

## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION AND VISUAL POLLUTION: ITS PHILOSOPHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT**

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### **Abstract**

This research examines the relationships between the environment, visual communication as a resource and their significance to the aesthetics of the people. The research will look into the psychology and philosophy effect. Visual pollution on humans can be manifested in two forms which have been already recognized:- direct, the effects being psychological and physiological; - indirect, the effects being various, from road accidents caused by distraction, to the economic decline of a community. Environmental design professional/students should work and educate cultural planners, city planners, architects and engineers to enhance the visual aesthetic qualities of the built environment in some Nigerian cities. Visual Arts research provides a forum for historical, critical, cultural, psychological, educational and conception research in visual arts and aesthetic education

**Keywords:** Environmental communication, Visual pollution, advertising, Sign, and graphics philosophy and psychology

### **Introduction**

Visual pollution is a serious issue the environment just like other aspects and can be prevented through the proper application of graphics design resources. This paper addresses the sources and prevention of visual pollution in our environment. Sign and Graphics as a new axiological (its value and its perception on the people), on the one hand, and one of its most obvious effect, its sources, and prevention on visual pollution, which already starts to be in the attention of those who can counter it, on the other hand. Visual communication design plays a fundamental role in all aspects of education and information dissemination. This research paper, if properly implemented for advertising purposes can help reduce

and prevent visual pollution. Visual pollution on humans can be manifested in two forms which are direct, the effects being psychological and physiological; - indirect, the effects being various, from road accidents caused by distraction.

This study is an artistic/designer didactic perception towards effective advertising employing rich graphics signs and symbols in preventing and reducing visual pollution in the environment. Graphics is an abstract design mostly used to (enhance) enliven large public space which otherwise would be very dull. Design can involve recognizable motifs appropriate or typical to the situation under or maybe completely abstract. This type of pollution is strongly felt in the large urban areas where aggressive outdoor advertising (posters, billboards, pictures, neon, and so on.), became more than just unbearable. Experts consider that Graffiti, for example, has a strong negative influence, which may cause depression and acts of vandalism. The economic value is generally understood as the awareness of the usefulness of the goods comparing to others, which satisfies a certain need.

The needs are physical and mental, so there is the need to distinguish between two kinds of values: spiritual values and material values. The economic values are material. The value theory is more likely a theory of cost since it addresses a crucial moment of the value, that meaning the cost, the labor required producing the goods, and the limited usefulness. The economic values are constituent for the social reality; they represent only a part of the social values that span multiple levels with different functions in the social life. The ethical values relate to our desires which can be numerous, so we always require the same question: Which is the best goal? For some people, it is happiness for others wealth, virtue, and others. The psychological theory states that an ethical value has a mental basis; it is a product of the self will, of the will to upgrade one's personality.

**Visual pollution** is an aesthetic issue and refers to the impacts of pollution that impair one's ability to enjoy a vista or view. Visual pollution disturbs the visual areas of people by creating harmful changes in the natural environment. Billboards, other visual communication media, open storage of trash, antennas, electric wires, buildings, and automobiles are often considered visual pollution. Visual pollution can be caused by the crowding of an area. Visual pollution is defined as the

whole of irregular formations, which are mostly found in nature. The resultant effects of exposure to visual pollution include distraction, eye fatigue, decreases in opinion diversity, and loss of identity.

Nowadays, the conviction of every visual artist, professional or not, is that sign and architectural graphics undoubtedly plays a fundamental role in all areas of pollution prevention and control.

The value appears as well as the relationship between subject and object, in which employing polarity or polarization and hierarchy, people express their differentiated appreciation for certain things or their qualities, for certain persons or human acts, for certain works created by their ability to satisfy some specific needs, aspirations or interests.

### **Concepts used**

This study will only focus on three values, which are directly related to sign and architectural graphics as it affects the environment, and have an impact on this activity, namely: economic, ethical, and aesthetic values which, depending on the way they are perceived, and lead to visual pollution. Classification of values can be economic values, legal values, and political values, ethical values, historical values, aesthetic values, religious values. The first four values are determined by the constituent and regulating functions of the social life. The other three are determined by the frame in which the social reality exists and evolves.

The aesthetic values relate to the aesthetic pleasure by the existence of an object that has a value, beauty is the central aesthetic value, to which all the other ones report. By their specifics, the aesthetic values are significantly related to sensitiveness. The aesthetic values can be intuited, felt, experienced, represented, and imagined. And then we might ask ourselves: where is the beauty in all the Pollution, which is a consequence of the oversized and unjustified consumption. The forms of pollution are air pollution, water pollution, soil pollution, radioactive contamination, and noise (sound) pollution, thermal and visual pollution. It is noticed the possibility to group them into three basic categories: chemical, sound, and visual.

It must be mentioned that all living organisms (plants, insects, birds, animals, humans) are affected by visual pollution. This paper shall refer primarily to people, but also note that anything that affects other creatures listed above, actually distorts the functioning of the ecosystems and hence of the human. If the bright light prevents insects to move,

they can no longer be food for birds, the latter ones receive and transmit their influences in their turn, and the weaknesses chain continues.

Visual pollution on humans can be manifested in two forms which have been already recognized:- **direct**, the effects being psychological and physiological; - **indirect**, the effects being various, from road accidents caused by distraction, to the economic decline of a community. Dumitrescu A. and Manolache D., define the visual pollution by the presence, in the visual field, of some human-made implants, which are in disharmony with the landscape and which promote excessive, depressed, or subversive messages, ([www.imst.pub.ro/TCM/Dumi/Visual\\_Pollution.pdf](http://www.imst.pub.ro/TCM/Dumi/Visual_Pollution.pdf)).

This is strongly felt in the large urban areas where aggressive outdoor advertising (posters, billboards, pictures, neon, and so on.), became more than just unbearable. Experts consider that Graffiti, for example, has a strong negative influence, which may cause depression and acts of vandalism. The economic value is generally understood as the awareness of the usefulness of the goods comparing to others, which satisfies a certain need. The needs are physical and mental, so there is the need to distinguish between two kinds of values: spiritual values and material values. The economic values are material. The value theory is more likely a theory of cost since it addresses a crucial moment of the value, that meaning the cost, the labor required to produce the goods, and the limited usefulness. The economic values are constituent for the social reality; they represent only a part of the social values that span multiple levels with different functions in the social life. The ethical values relate to our desires which can be numerous, so we always require the same question: Which is the best goal? For some people, it is happiness for others wealth, virtue, and others. The psychological theory states that an ethical value has a mental basis; it is a product of the self will, of the will to upgrade one's personality.

**The visual pollution sources are:**

Billboards, open storage of trash space debris, telephone, towers, electric wires and others. This can be seen as an actual form of pollution in the environment that makes people feel insecure and uncomfortable. Administrative negligence – the local public administration loses control over what is built or assembled in public spaces, it does not know what

and where is displayed, does not solve the problem of buildings in ruins no matter who the owner is Logic, architecture, cleanliness, space harmony must be kept in the urban jungle, but they are all suffering because of the business interests and the obtaining of the profit. It is well known the skyscraper building type, with 19 floors or more, ground floor and four underground Levels, in cities like Lagos in Nigeria.

Development Building and other changes in the environment are determined by the location of all kinds of items (terraces, public transport stations, garbage cans, huge panels so powerfully illuminated that they can blind drivers at night, stalls, tents, booths installed for commercial purposes, different network cables, and so on.) on the public spaces. - excessive advertising - literally suffocating because not even the green areas (trees, land, parks, and so on...) are not spared in the desire to ensure good visibility. The existence of giant billboards, outdoor display in general, which is present from the means of transportation to garbage bins is also suffocating.

Many observers point out that advertising is both a mirror and also a shaper of public opinion, social manners, and standards. They state that by the absolute value of exposure, advertising sets a social agenda on what is expected, what is fashionable, and what is of good taste for a considerable number of people. This influence is manifested especially on young people, poorly educated, and impressed people. But the image is not a universal language, even if there is an illusion that it forwards meaning because of its analog capabilities. There is this confusion between perception and interpretation - vandalism – from the Graffiti mentioned above to offensive messages, obscenities, street markings of different groups, all made without the owner's consent.

The failure to comply, as the studies in this area emphasize studies, determines the feedback from participants in the process of communication, such as the increasing of the blood pressure and heart rate; confusion; the trying to regain territory or the acceptance of an intruder; the lowering performance; the increased verbal aggressiveness; the diminishing of the sense of cohesion within the group. Improper use of space and lack of control over what is built and assembled in public places contributes to the problem of the visual clutter in the environment, this in a way can be attributed to poor planning in building and architectural construction for example high rise building, the transport system can bring adverse changes to the visual and physical

characteristics of a new city layout, which may reduce the readability of visuals.

Graffiti is writing or drawings that have been scribed, scratched, or painted, typically, illicitly, on wall buildings or other surfaces, often with the public view. Graffiti ranges from simple written words to elaborate wall painting and have existed since ancient time, example dates back to ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, and Roman Empire. Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that explores art, beauty, and taste, with the creation of beauty. In its more technical epistemological perspective, it is defined as the study of subjective and sensor-emotional values, sometimes called a judgment of sentiment and taste. Aesthetics studies how artists imagine, create and perform works of art, how people use, enjoy, and criticizes art, and what happens in their minds when they look at a painting, listen to music and read poetry and understand what they see and hear.

In recent times people have been criticizing the way and manner billboards and artistic visuals sprang up in big cities in Nigeria. It is therefore pertinent to introduce new technologies, fragmentation, and incentive method of advertising methods to improve on, to reduce the cluster of visual in the environment. Graffiti adds to visual clutter as it disturbs the view. Highway Beautification Variations in the built environment are determined by the location of street furniture such as public transport stations, garbage cans, large panels, and stalls. Insensitivity of local administration is another cause of visual pollution. For example, poorly planned buildings and transportation systems create visual pollution. High-rise buildings, if not planned properly or sufficiently, can bring adverse change to the visual and physical characteristics of a city, which may reduce said city's readability.

#### **Results of some authorities involvement in the visual pollution**

Human security in some nation of the world is a highly valued factor and the authorities in some states and cities have passed effective measures towards the control of visual pollution. Of a particular importance in this context is the need to develop anticipatory policies and to prevent, mitigate and monitor any adverse impact on the environment in general and in a transboundary context in particular. In Norway, restrictions have been imposed in Bergen since 1990.

The great city of Beijing China is recognized as one of the countries that have pioneered in this of this struggle. The layout of any street advertising is reviewed by a special commission, which sets out its beneficial or polluting role, the harmonization with the urban area, and the possible distraction of drivers in congested areas with heavy traffic and only after that it is approved. The U.S.A. people are witnessing a limitation on the size and number of panels according to various criteria, such as the number of houses on a street. In certain areas there are allowed only small panels, the large ones being history. States such as Alaska, Vermont, and Maine have partially or totally banned them and the outdoor advertising is prohibited. The Czech Republic took a number of measures on the visual pollution caused by the excessive use of neon. Moscow has introduced a regulation to reduce the size of the outdoor advertising.

But the most radical response was recorded in Brazil, in the largest city, Sao Paulo, whose population has exceeded 11 million. The outdoor advertising is considered illegal. The "Clean City" Law prohibits advertising on public transport and strictly regulates what can appear on the frontispiece of the shop signs. The authorities in Seoul invest in innovative technologies and construction that respects nature, and they are also supported by the largest research and development institute in Europe, Fraunhofer Institute - Germany. The researchers here are working on developing an environmental project involving a prototype building efficiently built in point of energy, incorporating all the principles of modern technologies of saving the energy and using alternative energy like the sunlight, the wind and the geothermal heat.

The ecological architecture has not yet been clearly defined. Two approaches are highlighted: the "green" (ecological) architecture and the sustainable one. The first one represents the practice of increasing the efficiency with which buildings and adjacent land use and take energy, water and materials, and the reducing of the negative impacts of such buildings on the environment and human health by improving the design, construction, use, maintenance and demolition, and the last one means the conformation of the „green" architecture with the principles of socio-economic and ecological sustainability. In practice, the ecological architecture products are represented by the passive housing, with zero emissions, green, ecological, durable and sustainable.

About ecological landscape it can be stated that it represents the dialogue between the buildings and their surrounding area, in compliance with the environmental regulations. In such an organization there cannot be outside display to jam this dialogue. Finally, the public spaces will not be used for private business, and the reducing of pollution will lead to social benefits that will delight many. Even the problem of plastic waste, which often fly blown over us and which is known that they are not biodegradable has a very simple proposal to be solved, recently coming from a 16 years old student in Canada, Daniel Burda. He discovered the process of decomposition of the plastic bags in less than three months. Some water, very little carbon dioxide and Sphingomonas and Pseudomonas bacteria are needed for this. The outdoor advertising supports businesses and businesses support the economy of an area. It is known that large amounts are collected by renting the public spaces and the rights of the display.

### **Visual pollution prevention**

1. Billboards should be allowed to hang at the roadside for a specific period & after that time these should be removed to avoid the unwanted burden of billboards.
2. Wires should be stretched by following a well-planned design so that these do not cause any problem to view things of distance.
3. Protect and enhance the urban and architectural qualities of individual buildings, groups, sectors, and districts in the heritage building which should not be placed any external visual propaganda, except those expressly permitted by the regulations.
4. Protect the environmental qualities of residential areas and in which only permits the use of notices in areas specifically marked for trade and in portions of buildings for such use.
5. Protect all the elements of urban furniture, which should not hang banners or notices.
6. Protect trees and natural resource elements of the city, which should not hang banners or notices.
7. Protect the air space, aesthetics, and urban landscape and refrain from placing structures and billboards on the roofs of buildings or attached to walls.



8. Do not divert the attention of drivers and confusing elements and advertising attached to road signs.
9. Do not put many posters or paintings in a place altogether
10. To monitor and reduce drawing of graffiti's and others in a public place
11. Protect all elements of urban furniture's( poles, tress)
12. Protect natural recourses elements of the city, which should not hang banners or notices

Signs and architectural graphics should be properly used in the environment to educate and make people aware and invariable help prevent visual pollution. Sign system or architectural graphics is very important and useful in the present changing world of things. It points the way or directs travelers quickly and clearly, thereby playing a crucial role in accelerating and making life's what living. Colorful design elements are particularly useful in old and new buildings or projects where there is a rich mixture of shops and restaurants; in airports hospitals and public places.

Sign package and construction are not only determined by the graphics element of types and style but also by the environment in which the scheme has to appear and the function the signs are expected to play. The boundary between sign and architectural graphics (wall treatments, flags, and banners for example) is often subtle, at times non-existence. Some wall graphics can serve the dual function of displaying information and providing a large area of color. But architectural graphics as an abstract wall design are mostly used to (enhance) enliven large public space which otherwise would be very dull. Design can involve recognizable motifs appropriate or typical to the situation under or maybe completely abstract.

Signs have always been used to identify, direct and inform views. Signs systems provide many other economic benefits: Signs are an essential part of the overall advertising and identity of a corporation. Sign language helps create easily recognizable and distinctive public images necessary for the corporation or establishment. Interior signs and graphics decoration are used in such services-oriented establishments like Banks, supermarkets, Hotels, Institutions, and others to identify various sections and departments, which serve the public.

Sign language helps reduce the need for salespeople to direct customers to where they can find their needs when combined into a coordinated system. Signs can direct the flow of traffics and pedestrians. Signs are used in technical workshops and laboratories to indicate danger and safe operation. In institutions of learning directional signs are employed for easy identification and direction of visitors to their destinations without actually asking many questions. Sign systems communicate information to people quickly and at a relatively low cost. The economic benefit of signing in terms of time-saving alone can far outweigh the cost of providing the sign. Directional signs are always found along the roads directing users.

Art is the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as graphics, painting, or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power. Art can be defined as a diverse range of activities executed by human beings, as well as the products of these activities. Art can be of many forms as well. Visual art is the creation of images that can be seen by the eyes and these include sculpting, painting, ceramics, graphics, photography, and other visual media. Music, theatre, dance, film, and other arts that require performing fall under the performing arts category. Literature and other forms of interactive arts fall under a broader definition of arts while fields such as interior design, architecture, industrial design, and the likes fall under the category of applied arts. Art can also be defined as the representation of reality, communication of emotion, expression, or other qualities. Aesthetics is the branch of philosophy that explores arts and related concepts such as interpretation and creativity.

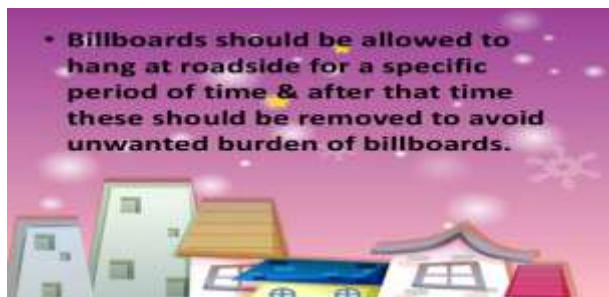
### **Conclusion**

The value of diversity in terms of visual designs, therefore, is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within the environment. This can be appreciated when architectural graphics are well employed in reducing and prevention visual pollution.

One will not definitely give up this kind of trade - *public spaces for information by means of advertising and money by renting*, due to the earnings. People are aware of the both sides of the phenomenon; the measures can be seen, especially in the local communities. It is a vicious circle, only that the rules will be better written! That is why business will give the both sides a strong impulse to work together.



Billboards should be allowed to hang at the roadside for a specific period & after that time these should be removed to avoid the unwanted burden of billboards.





Wires should be stretched by following a well-planned design so that these do not cause any problem to view things of distance.

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