



EXAMINATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RE-BRANDING CAMPAIGN AND ITS EFFECT ON THE RIVER STATE PEOPLE

Amadi, Richard Nlemany Ph.D

Department of Mass Communication, Rivers State University,
Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt

Abstract

Nation branding have continued to be a universally accepted concept among citizens of the world. Government of developed and developing nations have continued to adopt it as a strategy to promote global perception of their nation. Various government embacked on various branding and rebranding policies to enhance the perception of Nigeria as a country. This study examined the Federal Government re-branding campaign and its effect on the river state people. The specific objectives of the study were to evaluate the extent to which things have improved consequent upon the rebranding initiative and campaigns and analyses the appropriateness of media strategies adopted by the campaigners with a view to finding out the most significant in rebranding related campaigns. Survey research method was adopted in the study among 386 population of Rivers State. Structured questionnaire was used to obtain data utilized in the study and presented in tables. Chi-quare was used to test the study hypotheses. The result of the study shows things have not improved significantly consequent upon the rebranding initiative and campaigns (calculated value (5.1204) > critical value (9.488). Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, while the alternate hypothesis was rejected. The study also shows that the media strategies adopted by the campaigners have not been appropriate and most significant in rebranding related campaigns (calculated value (1.1217) is less than the critical value 7.815). It was recommended that the mass media owners and practitioners must take such future campaign as their social responsibility, agenda setting, and cultural normative functions. They can make Nigeria a better society for us and in the eyes of the international community. This is the only index that can catapult us into achieving the vision 20:2020.

Keywords: Nation branding, Re-Branding Campaign Effectiveness, River State

Introduction

Nation branding have continued to be a universally accepted concept among citizens of the world. Government of developed and developing nations continue to adopt it as a strategy to promote global perception of their nation. Nation branding is the branding of a country, and it can either attract or dispel tourists. It brings about improve economy, increases country competitive advantage and project a positive image of a country. As mentioned by Woo (2009) branding bridges the perception gap between the brand identity projected by the country and brand image (perceived by the rest of the world). In Singapore, Woo (2009) reported its branding activities in enforcing economic development with target on increasing tourism. South Africa, Wales, Spain, Colombia, and Ireland have succeeded in attracting foreign Direct Investments and tourists to their countries as a result of carefully managed country branding programmes. In Nigeria, however, branding was adopted as a means to improve the global perception of the nation and spur economic development. Country branding has become inevitable following the ever-growing globalization of business investment and the ferocious nature of the competition among places to attract employing companies, to host major sporting or cultural events, or to become centres for tourism (Miller, 1997).

Historically, Nigeria government have often been concerned with the perception of it citizens and the nation at large. Various branding and rebranding activities in form of policies have been carried to facilities a more positive perception of the country. In March, 1984 the then Military head of state president Mohamadu Buhari initiated the War Against Indiscipline (WAI), with a focus to instill public morality, discipline or social-order, civic responsibility and promote nationalism. In similar spirit, Mass Mobilization for Self-Reliance, Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) was introduced to foster support for the transitional programme of the government. It was a platform for educating the citizens about the political processes, mobilization of people to participate in elections, political debates and inculcating attitude toward patronage of locally made goods and Nigerian products.

Similarly, the National Orientation Agency (NOA) was established in August 23, 1993 to also tackle same problems like the MAMSER. Dissatisfied with the battered image of Nigeria in Diaspora, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in an attempt to redeem and improve the country's image also launched "Heart of Africa Project" in April 27, 2005 in a determined effort to improve the nation's image locally. The then Minister of Information and Communication, Mr. Frank Nweke (Jnr.) at the launch lamented that, "Nigeria has over the years been unfairly stigmatized and associated with

negative attribute by the international community”. He pointed out that “it adversely affected every facet of our lives, economy, dignity as a people and relations with other countries”. Recently, Late President Umaru Yar’Adua, intensified the effort to minimize the negative image of the country in March, 2009 by unveiling the country’s new branding initiative. The Campaign, “Nigeria-Good People, Great Nation”, which replaces the failed “Heart of Africa Project”. At the Launch, Late President Yar’Adua contended that the campaign was a genuine one to re-orientate Nigerians towards believing in themselves and change people’s perception of the country, both locally and internationally.

The launching of the Campaign, “Nigeria-Good People, Great Nation” was highly welcomed in the spirit that it will enhance the nation positive perception locally and globally. Akunyili (2009) revealed that the idea of re-branding Nigeria, however, is to re-orientate citizens and erase the wrong impression foreigners have about the country. To achieve these, Dora proposed an all-embracing approach involving the government, Nigerians, the media, foreign partners and all those who meant well for Nigeria and Nigerians. National and international mass media was adopted as a prominent strategy to advance the campaign. Mass media according to Defleur and Dennis (1991, p. 45), is a process in which professional communicator use media to disseminate messages widely, rapidly and continuously to arouse intended message to large and diverse audience in an attempt to influence them in variety of ways. The media serves as the “watch dog” of the society as they help in setting agenda, promoting culture, debate, mobilizes, and crusade for a wide range of development campaigns such as the Nigerian Re-branding project. Okunna, (1999, p.117) notes that the mass media encourages and ginger people to achieve the goals of society by promoting such goals in the media and stimulating the aspirations and activities of people towards achieving such goals.

No doubt, the campaign has been on through various communication media especially in Rivers State. River State within the past few decades have been notoriously known as a kingdom of recklessly and embezzlement of public funds with impunity. More so, the State between 2003 and 2007 witnessed high spate of cultism, hostage takings, kidnappings, political assassinations, murder, and closure of many companies coupled with myriad of people migrating to nearby States to take refuge. This thereby necessitated the aggressive drive of the campaign in the state. However, the extent to which the campaign have impacted the attitude and economy of the state has remained widely unknown, as such a need for the assessment of the federal government re-branding campaign and its effect on the river state people

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine federal government re-branding campaign and its effect on the river state people. The specific objectives of the study were to

1. To evaluate the extent to which things have improved consequent upon the rebranding initiative and campaigns
2. To analyses the appropriateness of media strategies adopted by the campaigners with a view to finding out the most significant in rebranding related campaigns

Research Question

This following research questions have been framed to serve as roadmaps, based on the research objectives:

- 1 To what extent have things improved consequent upon the rebranding initiative and campaigns?
- 2 To what extent have the media strategies adopted by the campaigners appropriate and most significant in rebranding related campaigns?

Research Hypotheses

The need to make the study statistically empirical has informed the formulation of testable hypotheses. The essence is to statistically check the relationship or variance between the frequencies to be observed and expected. They are hereunder stated.

1. Ho: Things have not improved significantly consequent upon the rebranding initiative and campaigns.
2. Ho: The media strategies adopted by the campaigners have not been appropriate and most significant in rebranding related campaigns.

Review of Related Literature

The Concept of Nation Branding

Compared to products, services and corporate branding, Nation branding is defined as the process whereby a country actively seeks to create a unique and competitive identity for itself, with the aim of positioning the country internally and internationally as a good destination for trade, tourism and investments (Nworah, 2005, p.2). Countries may be regarded as “products” in the sense that they provide labour, land, premises and industrial infrastructures to businesses (Stewart, 1996, p. 10); while offering housing, shopping, leisure and other amenities, and a social *milieu* to residents,

(Barke and Harrop, 1994, p. 45). Branding an area can help differentiate it from other places and hence greatly facilitate the promotion of its place product offer. The astute branding of a locality will highlight to outsiders its meaning in terms of its “core benefits, style and culture” (Louro and Cunha, 2001, p. 860) and (critically) will assist potential stakeholders (such as investors, residents or tourists) to identify the sources of place products relevant to their needs (Ryder, 2000, p.8). Thus, the branding of an area can give it a substantial competitive edge.

The branding of entire cities has been common for many years now (West, 1997, p. 10). The Brand imagery involved seeks to reflect a place’s aspirations and to link the locality as a whole with common attributes, benefits, relationships, programs and values attached to various products and services offered within the area (Keller, 1999, p. 8). Each component of the brand image should possess a rational and/or emotional relevance to a particular constituency and combine with all the other components to provide a total brand experience (Braune, 2000, p. 10). West (1997, p. 11) avers that if it is done effectively, country re-branding will attract investors and visitors, appeal to government officials, engender civic pride, and conspicuously distinguish a place from competing locations. Place re-branding exercises might be implemented to revive a pre-existing but outdated place image in order to make it more relevant to a target market (Hedberg, 2001, p. 15), or in recognition of the occurrence of fundamental alterations in the character of an area, or to communicate to potential stakeholders a change in the activities undertaken within the region.

2.2 Government’s Past Efforts to Launder Nigeria’s Image and Re-Orientate Nigerians

The status of a nation both at home and abroad is a direct function of the orientation of its citizenry as manifested in their attitudinal dispositions, social mores and values. Prior and immediately after independence, Nigeria was believed to be a relatively orderly, humane and value-based society as family bonds were strong and individuals were more conscious of their responsibilities and obligations to the society.

However, the oil boom of the 1970s opened the floodgate to various dimensions of social vices, like corruption, avarice, selfishness, unbridled materialism, etc which have virtually assumed the status of national culture. The implication of all these negative traits was the enthronement of a society on the verge of degeneration and virtual disintegration. It is in an attempt to reverse this ugly trend that past successive Nigeria governments initiated series of reform programmes to reposition the image of the country and re-orientate her citizens. These reform programmes range from Ethnical Revolution, War Against Indiscipline (WAI), Mass Mobilization for Social Justice, Self Reliance and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), the Heart of Africa Project to the current Rebranding campaign programme.

2.2.1 War Against Indiscipline (WAI)

This reform programme was introduced by Buhari/Idiagbon regime (1984 – 1985). The War Against Indiscipline was predicated on curbing official excesses of our political leaders and their followers. The WAI was launched in several phases and each phase addressed a particular form of indiscipline plaguing the Nigeria society. The War Against Indiscipline and Corruption was initiated to eradicate bribery and corruption, abuse of public office and resources, lawlessness, ineptitude, unpatriotism, greed, graft and the desire to reap where one did not sow. The courageous and gallant soldiers of WAI dissipated much of their energies in waging relentless war against laziness, drunkenness and idleness, favoritism, mediocrity, cheating, disorderliness, dishonesty, fighting and quarrelling in public, drug trafficking, gambling and swindling.

The essence of focusing each phase of WAI to a particular segment of the Nigerian population was based on the understanding that indiscipline had afflicted diverse segments of the Nigeria society. The gallant soldiers of WAI made frantic effort to liberate officers and men of uniformed forces, contractors, teachers, farmers, lawyers, doctors, engineers, artisans, labourers, market men and women etc., from indiscipline and corruption. The WAI brigade was established as a supportive outfit for the enforcement of the tenets of War Against Indiscipline and Corruption in May 1985. The organization was aimed at instilling discipline in the citizenry and facilitating the inculcation of the spirit of nationalism and patriotism, respect for revered traditions and culture, constituted authorities and so on and so forth. Few months after its launching, WAI sensitized Nigerians against any form of indiscipline.

The alertness of WAI commanders and soldiers was clearly demonstrated by the usual query ‘WAI’ (pronounced as why) each time any individual, irrespective of his status exhibited any act of indiscipline. Indeed, with deep sense of commitment and devotion displayed by the prosecutors of WAI reform programme, honesty, hard work, patriotism, patience, orderliness, meritocracy, cleanliness, fairness, justice, accountability and dignity became the order of the day. However, the traitor in the WAI army betrayed the huge successes already recorded by the reform programme. Thus, on August 27, 1985, Ibrahim Babangida overthrew the Buhari/Idiagbon regime and became the new Head of State.

2.2.2 The Ethical Revolution

The Federal Government under President Shehu Shagari launched the programme in (1979-1983) to re-orient Nigerians to toe the path of moral rectitude. The preamble of the manifesto of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) stress categorically in PART 1 Section 1: “Nigeria today is a country where too many things do not work as they should. Our development schemes have not improved the quality of life as much as they should... yet we have planned and re-planned. We

have probed and re-probed. We have reformed and reformed. But at the end of it all, contentment still eludes us.... The NPN is out to make Nigeria work; to make the nation great and to give everybody a chance”.

The preamble of the NPN manifesto went into some details to stipulate the steps the party proposes to take so as to achieve this necessary but awesome task, including the proposal in sub section (VI) which states that the “Nigeria of NPN will be: (VI) a country where the general awareness and patriotic commitment of the citizens will be enhanced through adequate and sound education based on high moral principles and indigenous African values”. Part II Section XI, under Law and Order, acknowledges that “Lawlessness, disorderliness, indiscipline and crime pose serious problems to the majority of decent and law abiding citizens.

The greatest social and economic problem facing this nation today is the break-down in the National Ethic: Morals, morale, discipline, work ethic, social responsibility and general civility. Today, an alarming analogue of Gresham’s Law in economics is actively in operation for the social decay of this nation. As bad money drives out good but good money cannot drive out bad under Gresham’s Law, so are the activities of the crooks, cheats, smugglers and anti-social members of our community making life so unbearable for the helpless good citizens that the rate of the latter’s conversion to the anti-social side of the equation is now overwhelming. In a publication titled “The mission of the NPN”, put together by the Special Adviser to the President on Political Affairs, Hon. Dr. Chuba Okadigbo, this tripartite mission of the NPN, that is (a) to make Nigeria work (b) to make the nation great and (c) to give everybody a chance, was re-emphasized as “the wellsprings, the major pre-occupation of the NPN, as far as its first term in office (1979 – 1983) is concerned.

The Nigerian Ethical Revolution is predicated on the maxim that in order to make Nigerians work, we must take specific measures: institutional, legislative and executive to repair the worsening breakdown in our National Ethic: work ethic, morals, general civility and social discipline. This problem has grown increasingly worse in the last five decades ago. The problem at the moment assumes the proportions of a national emergency, in which there is a serious decline in morals, waning discipline and rising propensity for heinous crimes and anti-social behavior. This reform programme did not usher in the much anticipated change in the attitudinal disposition of the leaders and the led as the country at this period witnessed high incidence of political instability, corruption, fraud, squander-mania, nepotism, tribalism and a host of other negative social vices. In a nutshell, the noble objectives of ethical revolution sunk into oblivions as the social maladies the programme was meant to eradicate increasingly manifested in virtually every sectors of the Nigeria economy. This gross ineptitudeness and corrupt practices of our civilian leaders led to the military incursion into politics in Nigeria.

2.2.3: Mass Mobilization For Social Justice, Self-Reliance and Economic Recovery (MAMSER)

This reform programme was initiated and masterminded by General Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993). In fact, Babangida's administration declared its intention to continue to prosecute WAI but with a shift in strategy. In place of what the regime considered a coercive approach of his predecessor, it opted for the persuasive mode of instilling discipline in the Nigerian society. On July, 1986, the IBB administration launched as a component of the conceptualized National Orientation Movement (NOM), the New Direction of WAI with three themes: Patriotism and Economic Recovery. Through the campaign, the then military regime had hoped to enthrone a society that would provide the conducive atmosphere for the attainment of its fundamental objectives of economic reconstruction, social justice and self reliance. NOM came into existence from the emergence of the new direction of WAI. It must be highlighted at this juncture, that one of the enduring legacies of the crusade is the monthly Environmental Sanitation exercise.

In July 1987, the national moral crusade moved a step further with the birth of MAMSER. The programme was designed to galvanize and re-orientate Nigerians to confront "with renewed faith and re-invigorated vision, the challenge of taking this nation to the greatness she deserves". By 1993, government realized the need to streamline the nation's machinery for the enthronement of a more disciplined, morally conscious society. It was in this regard that the National Orientation Agency (NOA) was established. The new agency absorbed MAMSER, WAI/NOM as well as the Public Enlightenment Department of the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture.

As specified in Decree No. 31 of 1987, which established the Directorate, the key functions of the Directorate are to;

- Establish an appropriate framework for the positive mobilization and education of all Nigerians towards economic recovery and the development of a new social and political order.
- Awaken the consciousness of all categories of Nigerians to their rights and obligations of citizens of Nigeria;
- Inculcate in all Nigerians the value and spirit of civil responsibility, commitment to societal justice and economic self-reliance through mobilization and harnessing of their energies and natural resources into productive use;
- Sensitize, induct and equip all Nigerians to fight against internal and external domination of our resources into productive use;
- Re-orientate all Nigerians to shun waste and vanity and to shed all pretence of affluence in our lifestyles;

- Promote pride in the consumption of home-produced commodities and in self-reliance;
- Prepare the framework for creating the basic institutions and norms of democracy at all levels of our society;
- Create consciousness about power and its use, and about the proper role of government in serving the collective interest of Nigerians;
- Ensure that materials which appear in the mass media, both electronic and the print, are in consonance with the national objectives of self reliance, social justice, human rights, democratic norms, economic recovery and economic development;
- Propagate the need to eschew all vices in public life including corruption, honesty, electoral and census malpractices, ethnic and religious bigotry;
- Propagate the virtues of hard work, honesty, self-reliance, commitment to and promotion of national integration, and finally;
- Inculcate in all Nigerians the virtues of patriotism and positive participation in national affairs.

The need for social mobilization is predicated on three basic issues namely: to create a united, strong and self-reliant nation with a great and dynamic economy; to foster social justice through mass mobilization of the popular masses, so as to know their rights and legitimate processes of seeking redress when aggrieved and to build a free and democratic society in Nigeria. Based on the well-researched recommendations of the Political Bureau, it was aptly resolved that “a politically conscious, effectively mobilized and properly motivated population is the greatest deterrent to bad governance”. In other words, to create a free and democratic society in Nigeria, the masses must be politically aware, socially conscious and physically organized into popular formations (Political Bureau Report, 1987:203-204).

The central argument of the Directorate is that the missing link has been effective mobilization and orderly organization of the nation’s productive forces. The essence of mobilization is to pool together and release the productive power of our talents and labour power. Mobilization will not only cultivate, shape and energize our productive forces but will release such forces from oppressive and counter-productive social structures. The truth is that it is the human resources of a nation, not its capital, not its material resources, that determine the nature, direction and speed of its socio-economic development.

The crux of the matter is that it is the human resources of a nation that ultimately determine the nature, direction and pace of its socio-economic development. In other words, nations are built

essentially through the creative, productive and innovative handwork of the people themselves. Therefore, real development is an essential human issue as it concerns the capacity and creative ability of a people to effectively transform the national resources of their environment into goods and services. This view of development readily found expression in our Third Development Plan, when it was rightly argued that “true development must mean the development of man-the unfolding realization of his creative potential enabling him to improve his material conditions of living through the use of resources available to him. It is a process by which man’s personality is enhanced and it is that enhanced personality – creative, organized and discipline – which is the moving force behind the socio-economic transformation of any society. It is clear that development does not start with goods and things; it starts with people-their orientation, organization and discipline.....when a society is properly oriented, organized and disciplined, it can be prosperous on the scantiest basis of national wealth” (Third National Development Plan, Ministry of National Planning, 1980:20-21).

From the perspective of development, it is obvious that any nation which fails to develop the skills and productive talents of their people and to effectively mobilize and utilize such skills to transform the national economy will be unable to achieve real development. This is why Mass Mobilization is supremely relevant to our development process and as well critical to effective laundering of the internal and external image of the country. It is regrettable that the current image reform programme like others in the past, could not achieve its laudable objectives primarily because of poor implementation.

2.2.4 War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC)

This campaign programme was the brainchild of General Sani Abacha when he forcefully took over the reins of power from Ernest Shonekan (1993-1998). The thrust of the reform programme revolves on the fact that indiscipline has been identified as the greatest threat to the attainment of national goals and rapid socio-economic development of the country. Therefore, there is need to:

- Restore discipline to our national life;
- Inculcate the spirit of nationalism and patriotism in all Nigerians, using our revered traditions and cultures to ensure positive relationship between the citizenry and the nation with particular emphasis on duties and responsibilities;
- Ensure and uphold leadership by example;
- Develop positive work ethic and a just rewards system;
- Combat corruption and fraud in the society, especially in the public and private sectors;

- Inculcate in the Nigerian youth the values of patriotism, nationalism, integrity, honesty, positive work ethic and respect for elders and constituted authority;
- Integrate those Nigeria youths outside the main stream of positive values of civilized behaviors, and finally;
- Instil in the business and industrial class a sense of commitment and social responsibility to the nation (report of the Cabinet Committee on WAIC, 1993 p7).

According to the report submitted by the Cabinet Committee on War Against Indiscipline and Corruption, the reform programme comprises five main components, namely:

- (a) Corruption and Economic crimes
- (b) Social Justice and the Rule of Law
- (c) Work Ethic
- (d) Environmental Discipline, and lastly;
- (e) Queue culture.

2.2.5 The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS)

This image reform programme is Nigeria's plan for prosperity. The primary aim of NEEDS is to create new Nigerian citizens who value hard work and who realize that one cannot have something for nothing. The NEEDS vision is anchored on the Nigerian constitution, the Kuru Declaration; previous initiatives, such as Vision 20:2020; and the widespread consultation and participation throughout Nigeria that was part of the NEEDS process.

The programme's core values recognize the importance of respect for elders, honesty and accountability, co-operation, industry, discipline, self confidence, and moral courage. Prior to the restoration of democracy, Nigeria suffered setbacks that tarnished its reputation. The primary target of NEEDS programme is to introduce series of socio-economic pro-people programmes that will not only wriggle the country from its economic doldrums, but also restore the image of the country. Although Nigeria is rich in natural and human resources, seven (7) of every Ten (10) Nigerians live on less US\$1 a day. NEEDS is primarily designed to eradicate poverty and make it a thing of the past in Nigeria. It also aims to create a Nigeria that Nigerians can be proud to belong to and grateful to inhabit; a Nigeria that rewards hard work, protects its people and their property and offers its children better prospects than those they may be tempted to seek in Europe, or the United States. All citizens, regardless of gender, race, religion, or politics should feel that they have a stake in Nigeria's future and that their royalty and diligence will be rewarded. The NEEDS vision is also one in which Nigeria fulfils its potential to become Africa's largest economy and a major player in the global economy. (National Planning Commission's Handbook, 2004:11).

NEEDS focuses on four key strategies: re-orientating values, reducing poverty, creating wealth and generating employment. As a socio-economic and political programme that is intended to salvage the image of the Nigerian nation, NEEDS is based on the notion that those goals can be achieved only by creating an environment in which business can thrive, government is redirected to providing basic services, and people are empowered to take advantage of the new livelihood opportunities the plan will stimulate. According to the same handbook, NEEDS sets out far-reaching public reforms that will make clear that corruption and graft will be punished. The National Orientation Agency (NOA) and its state level counterparts will be strengthened to lead a campaign to re-instil the virtues of honesty, hard work, selfless service, moral rectitude and patriotism. The campaign will draw on resources from a variety of government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based organizations including schools, colleges, universities and private sectors, religions, social, cultural, and traditional organizations. Indeed, NEEDS is pro-Nigerian people, their welfare, health, employment, education, political power, physical security and empowerment – all put together are of paramount importance in realizing this vision of the future.

To reduce poverty and inequality, the plan proposes acting on several fronts;

- Offering farmers improved irrigation, machinery and crop varieties that will help boost agricultural productivity and tackle poverty head on, since half of Nigeria's poor people work in agriculture. Supporting small and medium scale enterprises will help create jobs. Together with the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS), NEEDS seeks to implement an integrated rural development programme to stem the flow of migration from rural to urban area;
- Half of Nigeria's are children, the bridge to prosperous future. NEEDS recognizes the importance of children by making the improvement of the education system a top priority.
- HIV/AIDS is a major social and health problem. It also threatens the country's productivity and economy. The plan is to improve the system of health-care delivery, with emphasis on HIV/AIDS and other preventable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and reproductive health-related diseases; and finally,
- NEEDS calls for replacing the pension scheme, which is in crisis, with a contributory scheme. It proposes special programme targeting people who have the weakest political voice and who are most vulnerable to the ravages of poverty. Laws and programmes will be implemented to empower women, children, the disabled and the elderly.

Despite the fact that Nigeria is endowed with enormous natural resources, the country is still poor and social development is limited. The truth is that if the present trend continue, the country is not

likely to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The three major obstacles that hamper the realization of the dreams of the Millennium Development Goals include;

- Not all the people enjoy the same chance of prosperity;
- Past governments in Nigeria, instead of focusing on delivering essential public services, assumed control of major sources of national income. In the process, corruption thrived in public services and gained a strong foothold in society;
- Although the environment for private enterprise is improving there are still many challenges.

2.2.6 The Heart of Africa Project

In July 2004, the Federal Ministry of information and National Orientation under its former Minister, Chief Chukwuemeka Chikelu fashioned out an enduring and cohesive image programme aimed at addressing the negative image of the country. In an attempt to hold the bull by the horns, Chikelu who was a minister under Olusegun Obasanjo's administration introduced Nigeria's image project christened the 'Heart of Africa' project. This project was based on the results of the audit and research carried out by a public relations firm – Alder Consulting In a report released in 2004 by the Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, the Heart of Africa project is expected to do the following:

- Ensure that the right kind of information is received about Nigeria both locally, and internationally.
- Redefine Nigeria's image and inspire pride in the hearts of her people all over the world;
- Re-orientate Nigerians and promote national values;
- Promote economic advancement and national progression through definite programmes, and finally;
- Enhance the international perception of Nigeria, her people, her economy and the value placed on her products.

As part of the programme strategy, a re-orientation campaign called PRIDE was also launched in Nigeria. PRIDE is an acronym for;

P	-	Patriotism
R	-	Resourcefulness
I	-	Integrity
D	-	Distinction
E	-	Enterprise

The programme is largely domestic in nature. It is designed to inspire patriotism, enterprise, and resourcefulness in Nigerians, and motivate them to aspire for national goals that would benefit the entire Nigerian citizenry and more importantly, accomplish such dreams in record time. Expectedly, the project works in concert with critical institutions like police, custom, immigration, as well as the civil service. The essence of maintaining close link with these institutions is to ensure that PRIDE actively promotes correct perception of the country, and her peoples. Sequel to the high spate of corrupt practices, civil unrest, poverty, political instability, fraud, kidnapping, to mention but a few; Nigeria's image has been dented both locally and internationally.

Research Method

It is an established fact that there are numerous research methods available for researchers to adopt in their studies. These research methods include content analysis, survey, historical, descriptive etc. Among these various research methods available to researchers in conducting their researches, survey research method was employed and utilized in this study.

The rationale behind the adoption of this method is popular social researchers' averment. According to Ogbuoshi (2006, p.34) "survey research refers to the sampling of peoples opinion on an issue". This translates to mean that survey research method is well suited for circumstances where the researcher's interest is to find how many people in a particular population hold or possesses a particular attribute, opinion etc. This aligns with the broad objective of this study. Consequent on the above, the survey research method is adopted for this study.

Population

The population for this study comprises all the people of Rivers State. The total number of people in Rivers State is 5,198,716 (five million, one hundred and ninety eight thousand, seven hundred and sixteen), based on the 2006 census figures obtained from the National Population Commission in Port Harcourt, Rivers State capital.

Sample Size

The researcher adopted the Taro Yamane's statistical formula that is widely used by both social science and physical science researchers. To prove that the sample is a representative of the population, a critical parameter at an acceptable level which Tuckman described as a confidence level is normally put at a 95% level (.05). This means that both sample and population are distributed in the same way, and there is 5% error margin for them. In alignment with the above statements, the researcher adopted Taro Yamane's statistical formula in the determination of the sample size from the population of Rivers State.

Research instruments

Research instrument has to do with various tools available for researchers to utilize in gathering data. Since the research method adopted for this work is the survey approach, the researcher deems it fit to use the questionnaire method of data collection as its research instrument. The rationale for this adoption is borne out of the researcher's desire to obtain reliable and valid information and to ensure that the results obtained would conform to certain scientific principles such as systematic, objective and general reliability of information.

Method of Data Collection

Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to extract relevant information from the respondents. The questionnaire will be structured in such a manner that it properly captures and addresses all the specific objectives of this research. The research instruments (questionnaire) were objectively distributed to the randomly selected samples in each Local Government Council headquarters in Rivers state. The questionnaires were also distributed to the respondents individually by the researcher. They were collected back on the spot, as the researcher waited patiently for the respondents to fill the questionnaire as distributed. The essence is to reduce the mortality rate as much as possible. Data were arranged and coded for easy understanding.

Method of Data Analysis

The study hypothesis earlier formulated was tested using the data collected. Tabulation and simple percentages mathematical tool was also used in the presentation of data. Quantification in research permits the measurement of variables involved in a study. Therefore, chi-square statistical measure was used in testing the hypotheses. That is, to check the relationship or variance between the observed and expected frequencies.

Result Presentation

Ho: Things have not improved significantly consequent upon the rebranding initiative and campaigns.

Hi: Things have improved significantly consequent upon the rebranding initiative and campaigns.

DATA TESTED: Data collected from question 17 as computed on table xvii was used in testing this hypothesis.

Table 4.2.7: Contingency table for Question 17

Response	MALE		FEMALE		Total
	<i>fo</i>	<i>(fe)</i>	<i>fo</i>	<i>(fe)</i>	
Strongly agree	4	(5.9)	7	(5.1)	11
Agree	22	(26.7)	28	(23.3)	50
Strongly Disagree	107	(100.3)	81	(87.7)	188
Disagree	54	(56.6)	52	(49.4)	106
Cant say	19	(16.5)	12	(14.5)	31
Total	206		180		386

$$Fe = \frac{TR \times TC}{GT}$$

$$R_1 C_1 = \frac{206 \times 11}{386} = 5.9$$

$$R_2 C_1 = \frac{180 \times 11}{386} = 5.1$$

$$R_1 C_2 = \frac{206 \times 50}{386} = 26.7$$

$$R_2 C_2 = \frac{180 \times 50}{386} = 23.3$$

$$R_1 C_3 = \frac{206 \times 188}{386} = 100.3$$

$$R_2 C_3 = \frac{180 \times 188}{386} = 87.7$$

$$R_1 C_4 = \frac{206 \times 106}{386} = 56.6$$

$$R_2 C_4 = \frac{180 \times 106}{386} = 49.4$$

$$R_1 C_5 = \frac{206 \times 31}{386} = 16.5$$

$$R_2 C_5 = \frac{180 \times 31}{386} = 14.5$$

Table 4.2.8: Computation test for Hypothesis

<i>Fo</i>	<i>Fe</i>	<i>fo - fe</i>	$(fo - fe)^2$	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
4	5.9	-1.9	3.61	0.6119
22	26.7	-4.7	22.09	0.8273
107	100.3	6.7	44.89	0.4475
54	56.6	-2.6	6.76	0.1194
19	16.5	2.5	6.25	0.3788
7	5.1	1.9	3.61	0.7078
28	23.3	4.7	22.09	0.9481
81	87.7	-6.7	44.89	0.5118
52	49.4	2.6	6.76	0.1368
12	14.5	-2.5	6.25	0.4310
386				5.1204

$$X^2 = 5.1204$$

DEGREE OF FREEDOM (Df) = (R - 1) (C - 1). On the contingency table 4.2.7, there are 5 rows and 2 columns. *df* therefore is (5 - 1) (2 - 1)

$$4 \times 1 = 4df$$

At 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, the critical value is 9.488.

TEST RESULT: The calculated value (5.1204) is less than the critical value (9.488). Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, while the alternate hypothesis was rejected.

Statistics hereby reveals that things have not improved significantly consequent upon the rebranding initiative and campaigns.

Hypothesis Two

Ho: The media strategies adopted by the campaigners have not been appropriate and most significant in rebranding related campaigns.

Hi: The media strategies adopted by the campaigners have been appropriate and most significant in rebranding related campaigns.

DATA TESTED: Data generated from question 11 as computed on table xi was used in testing this hypothesis.

Table 4.2.9: Contingency Table for Question 11

Frequency	MALE		FEMALE		Total
	<i>fo</i>	<i>(fe)</i>	<i>fo</i>	<i>(fe)</i>	
Regularly (Everyday)	42	(44.8)	42	(39.2)	84
Occasionally (Weekly)	80	(75.2)	61	(65.8)	141
Never	0	(0)	0	(0)	0
Don't know	84	(85.9)	77	(75.1)	161
Total	206		180		386

$$Fe = \frac{TR \times TC}{GT}$$

$$R_1 C_1 = \frac{206 \times 84}{386} = 44.8$$

$$R_2 C_1 = \frac{180 \times 84}{386} = 39.2$$

$$R_1 C_2 = \frac{206 \times 141}{386} = 75.2$$

$$R_2 C_2 = \frac{180 \times 141}{386} = 65.8$$

$$R_1 C_3 = \frac{206 \times 0}{386} = 0$$

$$R_2 C_3 = \frac{180 \times 0}{386} = 0$$

$$R_1 C_4 = \frac{206 \times 161}{386} = 85.9$$

$$R_2 C_4 = \frac{180 \times 161}{386} = 75.1$$

Table 4.2.4: Computational for Hypothesis One Test

<i>fo</i>	<i>Fe</i>	<i>fo - fe</i>	$(fo - fe)^2$	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
42	44.8	-2.8	7.84	0.175
80	75.2	4.8	23.04	0.3064
0	0	0	0	0
84	85.9	-1.9	3.61	0.0420
42	39.2	2.8	7.84	0.2
61	65.8	-4.8	23.04	0.3502
0	0	0	0	0
77	75.1	1.9	3.61	0.0481
386				1.1217

$$X^2 = 1.1217$$

DEGREE OF FREEDOM (Df) = (R - 1) (C - 1). On the contingency table 4.2.9, there are 4 rows and 2 columns. *df* therefore is (4 - 1) (2 - 1)

$$3 \times 1 = 3df$$

At 0.05 level of significance and 3 degree of freedom, the critical value is 7.815

TEST RESULT: The calculated value (1.1217) is less than the critical value (7.815). Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Result shows that since the respondents occasionally consume the media contents from their preferred media, the media strategies adopted by the campaigners have been inappropriate and not significant in rebranding related campaigns.

Discussion of the Findings

Hypothesis one support of the collected data as tested. Since the calculated value (5.1204) was less than the critical value (5.1204), the null hypothesis was accepted, while the alternate hypothesis was rejected. It shows therefore that even with the rebranding campaigns, things (Attitude, government, socio-economic development) and the battered image of Nigeria has not improved significantly. Therefore, research data continues the study of Adebajo (2011, pp.105-106) on the evaluation of Rebranding Nigeria image campaign and reality. In that study, it was discovered that the campaigns failed to address the battered image of Nigeria into a positive one. Hence, the researcher concluded that the rebranding campaign will not be able to achieve the set objectives of the campaigner (the federal government). This present research is in alignment with the above study.

Nothing has changed because of the unwillingness of various actors in the Nigerian project. Hence Uwah (2009, p.1) contend that “no amount of legislation can effectively tackle the sleaze if the character and value orientation of the individuals who run national institutions do not change”. Change will only come if the actors in government decide to rebrand themselves first. Contrary to the postulations of McCombs and Shaw (1972, p.197), agenda was not set. But the campaigners succeeded in “Putting Pictures” of the rebranding in the “heads” of people as it concerns the rebranding initiative. Research data also gave statistical support to the null hypothesis in the test of hypothesis five. Data collected from question 11 as presented on table xi was used, and it was observed that the calculated value (1.1217) was less than the critical value (7.815). Consequently, the null hypothesis was accepted. Result indicates that the media strategies used in driving the rebranding campaign have been grossly inappropriate. For instance, the people do not frequently access their preferred media. Therefore, the campaign through these channel end up being wastages.

During the informal discussion with the respondents, 90% of them agreed that the slogan “Nigeria- Good people, Great Nation” is never near the ability to induce the change needed. Neither does the use of short message service (SMS) from the GSM service providers can perform the magic.

This finding is in sharp variance with idea of Bejide (2011) who believes that in inducing attitudinal change in citizens which will metamorphose into change in the society and nation at large, persuasive and factual messages can be packaged in a continuous manner as to register the effect in the minds of the people. This she calls BURSTING strategy in advertising and publicity. Unfortunately, the respondents hold that the message of the rebranding campaigns were not only untruths, half-truths, non-persuasive, but outright government political propaganda and outright the campaign as a failure from the beginning. This finding is also in tandem with the study conducted by Yahaya (2010) where the researcher concluded that attempt to hoodwink the people through political propaganda in the name of rebranding is the major undoing of the current rebranding Nigeria image initiative.

In addition, the study result shows that the print media is very unreliable in driving the ideals of the rebranding campaigns as 71% of the respondents do not read newspapers. Therefore, the point media are very inappropriate in the projection of the rebranding campaigns. However, research data presented on table x supports the use of the social media. Research data as computed on table xvi indicates that the rebranding campaigns have not had any positive effect on the attitude of the people. 288 or 74.6% believes the campaign has not had any effect on them. They saw the

campaign as mere lyrics or slogans. The fact the expatriate and non-natives still relocate out of the state is an indication that

Conclusion and Recommendations

The rebranding Nigeria initiative “Nigeria-Good People, Great Nation” was perceived as a political gimmick. 90% of the respondents were in agreement with this. Research data shows that the rebranding initiative cannot induce the needed change of attitude. The strategies adopted so far have not been effective. No rationale for the choice of media, and there has not been consistencies in the campaigns. Besides, the rebrand messages were perceived to be political lies, propaganda and deception. The print media (Newspapers and Magazines) were seen as ineffective in driving the campaign, since the number of respondents that consume these media contents were grossly insignificant.

Data presented give statistical support to this research finding. But the social media were seen as very appropriate in the rebranding campaigns. The result also lends credence to this. In all, the people perceive the “Rebranding Nigeria” campaign as a failure, just like past initiatives such as “Heart of Africa”. It is therefore recommended that

(i) The mass media owners and practitioners must take such future campaign as their social responsibility, agenda setting, and cultural normative functions. They can make Nigeria a better society for us and in the eyes of the international community. This is the only index that can catapult us into achieving the vision 20:2020.

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