural-oriented design.

**Theme 4 Emotional Factors**

In Moalosi (2007) discussion on consumption, he explains that people buy specific products to symbolise their personalities and identities. Others purchase out of prestige or self-esteem when appropriate features are inculcated into the product design (Moalosi, 2007) products which are localized are more appealing as compared to globalized products. Designers as a result of inadequate research have not yet been in the position of intentionally inculcate cultural factors into design as they have done with physical and cognitive human factors successfully.

A theory is advanced by Jensen (1999). This notion is elaborated as follows:

*Consumption practices are cultural phenomena and not simply economic phenomena. This is because the consumption practices always tend to have an identity value as well as a functional value.*

(Dant, 1999) as cited by (Moalosi, 2007) products which are localized are more appealing as
compared to globalized products. Designers as a result of inadequate research have not yet been in the position of intentionally inculcate cultural factors into design as they have done with physical and cognitive human factors successfully.

This becomes a highly emotional issue as the consumption behaviour of people is based on their identity, or prestige.

To find out whether consumers’ emotional needs such as self-esteem, personal identities and prestige have been met, interviews were conducted. It was observed from the interview that the label of the orange juice appealed to the participants because they could identify with the illustrations. They indicated their appreciation of the illustration on the label and their emotional connection with the entire design when they were asked the first question, “What is your impression about the product?” Answers given included comments such as:

“Oh, I like it”, “It’s nice”, “It’s cool”, really nice”, “Why do you think I stopped?”

Even though these comments do not necessarily capture their emotional expressions, their gestures which were observed as they gave their comments spoke even louder than their words. Observation of gestures are supported by researchers and considered as very important in qualitative enquiries. This is because they are “very useful in overcoming discrepancies between what people say and what they actually do and it might help you to uncover behaviour which the participants themselves may not be aware of” (Patton & Cochran, 2002).

Some participants laughed and nodded their head as they interacted with the researcher to know more about the product so that they could make purchases. Others took the product in their hand as they turned it round over and over again with smiles. It was also expected that as they only entered the shop to purchase particular items and leave, they would not give the researcher much attention for interaction, but rather they stay a while after the interview and ask further questions. Apart from that some consumers would just pick the product and go to the counter to pay. This indicates that the consumers accept the design of the label and are able to relate with it emotionally.

**Conclusion**

This study confirmed that generally, the purchasing activities of Ghanaians are as a result of cultural affiliation and not simply economic activity. That is to say, people buy products to symbolise their cultural identities. This confirms the fact that Ghanaians are more likely to buy products that look African rather than exotic, even though they may not be able to understand the meaning of the illustrations or symbols used. The results of this investigations also showed that made in Ghana products do not have “Ghanaian looking appeal” or do not have Ghanaian cultural identity so as to allow the preservation and promotion of the Ghanaian culture.

“Lack of culture means what it has always meant: ignoble civilization and therefore imminent downfall.”

Frank Lloyd Wright
The relevance of cultural identity is clearly supported by this study as it was found out that inculcating culture into packaging design ensures the preservation and promotion of culture and its protection against the radical effects of globalization. However, it ultimately serves as a unique and authentic contribution to the global culture.

References


Keith D. Denton, (1997),”Down with diversity (at least some of it): a case for cultural identity”, Empowerment in Organizations, Vol. 5 Iss 4 pp. 170 - 175


