# THE RHETORIC OF 'INTERNAL' BRANDING IN NIGERIA'S REBRANDING CAMPAIGN

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### Abstract

This paper examines the rhetorical strategies of mobilising and inspiring a domestic audience for national identity re/construction in order to reinforce the Nigerian brand. Data for the study are composed of some branding strategies packaged and broadcast mainly on radio and television by Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Information and Communications in its rebranding campaign in 2009 which was targeted at domestic citizens' value re-orientation. The study adopts Fairclough's (1992) dialectical-relational approach which centres on "dialectical reasoning" – a way of reasoning from critique of discourse to what should be done to change the existing reality, by way of explanation of relations between discourse and other components (social, cultural and political) of reality. It then applies the tenets of the theory to analyse the rhetorical strategies in the rebranding campaign, as the domestic citizens' agency is considered instrumental in bolstering the Nigerian brand. The study demonstrates that the branding strategies analysed largely invoke history, collective memory, values, traditions, and aspirations which could appeal to domestic citizens' nationalistic sensibilities and imaginaries to evolve an enduring Nigerian brand which is domestic driven.

## 1 Introduction

The question of Nigeria's negative image perception in the international community has generated interest among critical stakeholders because national image entails national identity and the politics and economics of competitiveness. Oluwafunmilayo et al. (2022) aver that a negative perception of a country's image could translate to her lacking respect, influence, and prestige in the international community. Consequently, scholars have tried to establish some possible causes of Nigeria's image crisis and appraise efforts made towards building a positive image for the country. Indicators such as absence of good governance, endemic corruption, insecurity of lives and property, poverty, infrastructural decay, gross human rights violations and extra-judicial killings have negatively impacted Nigeria's image in the international community. In addition, social vices such as cybercrime, money laundering, smuggling, and drug trafficking, which some

Nigerians both domestically and externally perpetrate, have adversely affected the country's image. Thus, the negative perception of Nigeria's image derives from assessing the citizens' behaviour, on the one hand, and interrogating the governance style of the country's political leaders, on the other.

Given the claim that news coverage about Africa in the international media has been ostensibly biased, there is a conspiracy theory that western media negative representation of Nigeria, particularly by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Cable News Network (CNN) in their news coverage, has largely fuelled the country's image problem externally. Therefore, some of the adverse effects of Nigeria's negative image in the international community have been negative stereotyping of Nigerian nationals, visa ban, profiling and deporting Nigerian nationals, and poor ranking reports of the country, chief among which is the poor rating of the ease of doing business in Nigeria. Since development is tied to a positive image perception in the international community, Nigeria would certainly face stiff competition in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). In view of the fact that "negative external perceptions do not serve the purpose of foreign policy of any state and the national interest it seeks to pursue" (David 2021: 41), successive administrations since Nigeria's return to democratic governance in 1999 have initiated schemes to tackle Nigeria's brand eroders. Such image-building initiatives are lent further credence by Owuamanam and Agbaenyi (2021: 100), who assert that "[...] image-building must necessarily constitute a fundamental element of leadership character and a nation's foreign policy [...]".

It is instructive, therefore, that Nigeria's rebranding campaign of 2009 had as its focal point how to engender attitudinal change in citizens so that they could imbibe the core values and cherished traditions requisite to re-igniting national pride and promoting the country's positive image. At the unveiling of the logo and slogan of the rebranding programme on 17th March 2009, President Umar Musa Yar'Ardua represented by Vice-President Dr Goodluck Jonathan declared that the campaign was to enlist all Nigerians in the quest to engender social change, entrench community values, drive national re-orientation, and restore the dignity of Nigeria and Nigerians. Professor Dora Akunyili, Nigeria's Minister of Information and Communications during the rebranding programme emphasised that the exercise was rooted in inspiring the internal audience to live the Nigerian brand before Nigeria's image could be enhanced externally. Given that 'internal' branding constitutes a vital aspect of nation branding and indeed the substratum on which the success of nation branding at the international level rests, the present study attempts to explore the discursive construction of Nigeria's image in the rebranding Nigeria campaign. It rhetorically analyses the branding strategies

deployed by the Nigerian government to mobilise an internal audience to live the socio-cultural and historical values which are instrumental in successfully promoting the Nigerian brand.

## 2   'Internal' branding in nation branding practice

Nation branding practice is a postmodern paradigm in which nation-states deploy branding techniques to promote their uniqueness with respect to their potential in competing for trade and investment, export and tourism promotion, among other indexes. Considering that nation branding is a multi-dimensional blend of economic, political and cultural aspects of national identity construction, scholars have seen it as another strand of diplomacy and a catalyst for successful participation in the global market. The conception of publics in relation to the circulation of discourse in nation branding practice shows how practices of marketing and strategic communication now pervade public spheres. Encompassing professions such as marketing, brand management, and public relations, the term "strategic communication" refers to "intentional and concerted efforts to advance value-producing representations of some target entity (e.g. a business, a product, a place, a politician, oneself) within and across publics" (Graan 2022: 2). Commenting on the public spheres of nation branding, Viktorin et al. (2018) posit that purposeful branding enables publics internationally and domestically to view a state as legitimate and credible and, therefore, worth patronage, allegiance and support.

Varga (2013) argues that although nation branding is usually discussed as an exclusively "externally" oriented strategy that aims to communicate a competitive image to attract international attention, there is an often neglected but crucial "inner-oriented" feature. Varga (ibid.) opines that nation branding is indeed an implicit cultural policy which is basically an inner-oriented, cultural-political measure which targets the citizens of the nation-state and is characterised by conservative, transformative and transferring political agendas. Therefore, Varga (ibid.) surmises that the inner orientation is a necessary condition for success since nation branding cannot be effective without the participation of citizens who are at the same time representatives, stakeholders and customers of the brand. Still on the inner-oriented audience, Brennan and Wilson (2016) state that the goal of nation branding in particular is thus to insist on the meaningfulness of the nation for existing or prospective citizens, thereby corroborating the view of Pamment and Cassinger (2018) on the idea that nation brands can extend and empower citizen participation in the assertion of national identity.

Against this backdrop, Nimijean (2018) emphasises the connection between nation branding, the external projection of national identity, and domestic politics.

Rehman and Ali (2019) emphasise that the citizens of any nation whether based locally or internationally are its brand ambassadors consequent upon which the task of any nation branding campaign for the promotion of a positive image internationally should begin with building the confidence of the citizens. For Hoefte and Veenendaal (2019), nation branding strategies can also have domestic effects because they can be employed by governments to enhance pride in the nation and thus promote social cohesion. It is noteworthy, therefore, that Browning (2015) emphasises how branding strategies demonstrate that foreign policy is not simply about interacting with others but also about communicating values and identity narratives to citizens. Writing on how brands are targeted for internal consumption and designed to provide direction and purpose for national citizens, Browning (ibid.: 205) submits that "[...] branding processes are not neutral since in packaging the nation and seeking to engineer social consensus around certain ideological commitments they draw on particular mandated histories and symbols to the exclusion of others".

## 3   Overview of research interests on nation branding practice

The global practice of branding nation-states with a view to enhancing the image and competitive identity of both developing and developed countries has attracted the attention of scholars across fields of study such as marketing, international relations, public relations, and communication studies. On the desirability and viability of nation branding in international politics, Eggeling (2020) argues that nation-branding is a productive and inherently political practice that (re)produces dominant interpretations of national and state identity rather than merely describing them. Eggeling (ibid.) elucidates the workings of nation-branding by investigating the activities involved in branding the Kazakhstani and Qatari state, and the interpretations that describe them. From another perspective, Del Percio (2016) analyses the debates, tactics, positioning, and controversies surrounding the policing of the brand "Switzerland". In another study, Kaneva (2021) reviews nation branding research that relates to the countries of the former communist bloc, proposing that future research should look at nation branding both as a field of practice that merits critical examination in its own right and as a lens that can be used to investigate changes in the state of nationhood today. Furthermore, Nimijean (2018) evaluates the Trudeau government's attempt at branding Canada in "Canada's back" and "Sunny ways", interrogating the rhetoric-reality gap when actions or experiences do not live up to the brand promise, and stressing the imperative of matching values with action to achieve the goals of brand Canada.

In another light, some scholars have explored aspects of nation branding practices such as the nexus between nation branding and economic development and other forms of diplomatic relations in international relations. Bisa (2013) examines the political aspect of nation branding as a subset of international relations by analysing the case of Greece and the branding campaign pursued by its government, and assessing the degree to which branding is one function of a nation's image enhancement. Nation branding is considered by Zeineddine (2017) as a competitive factor in modern economies by comparing the brand strategies in the nation branding initiatives of United Arab Emirates and Qatar to boost their economies. Qatar's nation branding efforts and relationship with economic development draw the attention of Rehman and Ali (2019), who apply Anholt's (2002) Nation Branding Hexagon Model with a view to establishing if economic development leads to the need for nation branding or vice versa.

An aspect of nation branding – soft power – which was popularised by Nye (1990) and further elaborated in Nye (2021) has also attracted the attention of some scholars. On the theoretical relations between public diplomacy and nation branding, Tecmen (2020) stresses the importance of deploying soft power assets to create distinct and appealing identities with respect to the making of brand Turkey. In a similar vein, Matsui (2014) investigates why and how some aspects of stigmatised Japanese popular culture were appropriated within government circles to promote the "Cool Japan" popular brand. In addition, the practice of sharing a state's cultural heritage through cuisine which is called gastrodiplomacy to assess Malaysia's potential to make its own stand in the eyes of the world by its capacity of using food as a soft power tool has been the subject of a study by Solleh (2015). With respect to the branding potential of languages as an important resource for local strategies in nation branding, Brennan and Wilson (2016) investigate how in Shetland and Western Ireland, meanings associated with language are connected with how crises are framed and constructed in discourse. In a related study, Djuraeva (2022) utilises the concept of "nation branding" in two post-Soviet Union nation states – Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan – to trace the relationship between language ideologies and broader socio-political factors by examining students' ideologies of English vis-à-vis their linguistic repertoires in the context of national imaginary and globalisation. It is interesting how Lee and Kim (2021) explore South Korea's pandemic public diplomacy in the context of her national responses to COVID-19 pandemic, adopting sentiment analyses of social media and international news media which suggest that the country is perceived as a model on how to cope with the pandemic by international audiences. Finally, the role of digital diplomacy in the articulation of soft power

given the potency of digital diplomacy in conducting public diplomacy has been investigated by Gosling (2021).

In the foregoing overview of research interests in nation branding practice, negotiation of meaning in the discursive construction of national identity has not been adequately explored. There are, no doubt, existing studies such as Del Percio (2016), Graan (2016), Golinvaux and Evagelou (2017), Allagui and Al-Najjar (2018), Cheregi (2018), Panajoti (2018), Zantides (2019), Işik and Bilici (2021), and Budiwaspada and Fadilah (2021) which apply the tools of semiotics to analyse branding strategies in nation branding discourses. The lacuna in these studies, however, is that none explores the rhetorical strategies of mobilising the domestic audience by invoking elements of history, memory and culture relative to Nigeria's national identity re/construction. This research gap is what the present study intends to address by rhetorically analysing some brand strategies in Nigeria's rebranding campaign discourse.

## 4   The data

Data for the study are composed of some branding strategies designed by Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Information and Communications in the 2009 rebranding Nigeria campaign to re-orientate the Nigerian citizenry in a bid to redress the country's negative image. The data consists partly of the brand slogan which became popularised and was widely circulated via media outlets as soon as the scheme was launched. In addition, the data comprises two radio and television jingles designed and broadcast on federal and state media houses to mobilise and inspire Nigerians for the coveted attitudinal change and renewal of national pride. The jingles were recorded from the broadcast of some radio stations and transcribed accordingly. The text of one of the jingles originally rendered in Nigerian Pidgin was carefully translated into Standard English. But the original Nigerian Pidgin version is still retained in the data presentation for authenticity. It is instructive that the second jingle unlike the first one has no Nigerian Pidgin English version. The text is, therefore, presented for analysis in its original version in the Standard English language variety. The study adopts a qualitative analytical method, drawing upon relevant aspects of the theoretical framework.

## 5   Theoretical framework

Fairclough (2001) argues that Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) is the analysis of the dialectical relationships between semiosis (including language) and other elements of social practices. Hence, this study adopts Fairclough's dialectical-relational approach. Fairclough (2001: 123) notes that

the particular concern of CDA is "with the radical changes that are taking place in contemporary social life, with how semiosis figures within processes of change, and with shifts in the relationship between semiosis and other social elements within networks of practices". Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) posit that it is germane in discourse analysis to forge meaningful links between texts and societal and cultural processes and structures, thereby providing an interdisciplinary perspective where the analyst combines textual and social analysis. What is central to Fairclough's approach is that "discourse is an important form of social practice which both reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations including power relations, and at the same time is also shaped by other social practices and structures" (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 65). Thus, CDA is a theory and method of discourse analysis that focuses on the study of the dialectical relations between discourse and social, cultural, and political developments in different social domains (Aydin-Düzgit 2017: 1).

Writing on the nature of CDA and dialectical relations, Fairclough (2019) explains that CDA as "dialectical reasoning" is a view of CDA which might support political action to change social life for the better. Fairclough further states that "dialectical reasoning" encompasses a way of reasoning from critique of discourse to what should be done to change the existing reality, by way of explanation of relations between discourse and other components of reality. That is why CDA is considered as a combination of critique of discourse and explanation of how discourse figures in the existing social reality as a basis for action to change reality. According to Gürsel-Bilgin (2020: 34), the general question the dialectical-relational approach seeks to address is "what is the particular significance of semiosis, and of dialectical relations between semiosis and other social elements, in the social processes (issues, problems, changes, etc.) which are under investigation?" Gürsel-Bilgin (2020) concludes that Fairclough's (1992) dialectical-relational approach identifies how discourse not only functions to produce and reproduce society through its social structures, relationships, and value structures, but also has a hand in transforming society.

According to Aydin-Düzgit (2017), the dialectical-relational approach proceeds in four stages of analysis. The first stage involves the identification of a social wrong. The second step entails a focus on the mechanisms in the social order that prevent the social wrong from being addressed. The third step revolves around an evaluation of whether the identified social wrong is inherent to the social order, while the fourth and final step tries to identify possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to dealing with the social wrong under scrutiny. Against the backdrop of the first and last stages above, in the analysis we will attempt to underline the negative image of Nigeria in the international community for

which the government tried to mobilise the citizens to imbibe some core national values steeped in history, memory and culture for the re/construction of Nigeria's national identity narratives. Further, we will carefully analyse relevant brand strategies in the campaign by focusing on the relationship between discourse and elements of social practices which are geared towards transforming reality in the political context.

Generally, we will examine the discursive construction of Nigeria's national identity by exploring the dialectical relations between discourse and social, cultural, and political developments. We will analyse the data in line with Fairclough's (1992) view that in the attempt to investigate the social function of language (while doing CDA), one needs to make a description of linguistic properties so as to disclose or unravel the ideologies embedded in the discourse under study. Fairclough et al. (2011) opine that although there is a diversity of approaches to CDA research, drawing on various linguistic analytic techniques and theories, all will involve some form of close textual analysis. Elaborating this view further, Huckin et al. (2012: 118) explain that "[t]he systematicity of CDA keeps analysis close to the linguistic data under analysis, looking for patterns at the stylistic, verbal, syntactic, and figurative structure and considering the ways in which such discursive and semiotic structures circulate or articulate with ideology".

## 6 Data analysis

In this section of the study, we identify some discursive practices characteristic of the persuasive discourse of re-orientating Nigeria's citizens for national rebirth, paying close attention to the striking linguistic devices that give rhetorical force to the discourse. The analysis is carried out in three major sub-sections.

### 6.1 Deployment of sloganeering strategy in nation branding practice

The strategy of sloganeering is deployed in Nigeria's rebranding campaign to give a positive self-perception of Nigeria's national values. In this light, the slogan of the rebranding campaign "Nigeria, good people, great nation" has some significant semiotic-cum-rhetorical features with very deep ideological undercurrents that could inspire national rebirth citizens. In the discourse of constructing national identity narratives, Billig's (1995) notion of banal nationalism comes to the fore. Billig coined the term "banal nationalism" to illustrate the reproduction of nationalism in existing states and noted how national identities become "a form of life which is daily lived in a world of nation-states" (ibid.: 68). Consequently, there is a conscious attempt in nation branding discourse to counter the stories told by others about a nation by

engaging in the rhetorical practice of positive self-representation as evidenced in the slogan of the rebranding Nigeria campaign. The choice of the "augmenting adjectives" (Martinez-Mira 2014) *good* and *great* to qualify the noun heads *people* and *nation* respectively appears to instil a sense of pride in the domestic audience to believe in the country and themselves, too. To this end, the positive posturing of entities in the slogan of the rebranding Nigeria campaign typifies banal forms of nationalism which are mobilised in reproducing the discourses/ practices related to national imaginaries. The rebranding slogan which reiterates the cherished ideals of citizenship and statehood appears to resonate with national identity imaginaries in line with Anderson's (2006) notion of an "an imagined community".

Wodak et al. (2009) argue that the question of how an imaginary community reaches the minds of those who are convinced of it is easy to answer: it is constructed and conveyed in discourse, predominantly in narratives of national culture. Writing on the dialectics of discourse, Fairclough (2003: 23) explains that discourses include "not only representations of how things are, they can also be representations of how things could be, or 'imaginaries'. They can represent or imagine interconnected webs of activities, instruments, objects, subjects in social relations, times and places, values, etc". Fairclough (2012: 459) explains further that "[di]scourses as imaginaries also come to be enacted in new ways of acting and interacting, and such enactments are in part 'intra-semiotic': discourses become enacted as genres". Wodak and de Cillia (2007) corroborate this view, stressing that the construction of national identities always necessarily draws on narratives which relate the past, present and future in specific ways. Therefore, while the thinking of some observers could be that Nigerians are already a good people in a great nation, a fact that need not be reiterated, or that the virtues of 'goodness' and 'greatness' were saleable only in times past, the slogan "Nigeria, good people, great nation" appears to play up inherent national values which should remain constant across phases of national history no matter the odds. In all of this epistemic construction in the positive self-representation strategy deployed in the sloganeering technique of the rebranding campaign, we could validate Jørgensen and Phillips' (2002) view that discourse contributes to the construction of social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and meaning.

## 6.2 Invocation of national pride via the core value of hard work

In order to substantiate the alluring beliefs and values evoked in the sloganeering strategy ideologically interrogated in the previous sub-section, the rebranding campaign also engaged jingles dwelling essentially on the

fond collective memories of the people which they could tap into for renewed nationalistic spirit. Consider one of the jingles below which is first rendered in its original Nigerian Pidgin English version before the Standard English translation:

**Nigerian English version**
Every day for Naija as day dey break even before cockcrow
Plenty people don wake up to begin work for Nigeria
Farmers dem dey, builders dem dey
Market people nko? We dey. Teachers? we dey
Some dey work for office, others na factory
Sports people nko o dem own na for stadium
Some people own na to sing, everybody get im own
Naija people no dey lazy, dem no tire, dem no give up
Come rain, come shine
Country people na dem go make country better
Wellu wellu …
Nigeria, good people, great nation

**Standard English translation**
Every day in Naija [Nigeria] as day breaks even before cockcrow
A lot of people have woken up to begin work in Nigeria.
Farmers are there, builders are there.
What of market people? We are there.
Teachers? We are there.
Some work in the office, others in the factory.
What of sports people? Theirs is at the stadium.
Some people's job is to sing, everybody has their own job.
Naija [Nigerian] people are not lazy, they don't get tired out, they don't give up.
Come rain, come shine
It's our nationals that make the country better
Very, very well
Nigeria, good people, great nation

This jingle appears to be directed at domestic citizens to invoke a sense of national and cultural pride in what Nigerians do for a living, which should bring contentment to an average national instead of engaging in some untoward activities which regrettably could tarnish the nation's image. Interestingly, the ideology that citizens should take pride in their work is conveyed via some striking style markers with very compelling rhetorical effects for mass mobilisation and national re-orientation. In this regard, the appropriation of deixis for rhetorical effect is significant. According to Levinson (1995), deixis refers to the phenomenon wherein understanding the meaning of certain words

and phrases in an utterance requires contextual information. Levinson (2004: 14, as cited in Maienborn et al. 2011: 1-2) sees deictic expressions as linguistic elements with "built-in contextual parameters" that must be specified by aspects of the situational or discourse context. Of the five forms of deixis (person, spatial, temporal, discourse and social) classified by Levinson (2001), we will touch on the appropriation of only temporal, spatial and social deixis in the jingle above.

According to Dylgjeri and Kazazi (2013), in English, temporal deixis is expressed by adverbs of time and tense markers on the verb. Thus, in the jingle, the use of the temporal deictic marker *every day* is rhetorically significant. It emphasises the consistency, habitualness, unfailing assiduity, and zeal with which Nigerians supposedly go about their daily activities in the course of fending for themselves and also developing the nation. To emphasise the value of hard work and the expediency of exploiting the morning hours for efficiency, the temporal deictic marker "as day breaks even before cockcrow" is instructive. For in a traditional African society, there is a well ordered and clearly defined system of traditional ethics guiding human conduct and actions. Traditional ethics, according to Udokang (2014: 266), are "the norms, precepts, principles and moral codes, which regulate the conduct and actions of individuals in African societies". So, the breaking of the day for a traditional African man/woman is a call to duty, particularly when the traditional time indicator – the cock – crows at dawn.

The jingle also contains verbs expressing both actions and a state of being. First, the verbal group "have woken up to begin" is striking. The goal of waking up for the day is not to perpetrate cybercrime or engage in other unpatriotic activities but to be meaningfully engaged as summed up in the complement *work* of the verb *to begin*. As we shall see shortly, *work* is used as a superordinate term with subordinates or hyponyms. Second, the recurrence of the verb of state *are* in the jingle is significant, too:

> Farmers are there, builders are there.
> What of market people? We are there.
> Teachers? We are there.

The repetitive pattern of the verb of state *are* in the lines above emphasises some of the noble classes of workers and the pride they take in doing what they know best, not opting for social vices for survival. While the verb is used with a third person narrative voice referring to a class of people who specialise in certain vocations – "Farmers are there, builders are there" – in the first line, there is a shift of narrative voice in the second line to a first-person narrative voice (i.e. *we*)

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where the proud nationals themselves acclaim their vocations with a sense of pride – "What of market people? We are there. / Teachers? We are there". This voice shift is rhetorically significant, as it attempts to give authenticity to the pride which the workers themselves take in doing their respective jobs.

To this end, the deployment of social deixis in the jingle is noteworthy. According to Levinson (2001), social deixis concerns encoding social identities of participants, or the social relationship between them, or between one of them and persons and entities referred to. Huang (2009) explains that the information encoded in social deixis may include social class, kin relationship, age, sex, profession and ethnic group. In this jingle, the information contained in social deictic elements centres on vocation. Recall that we mentioned *work* as a superordinate term earlier on. Now let us examine that in detail. In terms of the sense relations that hold between words in a language, Lyons (1968: 443) argues that the structural underlying principle is that "every linguistic item has its 'place' in a system and its function, or value, derives from the relations, which it contrasts with other units in the system". The term hyponymy is used by Lyons (1968) to denote the notion of "semantic inclusion", the meaning of one item is included in the meaning of another. The superordinate term is technically referred to as hyperonym while the subordinates are called hyponyms. The hyperonym in the jingle is *work*, while the hyponyms are: *farming, building, trading, teaching, administration, engineering, sport,* and *singing.*

It is noteworthy that these hyponyms touch on different aspects of vocation from artisanship (*farming, building, trading*), skilled labour (*teaching, administration* and *engineering*) to entertainment (*sporting* and *singing*). It is in line with these vocations that the jingle emphasises the social deictic elements: *farmers, builders, market people, teachers* and *sports people*. And for the vocations with no social deictic markers, spatial deictic markers are deployed. Fillmore (1982: 37, as cited in Cairns 1991: 19) describes spatial deixis as "that aspect of deixis which involves referring to the locations in space of the communication act participants […]". Hence, in the jingle, the spatial pointers "in the office", "in the factory", and "at the stadium" all emphasise noble locales where Nigerians would generally work to develop the nation as opposed to cyber cafes where some desperate youths perpetrate cybercrime. Further, the utterance "[…] everybody has their own job" becomes instructive. It typifies the representative act in Searle's (1976: 10) classification of illocutionary act which is "to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition".

The utterance "[…] everybody has their own job" appears to celebrate the diversity of vocations among Nigerians, which the next line of the jingle buttresses

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by invoking the work ethics that the people are noted for: "Naija people are not lazy, they don't get tired out, they don't give up". Preference for the negative element *not* in this line is rhetorically striking. It serves as a discursive strategy of engaging rebuttals which contest possible negative stereotypes of Nigerians, as a result of which the country has an image crisis. The value of hard work is further emphasised with the invocation of the temporal marker "Come rain, come shine […]" which is used in popular discourses to emphasise people's resoluteness to reach the acme of their desires no matter the odds. Generally, the staging of cultural identity in this jingle fits in with Williams' (1984) distinction between cultural policy as "display" and cultural policy "proper". Cultural policy as display, which is favoured for our present purposes, according to Varga (2013: 826), "takes on the form of 'identity politics', which aims both to shape collective identities and to provide a range of exemplary models that are available for individuals to construct their personal identities". As a result, Varga (ibid.) conceives of nation branding as being "essentially an inner-oriented cultural-political measure that targets the citizens of the national state".

## 6.3 Celebrating Nigeria's global ambassadors

With the kind of values that Nigerians are portrayed to have in the jingle we analysed in the previous sub-section, it naturally follows that they should excel in their various endeavours thereby doing their nation proud. The second jingle below attempts to highlight the exploits of Nigerians in this regard.

Nigeria is undoubtedly a country with many great minds.
At home and abroad, they are helping create a better world.
Philip Emeagwali, the *Time Magazine* calls him the unsung hero of the Internet.
Wole Soyinka, literary icon and Nobel laureate, the first African to be so honoured
Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Managing Director of the World Bank
Jelani Aliu, designer of the Chevy Volt General Motors electric car
Chimamanda Adichie, winner of several literary awards including the Orange Prize for fiction
Asha, international award-winning singing sensation
These are Nigerians who have impacted the world positively.
For each of these there are millions more doing us good
That testify to the can-do spirit of the Nigerian.
At home or abroad the spirit is the same.
Our people step up to the challenge, excelling in all endeavours
Making their families, friends and Nigeria proud.
Nigeria, good people, great nation.

This jingle is aimed at bolstering Nigeria's international pride by parading global brands who should serve as models to youths in particular. The use of the quantifier *many* before the noun head "great minds" and the adverb "undoubtedly" in the first line is stylistically significant. The stylistic markers reinforce the rhetorical attempt to dispel possible doubts about the stuff Nigerian nationals are made of as global citizens. In this sense, the use of the spatial deictic element "at home or abroad" is rhetorically significant. As a thematised element in the structure of the utterance, it attempts to stress the fact that Nigerians are not "local champions", as the common phraseology goes, but global citizens whose spheres of influence and ingenuity combine effectively with the resourcefulness of other nationals across the world to drive global development in different sectors.

The superordinate-subordinates relations between "many great minds" and a catalogue of iconic Nigerian figures in different fields of endeavour is intriguing, as clear evidence is provided to support the proposition that Nigeria is blessed with great minds:

> Philip Emeagwali, the *Time Magazine* calls him the unsung hero of the Internet
> Wole Soyinka, literary icon and Nobel laureate, the first African to be so honoured
> Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Managing Director of the World Bank
> Jelani Aliu, designer of the Chevy Volt General Motors electric car
> Chimamanda Adichie, winner of several literary awards including the Orange Prize for fiction
> Asha, international award-winning singing sensation

Rhetorically, these iconic figures are paraded as models to invigorate a sense of national pride in the average Nigerian citizen who is invited to admire and celebrate the nation's ambassadors. The iconic figures are also presented probably as models for some wayward citizens to have a rethink that it pays to tread the path of honour and do one's nation proud rather than engage in improper activities that cast the nation's image in a negative light.

The rhetorical goal of selling these national icons to the target audience is enhanced by the pattern of information structure in the discourse. Halliday (1967) identifies three categories of information structure: presupposition and assertion (the structuring of propositional information into given and new); identifiability and activation (the information status of discourse referents); and topic and focus (the relative predictability of relations among propositions). According to Roberts (2012), information structure is a sentence level structure generally characterised as a variation of sentential structure along certain parameters to modulate the presentation of the information imparted by the sentence in such a way as to

relate that information to a prior context. The factors in that relationship are characterised in terms of primitive functional roles such as theme/rheme, focus/(back)ground, topic/link, old/new, etc. It is the function of the second category in Halliday's (1967) classification (identifiability and activation) which correlates with Roberts' (2012) topic/link role and Birner and Ward's (2009) entity/attribute relations that we explore in the jingle.

In the lines quoted above, all the entities (iconic figures) have an attribute attached to each of them to reinforce the claim that Nigeria can boast of innovative minds shaping world affairs. It is rhetorically significant that cogent fields such as information and communications technology (ICT), literature, banking, automobile and entertainment are identified while zeroing in on the attributes of the entities. First, reference to the evaluative judgement of the famous international *Time Magazine* (an American weekly news magazine published in New York which has the world's largest circulation for a weekly news magazine) of Philip Emeagwali "as the unsung hero of the Internet" is rhetorically striking considering the global appeal of the magazine. Also, with respect to Wole Soyinka's winning the Nobel Prize in Literature, the use of the noun in apposition "the first African to be so honoured" as part of the attribute of the entity "Wole Soyinka" is a rhetorical attempt to emphasise the pride of place Nigeria occupies in streams of contributions Africa makes to global development.

Further, attributing the feat of designing the Chevy Volt electric car (one of the most admired American cars globally for its superior technology) by General Motors to another Nigerian Jelani Aliu is rhetorically significant given the fact that America is one of the leading lights in the automobile industry globally. It is interesting too that the entities whose attributes are being emphasised in the topic/link information structure also include the womenfolk in Nigeria: Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (Managing Director World Bank), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (winner of the Orange Prize for Fiction) and Asha (internal award-winning singing sensation). Hence, from banking, to literature to entertainment, Nigerian women are singled out as worthy ambassadors contrary to the possible negative picture of some Nigerian ladies as commercial sex workers in some notable cities in Europe and America.

## 7  Conclusion

This study has examined the rhetorical strategies used in the rebranding Nigeria campaign to communicate values and traditions, negotiate collective memory, invoke history and reinforce aspirations of a domestic audience for national image building. The rhetorical strategies explored in the study, despite the inner orientation of the rebranding Nigeria campaign, resonate with the discursive

construction of national identity narratives whereby positive self-perception is deployed by an in-group to contest purported negative perception by an out-group in a spirited effort to boost the confidence and patriotism of the domestic audience. The ideological struggle over disparate national identity narratives by patriotic internal stakeholders versus seeming external detractors as well as a disgruntled internal audience clearly demonstrates that nation branding discourse is a site of struggle over image perception. Given that discourses are never fully fixed, it is, therefore, justifiable that further research needs to explore the discursive patterns of approbation of or critical responses to the message of the rebranding campaign by the domestic audience in some counter-discourses or feedback responses via other public spheres apart from government-controlled media outlets.

The rhetorical strategies analysed in the study equally reveal the deployment of discursive practices which validate the principles of the theoretical framework adopted for the study. The study reveals that the social practice of seeking to mobilise an internal audience for a successful nation branding campaign necessitates the articulation of diverse social, cultural and historical elements which are central to the discursive construction of national identity. Such elements encompass some core national values and consciousness which are located in time and space relative to Nigeria's national identity in which some fond national memories are invoked, some subjects are celebrated as role models and some work ethics define the true Nigerian brand, among other national values. Generally, the analysis validates Fairclough's (2001: 125) definition of CDA as "a form of critical social science geared to illuminating the problems which people are confronted with by particular forms of social life, and to contributing resources which people may be able to draw upon in tackling and overcoming those problems".

## Funding

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