

THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN PROGRAMMES ON THE SOCIO-CULTURAL BEHAVIOUR OF NIGERIAN YOUTHS: A STUDY OF E.STAR TELEVISION

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Abstract

This study probes the impact which foreign Television programmes has on the Social behaviour of the Nigeria youths. Observably, youths love to take in whatever they see on the television hook, line and sinker. They dress like the celebrities, copy their hairdos as well as even their diction without considering what is acceptable in their own social environment. In fact, most youths in Nigeria have jettisoned their own culture and had replaced it with that of the foreign countries because of their exposure to the foreign programmes. The researchers observed that the issue of transgender that had become common among the developed countries is now becoming common here in Nigeria because youths in Nigeria also try to imitate what they are exposed to. The Researchers raised and answer some research questions like;how has the contents in the foreign television programmes affected the youths, what is the level of exposure of the youths to foreign programmes and what are the pervasive impacts of foreign television programmes on the Social behaviour of the youths. The researcher made use of survey methodology with the use of questionnaire and interview as the instruments of data collection.

Key words: Social, Influence, Youths, cultural genocide, values

1. Introduction

Technology is increasing significantly day by day and everyday new things are invented. One of the most important inventions of the 20th century is television and it added a new dimension to our lives. It was the biggest invention that added vistas in telecommunication field Daramola (2003).

This study is on the influence of foreign television programmes on the Social behaviours of Nigerian youths using E star TV as a study. According to Kim Ann Zimmermann (2015) "Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. This implies that culture is the learned and shared behavior of a community of interacting human beings."

Culture according to Nancy Jervis (2006) is "something material that you can touch, something immaterial, such as values and beliefs, customs and traditions, festivals and celebrations." In his own words Bodley (1994) defines culture in a useful way. He suggested that "culture is made up of at least three components: what people think, what they do, and the material products they produce. This implies that Culture, is understood as the totality of what a group of people think, how they behave (social behavior)s, and what they produce that is passed on to future generations". However, culture is what binds us together as human beings but also separates us into our different communities.

In today's world, understanding both our similarities and our diversity becomes increasingly important. Through an understanding and appreciation of cultural difference, children will be better prepared to live in an ever-shrinking global community. And increasingly, our classrooms are becoming miniature models of the global community itself.

Nigerian culture can be seen as the totality or summation of way of life of Nigerians. Nigerian culture is a synthesis of African, middle-Eastern and European cultures. The rate of cultural advancement in a society is known to depend on the level of consciousness of its people. Banks and McGee (1989).

Some of the foreign television programmes shown on television stations focus extensively on illicit sex, war, violence, crime, terrorism, drug abuse, vulgar language and behaviours which is against the culture of Nigerian society. Miles (2000) is of the view that, young people are affected more directly and negatively by the media than any other age group, research actually indicates that young people between the ages of 14 and 24 actually form one of the groups who currently spend the least time watching television. This is a paradox that has often been neglected in the literature. Ironically, the mass media itself has a vested interest in exaggerating the impact it has on young people's lives because media-hype simply makes good 'copy.'

This implies that regardless of the actual time young people spend in watching television and using other media, mass media have played and will continue to play an important role in structuring young people's lives in some shape and form in a period of rapid social change.

Studies show that most Nigerian youths watch thousands of soap operas. Some of these programmes are shown in GALAXY, AIT, MITV, CHANNELS, LTV and various satellite transmission operators such as STAR TIMES, DSTV, GOTV etc. These have raised Nigerians eyebrows to such foreign television programmes, which make our youths to copy their behaviours, dictions as well as associate with them. It is the Researchers' believe that this foreign programme is aimed to destroy and overpower the socio-cultural values of Nigerian youths.

1.1 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

There is no doubt that foreign television programmes have offered a lot of meanings and purpose to the social lives of Nigerian youths because some youths value their entertainment function and see them as a way to keep in touch with the so called latest fashion. However, while keeping abreast with fashion and the likes, the youths are gradually dropping off their own cultural values for that of the foreign ones. Also, they have been exposed to a great number of dangers; drugs, illicit sexual affairs, violence behaviours among others. Hence, The Researchers intended to find out the influence of foreign television programmes on Nigerian youths positively or negatively.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The Researchers seek to know how the contents of foreign television programme affects the youth as well as determine the level of exposure of the youths to the foreign programmes and proffer ways by which the youths can be oriented to copy only the good aspect of the foreign programmes and forsake the bad

1.3 EVOLUTION OF FOREIGN TELEVISION PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA

Foreign programmes came into Nigeria after the invention of television in Nigeria which makes it possible to broadcast live programmes of what is happening in foreign countries hence bringing it to our door step. According to Daramola (2003), Television is one of the major and significant ways of passing information to the people because it is considered to be the greatest communication mechanism ever designed and operated by man after the internet. Television influences our perception of politics, religion, movies, governance, fashion and culture.

Television is a compact structure that creates an intimate medium because it brings the world into our homes and it is not a mere transmission device, but it is a medium that brings its audience into a direct relationship with particular values and attitudes.

Rodman [2006], states that "Television remains the most time consuming activity, and it remains the main source of news and information. It is the medium through which politics is conducted and it is humanity's man form of entertainment, it is also the world's most powerful sales tool." Television is a very powerful tool because it has the ability to break or make any society due to the fact that its medium has the ability to make the viewer's replicate actions they get exposed to; either in part or whole. That is why Television has become a very strong medium for advertising and other persuasive communications.

However, using E. Star TV as the focus, the Researcher discovered that the station shows the programmes like; According to Jim, Ace of cakes, The adventures of Sinbad, America's got talent, American idol, America music award, Angela's eyes, The big bang theory, Crumbs, Bewitched, The apprentice, Devious maids, Sex and the city, The dick among others.

1.4 CULTURE AND NIGERIAN IDENTITY IN THE MEDIA

Nwagara and Umor (2002) assert that "Nigerian culture is a complex subject that involves more than music and dancing or arts in general. It encompasses the material and non-material aspects of culture. The material includes the food, clothing etc. while the non-material includes philosophical and creative aspects".

The Nigerian cultural values are distinct and vary from one region to the other and Nigerians are known for these distinct heritages - the music, songs, dance, marriage rites,

greetings, dressing etc. A culture exists when a distinct way of life shapes what a group of people believes, values and does (Wood 2009). The culture of one group is distinct from another based on different values, beliefs, norms, and other characteristics. The way a group understands and attaches meaning to an issue might be different from another group. For example, the youth and the elderly in a society, their interpretation of some issues might be different.

However, Nigerian cultural heritage is propagated and preserved through cultural expressions of art such as music, songs and dance. Mode of greetings is highly valued though different in the various subcultures Nwagbara and Umor (2012).

The media (Television, Radio, Newspaper) in Nigeria, help to proclaim the good image of our culture by reminding our youths how things are being done in time past and this can be done through programmes. For example "GOGE AFRICA" in AIT (Africa Independent Television).

1.5 CULTURAL STYLE/MODES OF DRESSING OF NIGERIANS

Dress culture harmonizes, unites and integrates people. Dress helps to define human character, essence, particularities and disparities. Obafemi (2011) asserted that cloths have ancestral and spiritual values, and are regarded with veneration. Dress is used to support the moral and ideological postulations of religious institutions, it portrays common lineage linkages and can be used for competitions. Dresses can mark generational or age differences.

Utah Ezeajugh (2011) says that "dress defines all the effects employed by man to physically distinguish himself in society". She believes that dress is a form of nonverbal communication which gives mental clues to a person's social identity. According to her, dress is a

form of semiotic distinction which can be translated into a language of signs, symbols and iconography.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The appropriate theory for this study is The Social Learning Theory. The theory was propounded by Albert Bandura who was a psychologist at Stanford University. The theory suggests that much learning takes place through observing the behavior of others (Anaeto, *et al.*, 2008).

Social Learning Theory stipulates that people can learn new behaviours by observing others. Earlier learning theories emphasized how people behave in response to environmental stimuli, such as physical rewards or punishment. In contrast, social learning emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between social characteristics of the environment, how they are perceived by individuals, and how motivated and able a person is to reproduce behaviours they see happening around them. People both influence and are influenced by the world around them.

In fact, Lefkowitz, *et al.*, (1977) as cited in Wirtz (2008), were of the opinion that there were three stages that can be identified in the link between passive violence (just watching) and active violence (actually carrying it out)-attention, retention and motivation. Hence, the youths learn and copy the behavior of the developed countries based on the kind of programmes they have been exposed to.

In like manner, the Agenda Setting theory is relevant to this study.

The agenda setting theory holds the assumption that there is relationship between news coverage and public perception of the importance of issues. The theory posits that mass media attention to an issue will elevate such issue of high point of importance by the public.

The basic idea of this theory therefore is that there is a close relationship between the manner in which the media present issues and other of importance assigned to those exposed to the news. In other words, the media has power to determine what the public think about and this can be achieved through the aids of different programmes. It describes the ability of the media to influence the salience of events in the public mind.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1: How has foreign television programme contents affected social behaviours of Nigerian youths.

Issues raised	Number	Percentage
Lifestyle	80	44.4
Academics	18	10
Violence	82	45.6
Total	180	100

Source: Field Survey, May 2015.

Based on this question, respondents explained how the content of foreign television programmes affects Nigerian youths which eventually lead to erosion of their cultural values. According to the table above 80 respondents representing (44.4%) said that the contents of foreign programmes affect the lifestyle of the youths especially in the aspect of dressing and approach to life, most youths copy what they watch on these foreign programmes and act

according to them. A vivid example are the females wearing of skimpy and revealing clothes because they have been made to believe that those wearing long and covered cloths are from the older generation. Also supporting this issue Mr. Grey, a computer science student from Olabisi Onabanjo University during the interview said that the contents of foreign television programmes affects the youths psychologically because our cultures are world apart and because Nigerian cultures does not permits wearing skimpy/jumpy dresses whereas foreign culture permits it. 18 respondents representing (10%) stated that the contents of foreign television programmes affects the youths academically especially through the use of language and spellings.

Table 2: High level of exposure to foreign television programmes may leads to erosion of socio-cultural values?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	115	63.9
No	65	36.1
Total	180	100

Source: Field Survey, May 2015.

According to the respondents, it is noted that exposure to foreign television programmes often make the youths to jettison their own cultural values to the foreign world as they are being brainwashed of everything they have learnt over the years, making them see it as an old way of life. However, in responding to the question raised, 115 respondents representing (63.9%) confirmed it while 65 respondents representing (36.1%) were of the negative opinion. The percentage of those that affirm it was greater than those that negate it.

Table 5: Are the negative impacts of this exposeure more than the positive ones?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	108	60
No	72	40
Total	180	100

Source: Field Survey 2015.

In addressing this issue based on my findings it can be said that majority of the youths said that if local programmes are improved they will watch local programmes. 108 respondents representing (60%) said yes they will watch local programmes if it is improved while 72 respondents representing (40%) said they won't because they don't believe local programmes can improve and even if they improve it is only a matter of time they will go back.

Conclusively, with all the above findings, one can see that foreign television programmes has a negative influence on the youths. However, the negative influence of these programmes is higher than the positive influence as it has not only corrupt the youths in terms of dressing, language etc., but also brainwashed them into believing that foreign culture is modern and the best.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the data gathered and analyzed, it was evident that foreign television programmes influences the cultural values of Nigerian youths. It was noted that the influences of these foreign programmes on Nigerian youths could be negative or positive depending on individual and the kind of foreign programmes they are exposed to. Moreover, the youths admitted that these foreign programmes have done more bad than good because they unconsciously emulate their lifestyles.

It is also necessary to point out that it was established in this study that there was heavy exposure to foreign programmes by the youths as they admitted that they spend most of their leisure hours watching foreign programmes and their reason is based on the fact that these foreign programmes broadens their knowledge and thinking about life and it was also stated that they will watch local programmes if they increase their picture and sound qualities, level of communication, unexciting programmes and above all sentiments..

Therefore, the Researchers recommended the following;

- Local programmes with high positive cultural values should be emphasized while foreign programmes should be de-emphasized.
- The regulatory body, National Broadcasting commission (NBC) should put all hands on deck so as to ensure that broadcasting standards are not compromised, the NBC has the statutory responsibility of promoting Nigerian indigenous cultures, morals and community life, hence they should checkmate contents of all foreign programmes and to make sure that it is good for viewing.
- Parents should devote adequate time to educate their wards on the cultural values of Nigeria and what they watch on television.
- In case of further studies, study should be done on youth preference of foreign entertainment programmes than other types of programmes because it was noted that most youths watch football and fashion. Or researchers can also do an in-depth research on the effects of globalization on the cultural values of Nigerian youths from pre-colonial era to this present day.

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