UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

COMMUNICATING IDENTITY THROUGH INSCRIPTIONS ON VEHICLES

IN THE TARKWA-NSUAEM MUNICIPALITY

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DECEMBER, 2018

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Cecilia Senya Eshun declare that, this thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and has not been submitted either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE……………………………………

DATE……………………………………………

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Dissertation, as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Dr. Christiana Hammond

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DATE…………………………………………………………..

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to the Almighty God; my late grandmother, father and sister; my mum, children, brother and husband.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how vehicle owners and drivers in and around Tarkwa in the Western Region of Ghana use their vehicle inscriptions to construct their identity. With interview and observation, data was collected from twenty inscriptions and analysed. Hecht et al's communication theory of identity and Adamo Semiotics formed the theoretical framework of the study. Meanings of the inscriptions were also solicited from their authors through interviews. The study discovered that there are social, Christian, Muslim and Traditional identities among drivers and car owners in and around Tarkwa. The study also discovered that the choice of words used in the inscriptions help one to identify the type of identity. Finally, the study recommends to society to identify authors identities using their choice of registers in the inscriptions.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

Communication is an indispensable tool for the expression of thoughts, feelings and ideas. Various media exist through which people communicate. Johnston (2016) asserts that the invention of writing and in particular alphabetic writing, marked a milestone in cultural developments in terms of communication through inscriptions. It provided humanity with a new means of communication that literally inscribed in stone the spoken word. Communication now spans both space and time. Space, because writing can be sent from one place to another in several forms such as letters, books, billboards, signpost, flyers, posters, text messages and emails. And time, because of the timelessness of every written piece of work which could be preserved for generations yet unborn to read. Shannon (2012) adds that since the discovery of the art of writing, nearly every form of writing material has been of immense help to man. Some written works are intended to ensure permanence while others are inexpensive but temporary and are capable of ensuring permanence. From the wax notepad of the schoolboy to the grand inscriptions on monuments, almost everything about antiquity is derived from writings on stones, metals, woods, animals, vegetables, vehicles, ships and minerals (Johnston, 2016).

Anthropologists are just like drivers shuttling back and forth between two cultures. They interpret the texts of one culture for people who belong to another culture. Johnston (2016) asserts that as written forms of language slowly developed, the materials or canvas upon which texts were applied also changed to become more user friendly. All these materials were seen as rigid and primitive in kind. As the need for

better communication and recording occurred, better forms of writing materials like wooden boards, paper and cement walls were developed (Shannon, 2012).

Bernstein (2004) claims that, the earliest outdoor messages were probably inscriptions on Egyptian monuments and continues that when Johannes Gutenberg invented the movable type printing in 1450, other efforts for modern advertising were also introduced through the handbill. Bernstein (2004) adds that in 1796, the first illustrated poster was made when the lithographic process was perfected. During the early 20th century, the growing use of automobiles which quickly led to companies making use of billboard advertising to publicize a wide range of products and services were introduced. The effectiveness of these advertisements led to creating an entirely new branch of the advertising industry as clients demanded newer and more attractive ads that could catch the eye and entice travellers to stop and spend their money (Bernstein, 2004). In the early 1900s in the USA, there was a boom in national billboard campaigns. Big advertisers began mass production of billboards for the national market, from toothpaste and soaps, to breakfast, cereals and sodas, billboards were made to advertise in big, bold pictures and everything that was useful to man. However in 1913, the practice of filling "open boards" with public service advertising began and has continued to this day. In that, the advent of digital technology, hand-painted boards were replaced by computer-painted outdoor advertising formats where outdoor companies offered a diverse range of advertising formats (Sharprint, 2012). From the early civilization until the present time, man has used the billboards to advertise, market, share their feelings, and generally uplift the lives of many.

Wells (2016, p.41), comparing writing to other forms of communication argues that writing has the ability to "put agreements, laws, and commandments on record. The

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command of the priest or king and his seal could go far beyond his sight and voice and could survive his death" (p.41). In other words, the king's words lasted even after his death because they were written down.

Sharprint (2012) records that the printed T-shirt is so much a part of modern life that most people do not stop to consider its history. Printed T-shirts, came into existence through impressive technological innovations. Sharprint (2012) argues that textile printing has a much longer history than the T-shirts, and adds that today inscriptions on T-shirts are worn as a way of personal expressions where individuals can express their political and social views advocate for change, or simply amuse onlookers. It is also an indispensable form of identity for businesses as corporate marketing strategies. In effect, the wearer of an inscribed T-shirt is a "human billboard".

Currently, there are various ways of communication including posters, billboards, flyers and signboards. Technology has also contributed its parts in making such means of communication more appealing and less restrictive to the reader. The attractiveness of modern communication, perhaps is as a result of colourful paints, font styles, shiny canvas or media and the use of neon lights (Leiden, 2009).

In addition to efforts of corporate organisations, individuals can also construct their identities in ways that are inexpensive and perhaps handy. Most often, people are seen to use oil paints, chalk, charcoal, pens or clay to make simple inscriptions on items such as wheelbarrows, tables, chop boxes, drinking sports, restaurant, kiosks, walls, facial-boards of houses, utensils and book covers. These inscriptions could be a form of identity construction. In modern times, some appealing modern methods of inscriptions

have been adopted by people to construct their identities, ideologies, beliefs and norms on vehicles and other automobiles.

1.1 The Concept of Car Inscriptions (mottonyms)

Oduro-Frimpong (2013) used the term "Mottonyms" for inscriptions, based on people's experiences, on Ghanaian commercial vehicles and 'names' by which drivers of such vehicles are called. Oduro-Frimpong (2013) notes that prior research on mottonyms implicitly affirms that these inscription are embedded in human interpersonal relationships and upon careful reflections, express people's personal social experiences.

The term 'inscription' was once used in the 2009 European Union state document for General Contract of Use (GCU) to refer to all labels, loading weights, number plates and any other information that may help in identifying wagons. These inscriptions and signs in the EU documents have been grouped together according to certain processes or operations- the loading and provision of wagons, combined transport, train preparation, shunting, technical inspections, workshops and key warning signs – but are not exclusively assigned to a specific process, specialist department or user. The document states categorically that no other meaning should be assigned to the inscriptions on the wagons except those mentioned in the document.

However, later, the term 'inscription' in its true sense means information that serves as records. This meaning may differ in the Ghanaian context for human communication. Perhaps, the most appropriate word often used is the 'signboard'. There is no ambiguity to the meaning of 'vehicle signboard 'or 'store signboard' 'building signboard' in the Ghanaian society. In this study, however, 'vehicle inscriptions' will be used more often than the term 'Mottonyms' or 'inscriptions'.

In this study 'vehicle inscriptions' is operationalized as any piece of writing on vehicles, other than the legal information and advertisements, that reflects on the experience or philosophical perspective of the inscriber and that may serve as a message as well as a name to the general public. For instance, if a car has the inscription *Yesu mo,* refers to "thank you Jesus*"* both the drivers and the vehicle owners are also called "Yesu mo". These inscriptions also serve as names to the drivers or the vehicles itself and are usually referred to as such in conversations. The inscription may be written in paint or may be printed stickers and fixed on the front part, side part or behind cars, thus on any part of the vehicle.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Though modern forms of communication continue to serve as means of sending information to audience, they are simultaneously used as a means of identifying the belief, philosophy and religious background of the communicator. Among the previous works of scholars is Malinowski (2010), whose work on canoe inscriptions was used to reflect the tradition ad experiences of fishermen. The objective of Malinowski (2010) was to determine if canoe inscriptions are related to lives. Various inscriptions were collected from canoes and informal interviews. Malinowski asserts that, reasons and the implications of inscriptions from fishermen, portray their experiences and traditions by serving as a rich medium for the exploration of the fishermen's culture and lifestyle. Malinowski (2010) finally recommends that, the canoe inscriptions be preserved well to serve as a useful means by which culture is transmitted from generation to generations, and place to place.

Miller (2001), also sees inscriptions on cars as an extension of the human body and a person's 'intimacy with his or her car'. He posits that inscriptions show a person's affection towards his or her car and that as the car gets old, the love diminishes, such that the car could be used to measure a person's level of affection towards an object. Also Miller (2001) furthers his study by using a collection of inscriptions and 'car station conversations' to relate to the intimacy between drivers and their vehicles. He concludes that a new vehicle that fetches money, reputation and comfort to its driver has a friendly and pleasant inscription such as "*I love my car*" and *"Girl bi nti*" means (Because of a certain girl). However, when the vehicle begins to deteriorate and does not provide the expected daily returns, the inscriptions also changes and becomes unpleasant like, *"I don't care*", "*Mmaka a mmaka"* (What I have said is what I have said). Miller (2001) therefore uses vehicle inscriptions to differentiate between new vehicles and old ones.

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Bernstein (2004), also traces the history of inscriptions in general by examining outdoor messages and the changes that have occurred. He presents historical information on inscriptions to when it became an outdoor means of communication. He contends that the proliferation of billboards in the streets is an indication that inscriptions have shifted from personal expressions of opinions to opinions that seek to convince society on themes such as taste, colour, quality of products and reasons to choose one trading commodity over another. He concludes that the number of outdoor inscriptions is an indication that technology has promoted trade.

Leiden (2009) studied from another perspective vehicle inscriptions and highlife music in Ghana and their interconnectedness. Leiden's (2009) study sets out to identify the inscriptions in Ampadu's cone of (i.e. one of the greatest high life artiste in Ghana) music and the messages embedded in them using excerpts from Ampadu's song in the1985's. His study concludes that, vehicle inscriptions in Ampadu's highlife music portray a drivers' experiences and philosophy in life. Therefore, he recommends that if the society wants to know how drivers think and understand issues, the inscriptions on their vehicles is a perfect source for that information.

Nash (2016) depicts the relationships between billboards and language by arguing that language and landscape are obliged to each other. His objective is to explore whether language used and the content of billboard are related. He uses pictures of billboards in the streets for analysis and concludes that, indeed, there is a relationship between the content of the text and pictures on billboards.

Oduro-Frimpong (2013) studied vehicle inscriptions as a referent name for drivers of such vehicles. His objective was to relate vehicle inscriptions as a means of expressing interpersonal relationships. He used a collection of vehicle inscriptions to show the interpersonal relationships between personal experiences of their authors and the text. He recommends that, vehicle inscriptions should be used to show how a person relates with others as well as share their experiences with others.

Wereko (2016) examined inscriptions and art forms on artisanal marine canoes in three communities in the Central Region with the aim of identifying and documenting art forms advertisement on canoes as well as their communicative implications. Using interviews to collect data grounded on the theory of identification by Burkes (1973) he reveals that marine canoe inscriptions are made up of texts, pictures and symbols.

Wereko (2016) observes that the meaning of such inscriptions can best be interpreted by the authors themselves, although some readers may have their own interpretations deduced as well. He concludes that, the art forms and inscriptions on canoes reflect the life experiences of fishermen including their perils on their voyage as well as the culture of their community.

From the review thus far, it could be seen that little attention has been given to the use of inscriptions on vehicles as a form of constructing an identity. This is a research gap that this current study seeks to fill by examining how writers of inscriptions of vehicles construct their identities through their inscriptions. Filling the research gap would therefore help to extend the literature by exploring the philosophies and meanings that are latent in the inscriptions and can only be revealed by authors of the inscriptions.

It is therefore the focus of this thesis to examine inscriptions on vehicles and to identify how inscribers of such inscriptions construct their identities through them. This study aims at examining vehicle inscriptions as a means of communication to identify the ideology, belief and philosophy of the inscriber for the target audience to identify with him or her. This will assist audience to understand the meaning of the inscriptions as well as the intent of the communicator.

1.3 Research Objectives

These objectives were formulated to guide the study;

1. To identify the kinds of inscriptions on vehicles in the Tarkwa Municipality.

2. To investigate how the authors of inscriptions on vehicles in the Tarkwa municipality construct their identity through such inscriptions.

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1.4 Research questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the inscriptions on vehicles found in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipality?

2. How do the authors of the inscriptions on vehicles in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem municipality construct their identities through the inscriptions?

1.5 Significance of the study

This research will help decipher as well as divulge some of the inscription on vehicles in Ghana most especially Tarkwa-Nsuaem municipality in the Western Region. The research would be of great benefit to institutions and organizations such as the Centre for National culture, Ghana Tourist Board, Museums and Monuments Board in addition to the promotion and maintenance of tourist attraction in Ghana. Moreover, this documentation, the vehicle inscriptions of the past and present day will be preserved for posterity.

The research will help people to understand the author's ways of thinking which reflect in their inscriptions, having had the ability to relate to the background of their inscriptions.

More importantly, this study will enlighten people in society on the similarities and differences in the ideas, aspirations and thoughts of different people that live together in the society. Again, this research would add to existing literature on vehicle research in Ghana and promote further research on the study of language and communication.

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1.6 Delimitation

The research examines inscriptions on vehicles in Tarkwa Lorry Park. It is assumed that the vehicles at the lorry parks in Tarkwa form part of the society. The researcher would have wished to extend his research work to other districts near Tarkwa so that this findings could have been described as a general problem in the municipality but this work was centred on Tarkwa -Nsuaem community due to the limited time and availability of the vehicles.

Again, this study did not cover all inscriptions on vehicles. By inscription, the researcher refers to writings on vehicles regarded as embedded with. Other inscriptions such as vehicle registration number, advertising stickers and labels are exempted from being considered as inscriptions.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The study is presented in five interrelated chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and covers the background of the study by tracing the history of inscriptions and changes that have occurred in the modern era. It also discusses the problem under investigation and sets out the objectives and the questions. Chapter two discusses the related literature on the identity theory of communication which is used to ascertain types of inscriptions and the ideologies of the inscribers. The chapter identifies the differences and similarities of inscriptions on the basis of the background of the inscriber.

The chapter three contains the research approach and design, and methods of data collection and explains subsections such as population and sampling, sampling

procedure and data analysis plan. Chapter four covers data analyses, discussions and interpretations of findings and the chapter five presents a summary of main findings, conclusions and provides recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, literature related to the study is reviewed. The chapter also contains the theoretical framework of the study and how it was applied to the data gathered on

identity; how identity constructed by vehicle owners through inscriptions on their vehicles.

2.1 The Historical Overview of Inscriptions

Wells (2016) asserts that the first writing was merely an abbreviated method of pictorial record. The invention of writing was of very great importance in the development of human societies. It put agreements, laws, commandments views and ideas on record. It made the growth of states larger than the old city states possible. It also made a continuous historical consciousness possible. The command of the priest or king and his seal could go far beyond his sight and voice and could survive his death. It is interesting to note that in ancient Sumeria, seals were greatly used. A king or a nobleman or a merchant would have his seal often very artistically carved, and would impress it on any clay document he wished to authorize.

According to Orly (2010), historians draw a sharp distinction between prehistory and history, with history defined by the advent of writing, which was the beginning of inscription. Orly (2010) continues that the cave paintings and petroglyphs of prehistoric peoples can be considered precursors of inscriptions, but are not considered true writing because they did not represent language directly. Writing systems develop and change based on the needs of the people who use them. Sometimes the shape, orientation, and meaning of individual signs changes over time. By tracing the development of a script, it is possible to learn about the needs of the people who used the script as well as what changed over time (Orly, 2010).

2.1 Related Works on Vehicle Inscriptions

Thompson (1996) record that painted texts and figures on vehicles are found in many countries. For example in Nigeria, in Haiti, and in Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Ghana and Sierra Leone. Vehicle inscriptions are more common in Africa than elsewhere in the world, and their abundance began after colonialism (Thompson, 1996).

Law (1980) writes that the rare instances of wheeled transport in the pre-colonial era were mainly ceremonial or, to a lesser degree, were used in warfare. None the less, wheeled vehicles as a regular means of transport were probably rejected because the enormous costs involved outweighed any likely advantages.

It is impossible to imagine a Ghanaian street-scene without vehicle inscriptions. There are names and sayings on vehicles, elegantly framed by entwining flowers, little figures or other decorative motifs. Sign- painting is also applied to canoes, as in beer and 'chop bars, beauty salons, barbering shops, kiosks and other places of business (Kirsten, 1980). This visualization of wisdom and proverbs is a continuation of an old tradition of decorating gold weights, spokesman, linguist staffs, umbrella tops, Fante Asafo flags, 'Adinkra' symbols and Kente cloths, all of which are adorned with similar expressions of wisdom.

Armah (1974) observes that texts on vehicles are directly visible but enigmatic. They speak out and remain silent at the same time. Tourists read them but do not understand them, not even when they are painted in English.

Kroniek van Afrika (1973) mentions that the texts are seldom original: they are derived from and refer to a world well known to Ghanaians. The text may be taken from an old proverb, a modern saying, a Christian prayer, the Bible, a newspaper report, sport or a

political event. The visitor is struck by the picturesque decoration but is at the same time put in his place because he does not understand as an outsider. Yet some Ghanaians may also not understand the specific point of a given text, or know exactly what they mean. Some inscriptions may tell a personal history which is known only to the driver or the car owner. The text may be conventional, but its full meaning may be unique and private. In an essay about Ampadu, the maker of the famous "Driverfo" song, Yankah (2000) describes "akutia" as 'a strategic verbal assault in which speakers in face-to-face confrontation avoid eye-contact with their targets and rather insinuate with words without mentioning names'.

The same applies, if to a lesser extent, to a driver who does not own a vehicle. His position, too, is viewed with some envy. He, too, is insecure: if he fails to do well financially, he will be sacked. Drivers and owners express their worries and anxieties in lorry inscriptions, according to Field. Some inscriptions reflect financial concern or flatter rich relatives. Envy, provoking witchcraft or other destructive actions form a particularly feared danger. Yankah (2011) inscriptions can be placed on a continuum ranging from defensive to offensive ways of contending with the dangers of witchcraft and bad luck. The owner or driver of a vehicle draws attention away from his own excellence, making him a less likely target for witchcraft. Thus, the inscriber in a way secures that God's help in case of misfortunes. Examples of defensive texts on vehicles in such instances include: "Nyame yɛ adom", (God is grace),"Wɔfapa yɛ", (It is good to have a good uncle), "Agyapa yɛ" (It is good to have a good father), "Ao Nyame boa me", (God help me) "Abotrɛ yɛ", (Patience is virtuous).Yankah (2011p.15) adds that car inscriptions, represent some form of experiential or religious "philosophical summaries" for drivers and served as a form of motivating motivation for the

inscribers. Geest (2013) notes that, a few observations need to be made to sketch the development in inscription. Accordingly, the first and most striking change is the Christianization of inscriptions. He asserts that more and more inscriptions come from Christian sources, such as Bible texts, hymns and prayers. Thus referring to Onyame (a traditional and a Christian term for God).

In spite of the continued practice of such mottonyms, there is an area in this tradition that has significantly changed. In essence, previously, roadside artists used oil-based paint to write these mottonyms but in recent times, artists 'carve' or print the majority of such mottonyms from sticky plastic. It is worthy also to note that within the Ghanaian commercial driving industry, most drivers are not necessarily the owners of the vehicles they drive. However, because most of the drivers have very good working relationships with their 'masters' they allow them to write their preferred inscriptions on the vehicles. In the researcher's interviews, she declined to interview those drivers who did not originate the inscriptions on their vehicles (Adamo, 2015)

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Hecht et al. (2004) observes, that individual's identities influence the formation of their beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. As a result, many scholars have studied identity to determine its effects on individuals' health choices, values, actions and thoughts under the assumption that identity and philosophy are entwined (e.g. Haslam, Jetten, Postmes, & Haslam, 2009). The theory posits that individuals internalize social interactions, relationships, and a sense of self into identities through communication. In other words, the relationship between communication and identity is reciprocal. From this perspective, communication helps build, sustain, and modify one's identity (Hecht et

al, 2004). Identity theorists argue that individuals behave in certain ways to remain consistent with their in-group's norms (Harwood & Giles, 2005) as well.

2.2.1 Communication Theory of Identity

Communication Theory of Identity by Hecht, Jackson, and Ribeau (2004) was developed based on theory and empirical data suggesting that communication is an element rather than just a product of identity. Among an emerging group of theories seeking to view identity as more processed and layered, CTI presents a more comprehensive or synthetic view of identity integrating community, communication, social relationships, and self-concepts, while "locating" identity in all these layers. Hecht et al posit that CTI has 10 common axiomatic propositions;

1. Identities have individual, social, and communal properties.

2. Identities are both enduring and changing.

3. Identities are affective, cognitive, behavioural, and spiritual.

4. Identities have both content and relationship levels of interpretation.

5. Identities involve both subjective and ascribed meanings.

6. Identities are codes that are expressed in conversations and could define membership in communities.

7. Identities have semantic properties that are expressed in core symbols, meanings, and labels.

8. Identities prescribe modes of appropriate and effective communication.

9. Identities are a source of expectations and motivations.

10. Identities are emergent and evolving

This "layered" perspective views one's identity formation and management as an on-going process of communication with the self and with others, rather than as a simple product of communication (Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau, 2003). In addition, CTI

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conceptualizes identity as a collective quality or form of social construction, where there is a "shared" element to identify with. For instance, just as members in certain groups recognize or share a particular language, beliefs, norms, and culture, they could also share common images of "selfhood" or identity that transcend the individual group members and reflect in cultural products and myths. As a result, CTI suggests that four layers of identities—personal, enacted, relational, and communal which interact or influence each other (e.g., Hecht, 1993; Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau 2003). In other words, the four layers of identity do not exist separately. However, for analytical purposes they are often defined and understood separately or as separate entities (Hecht, 2003). The following subsections describe the basic premise underlying each of the four layers and the relationships among them (Hecht, 1993; Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau, 2003).

Personal Layer identity

The personal layer refers to the individual as a locus or frame of identity. This layer may be thought of as being similar to one's self-concept, self- image, self-cognitions, feelings about the self or self-esteem, and or a spiritual sense of being. The personal layer of identity provides an "understanding of how individuals define themselves in general as well as in particular situations" (Hecht, 1993).

Enactment Layer

In this layer, identity is seen as being enacted in communication through messages. This layer conceptualizes identity as a performance or something which is expressed. Thus, when people communicate in a persuasive or articulate fashion, they are enacting an identity. Some enactments have significant outcomes for car inscriptions. It is

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worthy of note that this realm of identity has been studied less than the personal and relational layers, thus leaving room for future communication research.

Relational Layer

The relationship layer is central to identity formation where identity is seen as a mutual product, jointly negotiated and mutually formed in relationships through communication. Relational layer has three aspect. First, an individual constitutes his or her identities in terms of other people through social interactions with others and the formation of the person's identity is influenced by other people's views of him/her especially, through ascriptions and categorizations. For instance, an individual may form a relational identity as a "good person" by   being described as such. Second, an individual could create his or her identity through building relationships with others, such as marital partners, co-workers, and friends. Social roles are particularly important in shaping the identity. Third, the relationship itself can be a unit of identity. For example, a couple can establish an identity as a unit and thereby articulate a relational identity (Hecht, 2004).

Communal Layer

As noted earlier, a group is conceptualized as a frame or location for identity. While group membership (e.g., gender, race) can be the basis for personal identity, the community, itself, is an identity. While such a view may seem alien to the individualistic world of Western social science, communal identities are manifest in numerous ways. Group members share common characteristics, histories, and collective memories that transcend individuals and result in commonly held identities. Sometimes these identities are manifested in stereotypes, but other times they are simply the cultural code for the group members' (Hecht et al, 2004).

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2.2.2 Communication as Semiotics

Semiotics 'involves an analysis of signs and systems and their meanings especially in the area of communication' (Wales 1990, p.416). In a semiotic study such as this, the notion of sign is central. According to Adamo (2009), a 'sign' is everything that can be taken as standing for something else it is one of the six factors in communication which separately and together makes up the rich domain of semiotic research (Sebeok 1977, p. 16). Signs, therefore, are generally perceived as functioning in a communication process for sharing meaning (Adamo 2009, p. 12). Semiotics "involves an analysis of signs and sign systems and their meanings especially in the area of communication" (Wales 1990, p. 416).

Peirce's (1986) notion of semiotics involves a sign which consists of representatum, its object and its interpretant. This notion is important for this research because it is the representatum which is the visible present part of the sign, which in this research refers to the visible inscriptions written on motor vehicles. The object is that, the representatum refers which in this article is the owners and the drivers of the vehicles. The interpretant is the meaning conveyed by representatum which is the meaning of these signs to the drivers or owners, passengers or the writers of the representatum in the African context. Peirce, therefore, sees a sign as a triadic process rather than a dyadic structure and he views meaning as essentially relation rather than difference (Peirce 1986, p.46). A sign has meaning only in the context of a continuing process of interpretation and according to him the interpretant is another sign that translates and explains the first one and so on (Peirce 1986,p.46). According to Peirce (1986) the process by which something functions as a sign involves three factors called sign vehicle, the designatum, the interpretant and the epresentatum, which are the three

branches of semiotics and are related to three basic factors: sign, referents and users. In semiosis, one thing takes account of something else through mediation of a third thing.

2.3 Summary of Chapter

The chapter has reviewed related literature on the study. It is observed that several researches have been done on inscriptions. However, it was noted that the study of inscription as a means of knowing identity as well as their philosophical perspectives is yet to be common among scholars. Notably, similar researches on highlife, canoe inscriptions and clothing have occurred elsewhere in Africa but not enough on vehicle inscriptions and the construction of identity in Ghana.

It has also been espoused that, the communication identity theory is the most appropriate framework for the analysis of data and to situate the background of the inscribers of the vehicles as the source of their philosophies. Using the communication theory of communication theory of identity (CTI) by Hecht et al (2004), analysis included how   identity is constructed by inscribers on the four identity layers.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The methods of data collection for this study is described in this chapter. The main areas captured are the research approach, population, sample and sampling procedure, instruments for data collection, data analysis plan, ethical considerations and trustworthiness of data.

3.1 Research Approach

This study adopted the qualitative approach in order to explore and understand the meanings of vehicle. The study thus sought to explore the reasons behind the inscriptions on vehicles and the kind of identities that the inscribers sought to construct. Creswell (2013) explains that the qualitative approach is useful to explain the rich symbolic world that underlies needs, desires, meaning and choice.

3.1 Research Design

According to Creswell (2014), research design is a very important consideration for any research work. It serves as the general principle that guides the study. Robson (1993) adds,- a design is the overall strategy that a researcher chooses to integrate the different components of a study in a coherent and logical way. And ensures that each element effectively addresses the research problem as well as the focus of the study. In this study, a case study approach has been adopted to investigate how inscriptions on vehicles in and around Tarkwa municipality can reflect the identity of the inscribers.

3.2 Participants of the Study

Elliot (2016) defines participants as the individual or group who's physiological and or behavioural characteristics and responses are the object of research project. In this study

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twenty participants were consulted, mostly from the lorry parks in the district. Six of the participant were car owners, and fourteen of the vehicles were drivers. Fifteen lorry parks were visited because of proximity and the fact that they are the busiest parks.

3.3 Sample size and Sampling Technique

Sampling is the process of selecting a subgroup of a population that will be used to represent the entire population, according to Elliot (2016).Sample refers to the number of subjects in a study. Sampling technique, is the part of the research plan that specifies why and how many respondents will be selected for a study. The sampling was based on the fact that data have different themes and reflect different social and religious background of the drivers or car owners. This helped me to do a thorough analysis of the data in order to identify the various social and religious philosophies of the people. Much time and attention were allotted for these samples in order to do a detailed analysis. The choice of one data against the other depended on the differences in themes or similarities in the inscriptions on the vehicles. Hence, the sampling could be described as random since data were gathered anywhere, anytime within the Tarkwa - Nsuaem municipality.

The sampling was based on data that have different themes and reflect on different social and religious background of the drivers and car owners. This helped the researcher to do a thorough analysis of the data in order to identify the various social and religious philosophies of the people. Another reason is that the lorry parks spread across the districts and the researcher was not able to reach all of them within the time frame. However, arrangements were made with some citizens of the various towns where the lorry parks reside, so that they could identify some car inscriptions on my behalf. This arrangement helped me to collect much data. The twenty samples were all

taken from Tarkwa-Nsuaem municipal since it was difficult to sample every inscription in the lorry parks within the period of the research.

3.4 Instrument for Data Collection

Snape and Spencer (2003) posit that certain data collection methods have also been identified with qualitative research such as observation, in-depth interviewing, focus group discussions, narratives and the analysis of documentary evidence. Interviews and observations were the instruments used for the data collection in this study. Yin (2012) states that, interview is appropriate for data collection where information is gathered through oral or written questioning. The goal of the data collection was to capture quality evidence that would allow its analysis to lead to the formulation of convincing and credible answers to questions that have been posed. The instruments thus helped me to seek clearer meanings, explanations as well as justifications from the participants as well as their inscriptions.

Interview

Seidman (1998) explains that an interview is a conversation where questions are asked to elicit information. Daymon and Hollowoy (2010), also state that interviews are a major source of data in qualitative research and helps the researcher to explore participants' perspectives and perceptions. Interviews are explained as a means to collaboratively extract information about people's feelings, intentions, experiences and ideas; the interviewer is usually a professional or paid researcher, sometimes trained, who poses questions to the interviewee, in an alternating series of usually brief questions and answers (Daymon & Holloway,2010). Kvale (2007) sees interviews as the interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. The use of the interviews therefore offered me sufficient flexibility in obtaining accurate

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account on the phenomena that was being studied. In this study, informal interview was used. This enabled me to solicit views on the meaning of the inscriptions on vehicles from the subscribers themselves.

Observation

According to Bell (2008), observation is useful in determining what people actually do or how they actually behave in contexts**.** The observation method enable me to collect data from the inscriptions on the vehicles. The recordings of the inscriptions helped me to process and capture pictures of the inscriptions for the analyses and thematisation of data.

3.5 Data Collection Method

All data were collected from the fifteen lorry parks which are suburbs found in the Tarkwa- Nsuaem municipality. During the process participants were interviewed and recorded. The data is therefore transcribed from audio with written notes done in a jotter as back-up, should there be a part of the audio that may be unclear. Also pictures of some inscriptions on the vehicles were taken and included in the work. The interviews were also conducted at the stations and in the homes of the car owners. During narration from the participants voice recordings were made using a mobile phone recording devices. Notes, in synopsis, of the story or the case, were also made to back the recordings, should there be a part that will not be audible. All recordings made were very audible.

Each data or sample accompanied an interview with the drivers or car owner on the meaning and intent of the inscription. Some of the interviews were recorded using a

mobile devices with notes written in synopsis to support understanding or to back the records in case of failure. Here, the researcher used an earphone to listen and then transcribe them on a laptop, instead of writing before typing them. Sometimes, the researcher had to pause the audio, repeat a part before it could all be typed. However, consideration was given to audibility, themes that are different from one another and the length of the proceedings. Each of the twenty selected samples was replayed, transcribed and translated; some of them were in Twi, Wassa or Fante. This required time, attentiveness and patience. One has to replay a single utterance several times before getting all transcribed onto paper. Here, the researcher used an earphone. Sample of the inscriptions were translated from the Ghanaian Language into English. This stage was followed by the analysis of the inscriptions.

3.6 Data Analysis Plan

Here, inscriptions such as symbols and texts their analysis are analysed according to the designatum or sign, the interpretant or meaning and the representum or inscriber. In the end, the meaning of the inscription, the background of the inscriber and the category of philosophy from which he takes his ideology will be identified. Though the combination of the CIT and the semiotic branches are not easy to use, they will, nevertheless, serve the purpose of this research. The analysis of the data was done under three semiotic branches namely the designatum or sign, the interpretant or referents and the representatum or users. The designation or sign refers to the car inscription identified on the car; the interpretant or referent is the meaning of the inscription and the representatum or user is the person who chose the inscription, in this case, the driver or car owner. Afterwards, four layers of the identity theory, namely personal, enactment, relational and communal layers are used to identify the identity of the inscriber and to ascertain the category in which his philosophy falls. This is followed

by listening to the interview in the audio for more explanation on the inscription. The simple interlinear translation was used where the language need translation. Categories were also made of the data in order to identify the various ideologies, similarities and differences in the district

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has been devoted to descriptions on the research approach, design, population, sample size and sampling technique, data collection methods, and data analysis plan for the study. Participants selected at random included drivers, station masters, drivers' mates, passengers and the general public. Among the places visited included twelve stations in Tarkwa- Nsuaem municipality. Participants selected included drivers and car owners. Twenty inscriptions were selected and supplemented with interviews using a high sensitive phone device, backed by written notes for the analysis. Details of the two theories, which form the theoretical framework of this study, CTI by Hecht et al. (2004) and Semiotics (Adamo, 2009) were used as the framework for the analysis of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of findings and discussion on the data gathered on how identity is constructed through the inscriptions of vehicles in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem

municipality in the Western Region of Ghana. The discussions were done in relation to the following research objectives:

1. To identify the kinds of inscriptions on vehicles in the Tarkwa Municipality.

2. To investigate how the authors of inscriptions on vehicles in the Tarkwa Municipality construct their identity through such inscriptions.

4.1 Data Presentations

RQ1: What are the kinds of inscriptions on vehicles in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem municipality?

The inscriptions on the vehicles were categorised into themes in line with religion, politics, social and economic as asserted by (Verrips, 2002).Twenty inscriptions were selected out of the thirty inscriptions because it conformed to the research guidelines stipulated. This section thus analyses the meanings underpinning the texts collected from the vehicle owners and drivers who were purposively interviewed. The themes identified are; Christianity, Islam, and other issues. Below in Table 1 is a categorisation of the inscriptions according to their specific themes.

Table 1: Category of themes on inscriptions on vehicles

Christianity	Islam	Other issues
Bisa Ewurade	Al-Hamdu Lillahi	No pain, No gain.
		Determination
In Jesus Name	Al- Rahman	Love
Saviour	Zaman, Lafiya	Be hopeful

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Yesu mo	Allah Baka Lafiya	All shall pass
Blood of Jesus	Naagode Allah	Who knows tomorrow
The Lord is my shepherd	Yabuunde muna, Koofan saamu	If 7+2=11 who cares? Efa wo ho bɛn?
Son of man	Isha Allah	W'ano pɛ asem
Jesus wept	Allah Baka Lada, Adizatu	Nkwa pa
I and my father are one	Bismillali…….	Blessing
Isaiah 41:10-15	Allah Hu Akbar	Sweet mother

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, (2018)

From Table 1 there are three (3) categories of themes: Christianity, Islam and other issues. For instance, the themes for the Christianity included: *Bisa Ewurade* meaning "ask God". According to a participant, Christians, in every activities of their lives are supposed to ask God for direction as well as protection. Also, the participant added that, *In Jesus Name* is also another theme under Christianity which confirms the Christian faith that anything which is asked in the name of Jesus will be granted.

Saviour in the Christian faith refers to "Jesus" who is believed to have come to the world to save mankind from sin.

In the Akan language *Yesu mo* means 'Thank you Jesus'. Another participant said that, Jesus died on the cross for him to have salvation, "*blood of Jesus''* from the cross of Calvary which was shed for the redemption of sins according to the Christian faith is what makes him (participant) to become a Christian. *Son of man* is used in the Bible to refer Jesus Christ and *Jesus wept* is the shortest quotation in Bible according to a participant. *I and my father are one* and *Isaiah 41:10-15* are also inscriptions found in table 1 under the Christian themes.

Islamic inscriptions in the Hausa language were also found in Table 1 to include, *Al – Hamdu Lillahi* meaning "all praises to God", *Al-Rahman* which means "merciful God", *Zaman, Lafiya* means "peaceful co-existence" implying that one should live in peace with every member in the society. *Naagode Allah* refers to "thank you God", *Yabuunde muna, Koofan saamu* means "God gives us more properties, *Isha Allah* refers to "God willing", *Allah Baka Lada* means "God bless you", *Bismillahi…*refers to "beginning in the name of God' ,*Allah Hu Akbar* means "God is great"

Furthermore, from Table 1, inscriptions of other issues were; *No pain No gain, Determination, Love, Be hopeful, All shall pass, Who knows tomorrow, if 7+ 2=11, who cares? Efa* WO bɛn? means "it does not concern you" W'ano *pɛ asem, means "you push your mouth into every issue" Nkwa pa, refers to "good life" Blessing, and lastly sweet mother.*

Below are the vehicles with inscriptions attesting to the Christian faith.

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Fig.1. Vehicle Inscriptions on Christianity

Source: Researchers fieldwork, (2018)

Fig.1 includes some of the vehicles with Christian inscriptions like *saviour, Yesu mo,*

*in the name of Jesus and Isaiah 41:10-*15. From a participant, all Christians believe that

anything they ask in the name of Jesus, ensures that they acknowledge that everything comes from the Lord and that Jesus indeed deserves all the thanks, *Yesu Mo. Isaiah 41: 10-15*

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness…………" According to a participants this is his favourite quotation in the Bible, because the repetition of "fear" in this quotation makes the devil become afraid of him (participant) and so, everyone in the society calls him "fear not" which has become his acquired identity.
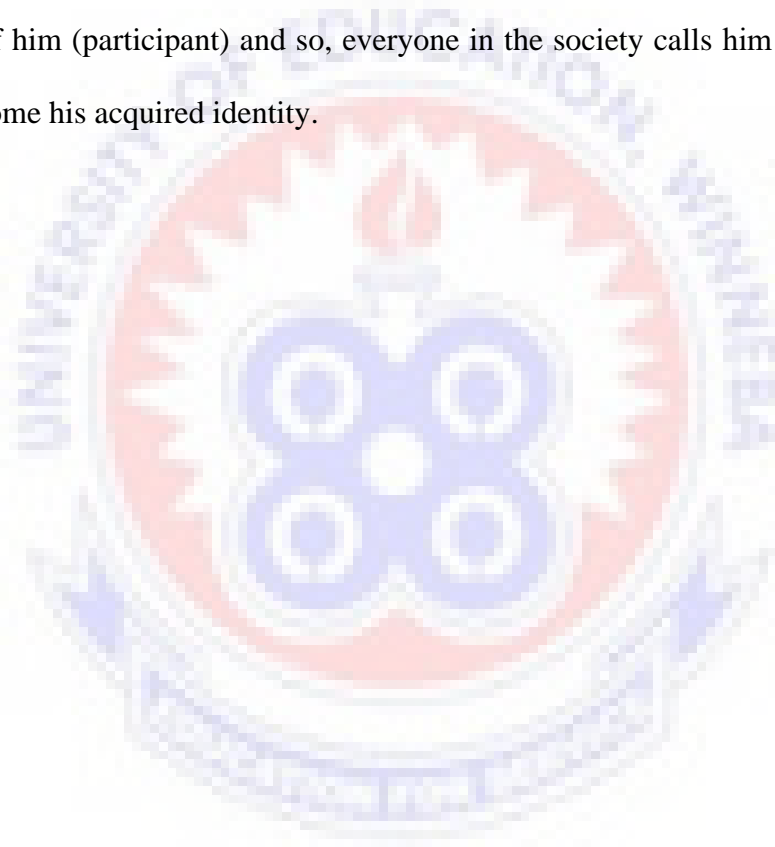
Below are the vehicles with inscriptions attesting to the Islamic faith

Fig.2: Vehicle Inscriptions on Islamic Religion

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, (2018)

Islamic inscriptions on vehicles in Fig.2 includes Isha Allah, "Allah" is the Supreme Being who deserves all the praise and adoration and everything good comes from Him, protection, good health and prosperity comes from Him according to a participant.

Fig.3. Below are vehicles with inscriptions attesting to other issues

Fig.3: Vehicle Inscriptions on Other Issues

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, (2018)

Be Hopeful, No pain, No gain, Determination, Love and *If 7+2=11 who cares? Efa WO ho bɛn?* Were some of the inscriptions in the "Other issues category" as shown in Fig.3? In life determination and perseverance are what one needs to go through pains in life, to achieve something. Being hopeful helps one to overcome the pains in life. From a participant, No one should be bothered in life about other people's issues is what the inscription If 7+2=11 who cares?

RQ2:   How do authors of inscriptions on vehicles construct their identities through the inscriptions?

The data revealed that the vehicle owners and drivers chose their inscriptions thoughtfully. Thus, the inscriptions helped them to create an identity for themselves. The Communication Theory of identity (CTI) (Hecht, 2004) states that, people can be identified by personal, enacted, relational and communal layers and each of these can be constructed or de-constructed depending on purpose and context of the communication performance.

Table 2 presented the different inscriptions on vehicles that were gathered as data and their corresponding codes for the discussions in this current study. Each vehicle inscription was given an alpha-numeric code as a pseudonym as shown below in Table 2. However, in some instances the actual inscriptions on vehicles were used to break the monotony of using alpha-numeric codes and the pseudonym. Creswell (2014) suggests that the interpretation and analysis of data involves the making of "sense" from what has been compiled as data into sections, or groups of information known as codes or themes.

Table 2: Vehicles Inscriptions and Codes

VEHICLE INSCRIPTIONS	VEHICLE CODES
Allah Hu Akbar	VIC 01
Naagode Allah	VIC 02
Isha Allah	VIC 03
Allah Baka Lada, Adizatu	VIC 04
Zaman, Lafiya	VIC 05
Bismillahi	VIC 06
Isaiah 41: 10-15	VIC 07
Saviour	VIC 08
Bisa Ewurade	VIC 09
In Jesus name	VIC 10
Jesus Wept	VIC 11
Blood of Jesus	VIC 12
Sweet Mother	VIC 13
Nkwa pa	VIC 14
Love	VIC 15
No pain no gain, determination	VIC 16
Blessings	VIC 17
All Shall pass	VIC 18
Efa Wo ho bɛn?	VIC 19
Be hopeful	VIC 20

The identified themes on how identity is constructed are: Islamic identity, Christian identity and social identity. Each of the themes are discussed accordingly in turns.

4.2 Islamic identity

Using the communication theory of identity (Hecht, 2004), one of the 10 common axiomatic propositions states that identities have individual, social, and communal properties. In other words, the CTI suggests that there are four layers of identities—personal, enacted, relational, and communal layers—of which interact and are influenced by one another (e.g., Hecht, 1993; Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau 2003). From the data, it was gathered that, all members of the Islamic faith use the name "Allah" to refer to God. The participants or inscribers identified with such inscriptions which served as a personal layer of identity affirming the Communication theory of identity. Hence, the society therefore identifies with anybody who believes in "Allah" and this inscription as a Muslim.   The Muslims believe that *Allah* is supreme and this conforms to the Communal layer, which gives every Muslim a communal identity or belonging. An inscription such as *Allah Hu Akbar means "God is great.*

Similarly*, Naagode Allah* means "Thank you Lord". Although not all speakers of Hausa language are regarded as Muslims, most societies in Ghana recognize those who speak Hausa as members of the Islamic faith. As an inscription, this belongs to the driver, and it is a personal identity which conforms to the principles of the axioms of identity (Hecht, 2004).

From the data, it was also evident that, Allah is the supreme provider and that, everything acquired is granted by *Allah*. To this, protection from road accidents is granted by *Allah.* A participant revealed that the inscriptions *"Naagode Allah"* on the vehicle is to show to people that he is ever grateful to God and this is his way of showing people that he is not an ingrate. This identity of being an exemplary individual ever

ready to show gratitude enabled others to identify with the act by testifying to Allah's magnanimity.

4.2.1 Christian identity

Similarly**,** *saviour* is considered a Christian inscription. Most Christians call Jesus the saviour of the world because according to John chapter 3 verse 16 in the Bible, "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life". This is explained by the Christian faith that God is a saviour of the world from the consequence of sin and eternal condemnation through the blood of His Son, Jesus. The inscriber is thus expressing his belief in the Christian faith, which supports the enactment layer, of the CTI. In essence, the profession of Jesus as the saviour is enacted publicly for everybody to see and identify with it. Thus, it was gathered that all Christians, believe in Christ as the Saviour. Additionally, another inscription 1 John 5:14-15 which states, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he hearth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him". This inscription according to a participant who was interviewed, is a kind of Christian plurality. This is in line with the communal layer, because Christians believe that they are a family and therefore share a common inheritance (Sherik &Plantinga, 2016).

The inscriber declared that she used this inscription to display her knowledge of the Bible and to identify herself with the Christian faith. Having used it to relate to others she had enacted that identity and had eventually gained some attention from the public which in a way is a relational identity conforming to the relational layer.

A participant aptly said:

> As Christians, we thank God through Jesus for what He has done for us and declares that other non-Christians too can adopt this art showing gratitude. This implies that identity is like a cloth that can be worn at a particular time and be removed in another time. That notwithstanding, it does not also mean that the Christian identity cannot also be tagged. If a Christian assumes the identity of a Muslim, it is because there are certain features for identifying Muslims that is why one is able to say that the person has assumed that identity (VIC10).

The excerpt from the participant (VIC10) indicates that a show of appreciation or gratitude to God will enable others to learn and create a relation with the inscriber. This forms the relational identity and it resonates in friendship, agreement and a model worthy of emulation (Hecht, 2004) or Camaraderie. As a result, a group of people with a common practice of praising, thanking and expressing gratitude to Jesus is constituted as a communal group with a common identity.

4.2.2 Social identity

Another theme that emerged was the construction of a determination identity by the participants. The inscriptions on vehicles were the vehicle's owners as well as their drivers. According to one of the participants:

> "Blessing" is a representatum of all good things expected to come into the life of a hard working person. It is a wish or expectation and a general believe that there is blessing stored up for everyone who professes that he/she is blessed. I am blessed and I want people to see it. I was to be an epitome of someone who can be called Blessed because I work hard (VIC 10)

From the excerpt, it could be seen that the participant believed that hard work can be rewarded because he is a living testimony. Creating an identity of diligence of determination is therefore a way calvanising people to appreciate hard work because they will be rewarded.

Again, *Love* encompasses a variety of strong and positive emotions and mental state, ranging from the most sublime virtue or good habit, the deepest interpersonal affection and to the simple pleasure. An example of this range of meaning is shown in the love for a mother. A participant stated that:

> Most commonly, love refers to a feeling of strong attraction and emotional attachment. Love can also be a virtue representing human kindness and affection, and an unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another and love may also describe compassionate and affectionate actions towards other human. All these are the reasons why I love my mother and I show it publicly. Everybody calls me by that name and I like (15).

The excerpt shows that as a social philosophy, love is a personal layer which is enacted to create a relational identity with others. When others express the attribute of love, it becomes communal and an anecdote for everybody to live in peace with one another.

The inscription *"no pain, no gain"* according to one inscriber has the same meaning. He added that when one works diligently, it can be regarded as "*determination"* because a person cannot gain from life without experiencing some form of pain or suffering. However, to achieve what one wants in life, determination is key. This theme was regarded as a social identity because it could influence other people to also spur on in life and not give up. The inscriber thus, asserted that, she wanted to identify with people who believed in little beginnings and also in hard work.

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Similarly, another inscription which was gathered to insinuate was *"if 7+2=11, who cares*? Definitely, the mathematical calculation is wrong and the author knows that. However, he intentionally does this to illustrate the meaning of the inscription and to lay emphasis on his philosophy, by adding the question or rhetoric: *"Ɛfa WO ho bɛn?"* To wit, "How does it concern you?" The author is in a way asking people to mind their own business. The author revealed in the interview that, he used this inscription to express his candid opinion about life and to show his social background as someone who cares less about the opinion of others. This supports the literature that identity is unique and could be ascribed by every individual in varieties of ways (Hecht et al, 2003).

4.5 Chapter Summary

The discussions indicate that every inscription can be related to an individual as well as a group. Using the CTI, a participant could have a personal, enactment, relational and communal identity through communication. However one inscription could be associated with more than one religious group depending on the interpretation. The reason is that, all religions believe in one supreme God. Hence, it is not easy to say that an inscription that mentions 'God' belongs to Christianity and neither can it also be said that every inscriptions on Allah is from an Islamic faith.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0   Introduction

This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study. The chapter also concludes the study and presents some recommendations on the bases of the findings.

5.1   Summary of key findings

The main objective of this study is to examine the kinds of inscriptions of vehicles in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem municipality. It was also to examine the kinds of identities that the inscribers sought to portray to their target audiences. The study was qualitative and data was purposively gathered from inscriptions on twenty vehicles. Additional data was gathered through interviews from inscribers of the vehicles (i.e. car owners or drivers). All these were done with the following research questions in mind:

1. What are the kinds of inscriptions on vehicles in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipality?
2. How do authors of inscriptions on vehicles construct their identities through the inscriptions?

Communication serves many purposes and identity construction is one of such functions. Vehicle drivers and owners use inscriptions on their vehicles to construct their identities by expressing their opinions; proclaiming their faith, revealing their experiences; and seeking approval from the general public. Adamo (2009) explains that inscriptions are signs, which stand for particular meanings. According to the communication theory of identity, identities influence the formation of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. From the data, it was evident that authors of vehicle inscriptions, construct four of identity layers; *personal layer*, others construct about

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them, through what they say or write. They also construct an *enactment layer*, which is the identity that reflects their thoughts, philosophy and beliefs. In addition, the authors construct a *relational identity*, which is constructed with other members in the society to seek their approval and understanding. Lastly, a communal layer is also constructed when several others identify with the kind of identity that authors have constructed through their inscriptions.

Among the kinds of identity constructed by drivers and vehicle owners are Social, Christianity, and Islamic identities. With the inscriptions of social identity, the inscriptions are mostly about life; advice, and life's experiences such as "No pain, No gain" and "Ɛfa WO ho bɛn?" The Christian identity reflected the Christian beliefs, doctrines, practices, experiences and philosophies which included inscriptions such as "Jesus is coming soon", "Yesu Mo" (Thank you, Jesus) and "In Jesus' Name" among others. The Islamic identity too revealed beliefs, doctrines, practices and philosophies of the Islamic faith including "Allah Naagode" (Thank you, God) and "Allah is great" among others.

5.2   Conclusion

All humans have a need to communicate, as satisfying relationships can literally be a matter of life and death, and while not everyone needs the same amount of contact, personal communication is essential for physical well-being. Social needs are met through communication, as it conforms to how relationships are built. Identity needs are met through communication. It can therefore be concluded with the findings of this study that, Identity is not permanent or static. It can be assumed or adopted for certain reason. Hence, one person can assume several identities at every point in time

depending on the context. Identity can be social, political, religious or cultural, and each individual can construct or deconstruct.

Drivers and vehicle owners in and around Tarkwa use inscriptions to show   social and religious identities. Religious identities are either Islamic or Christianity. For each type of identity, the choice of words or registers used in the inscriptions helped to categorise their association with a particular faith. However, inscriptions of traditional identities were not so obvious and recognisable because the registers used in these inscriptions were also used in constructing both Christian and Muslim identities. Except when the inscription is a wise-saying or proverbs, words like "onyame" and "nyankopɔn" were used mostly by the Christians and Muslims. Similarly, when the inscriptions had themes that discussed life in general, they were considered as constructing other social identities and not necessarily traditional religion. Therefore, the researcher's ability to identify the type of register used in an inscription, made it easy to recognise the author's identity as well.

5.2.1 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, these recommendations have been made

1. For the purpose of morality inscriptions containing insults/invective should not be allowed because children also read these inscriptions.

2. Policy makers should ensures inscriptions do not cover a large portions of windscreens and becomes a recipe of disaster all in the name of constructing an identity.

5.2.2 Suggestions for Further Studies

This research suggests that the future studies may include   artefacts identified on vehicles other than inscriptions. Again, future studies can also expand the sample to cover views from audience (passengers of the vehicle) and   how they also identify with the inscriptions on the vehicles.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is the meaning of the inscription on your vehicle?

2. Are you relating the inscription to your religious faith?

3. Do others have; a. different meaning of your inscription that you agree with them?

b. how do you know this?

4. Do the inscriptions have any social implication? If yes what are they?

5. In what ways do the inscriptions create an identity for you?

6. In what ways do the inscriptions draw people closer to you?

7. How has the inscription on your vehicle helped to create a name for you be it negative or positive?

8. Do you believe in the inscriptions on your vehicle or they are just for atheistic purposes?

9. Would you want people to associate your inscriptions on your vehicle to you?