
The Influence of Satellite TV Stations on Cultural Practices in Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract

Culture comprises the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, intellectual and emotional features that characterize society, our thought about life, and our ideas. Culture has the capacity to bring about the change of attitudes needed to ensure peace and sustainable development which is known as the only possible way forward for life on planet earth; it shapes the way we see the world. Considering the prominence of Satellite television as a virtual medium, this study sought to know the influence of media imperialism and the claim that it has affected and undermined South-Eastern sociocultural norms and values. More so, this study examined the influence of satellite television stations in the south-eastern states of Nigeria, the region that is fully immersed with her culture. It specifically examined how satellite television has affected the knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by Nigerians as a member of the society. The research methodology utilizes descriptive statistics with a self-designed questionnaire used to elicit information from a sample of 180 respondents. The findings of the study revealed that the relationship between satellite television stations and sociocultural practices is high and statistically significant.

Introduction

The introduction of Satellite television is one of the dimensions of this technological advancement which has a definite effect on the social and cultural orientations of human beings around the world. For these changes, human behavior is also changing and therefore, the study of changes in the human behavior is becoming more important in the present business world.

Since the colonial era, Nigeria has been experiencing cultural invasion; foreign culture has eroded the cultural heritage of the people; with the satellite television, it is rising at an alarming rate. The dilution of original culture is seemingly evident in youth dressing patterns, spoken words and other social adaptations. Many Nigerians appear to have obvious preference to western style of dressing than indigenous dressing due to over indulgence in the consumption of western media content. Youths prefer to wear western dresses, speak with foreign accents, play foreign music and watch their movies so much so that they perceive themselves to be westerners (Okonkwo, 2008).

Many Nigerians have obvious preference to western style of dressing than indigenous dressing due to over indulgence in consuming western media content. Contrarily, Baran (2010) insists that though the problem with globalized television is undisputable, the internal government regulation, over infiltration of foreign media and its content has helped to keep erosion of indigenous cultures in check. Furthermore, the millennials are enjoying foreign programs with great attraction ignoring their own cultural programmes. They are also getting used to the foreign lifestyles which are detrimental to the social norms and values of Nigerians especially the south-easterners, who adhere strongly to their culture as a way of life. Various satellite television channels have captured the attention of viewers in south-east Nigeria and exposed them to

programmes that are not in tandem with their cultural beliefs and norms, resulting to cultural erosion and cultural hybridization. Therefore, it is becoming imperative to conduct a study on how preference for Satellite television is affecting the cultural value orientations of the people in the South-Eastern states of Nigeria.

Satellite Television

Satellite Television broadcasting consists of the transmission of a video (or other) signal from an earth station to a geostationary satellite which subsequently broadcasts the signal back to the earth where it can be received over a wide area (Elbert, 1997), (Paschal and Withers, 1997).

Television as an electronic medium has indubitably transformed the media and its main traditional functions of information, education, entertainment and correlation of the society. There is no gainsaying that today, television has become a part of everyday life which was not so between the 1920s when it was invented and the 1960s when it lost its novelty. As a result of commercialization, the numbers of television stations have greatly increased, so also the number of television sets available in homes. Television is an inescapable part of modern culture. One depends on television for entertainment, news, education, culture, weather sports and even music, since the advent of music videos. With the recent explosion in Satellite and digital specialty channels, there is now access to a plethora of both good quality and inappropriate television content.

Television can be of benefit to children. It can bring them into contact with aspects of life they would not otherwise become aware of. It can provide a valuable tool in the home and at school not

simply to get children occupied but also as a constructive way to use their time. It is a channel through which a range of entertainment, drama and learning can be obtained and experienced and increasingly these days it is under the control of the viewer (Gunter and McAleer, 1997). According to Signorielli and Michael (2001), television is still the most popular medium, occupying a significant proportion of children's time, up to 13.9 hours a week, with higher viewing for those from ethnic minority (15.2 hours) and low-income groups (15.5 hours). The medium has been of tremendous influence whether positive or negative as it has changed the way we socialize across all strata in the society. Novak (1998), in Vivian (2009), comments that television is "a molder of the soul's geography. It builds up incrementally a psychic structure of expectations. It does so in much the same way that school lessons slowly, over the years, tutor the unformed mind and teach it how to think." Corroborating Comstock, Vivian also submits that "television has become an unavoidable and unremitting factor in shaping what we are and what we will become (2009)"

Culture

Culture is notoriously difficult to define. It consists of patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts: the essential core of culture consists traditional ideas and specially their attached values (Kluckhohn, 1951).

The concept of culture consists of the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow, and the material goods they create. It refers to the full range of human behaviour that make up the way of life of the individual member or groups within a society; how they dress, their language, beliefs, values and

norms, customs, dress, diet, roles, knowledge, skills and leisure pursuits. It is for this reason that Jekayinfa (2002), in Yusuf, states that “from wider perspective, culture includes the total repertoire of human action which are socially transmitted from generation to generation”. Kanagy and Kraybill (1999), in Oni (2005), describe culture as “set of tangible and intangible elements – things like diet, tools, technology, language and values – that gives shape and meaning to everyday lives of a particularly group of people”.

The culture of the African man is seen as his pride, thus, any danger that portends toward it is looked upon as a slap and derogation on the African’s man pride. It is in this light that our statement of problem posits a paradox, in trying to see technological development and globalization as having two faces on the same coin, with one positing “good” and the other “harm”. It is in this vein that Patricia (2013) points out that ‘the character of the mass media is such that it is expected to bring about positive influence in the lives of its audience through contents that lend credence among other things to the preservation of the culture and intrinsic values of the society’. The concept of culture has also been viewed as the rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices, symbols, norms, and values prevalent among people in a society. The prevailing value in a society may be the most central feature of culture (Hofstede, 2001; Inglehart, 1997; Schwartz, 1999; Weber, 1958; Williams, 1968). These values are shared conceptions of what is good and desirable in the culture and the cultural ideals.

Influence of Satellite Television on Youths

Stanislaus (2014) studied global television and cultural promotion: taming the cultural dilemma among Nigerian youths. The study

was conducted to re-examine the impact of global television on the behaviour of youths in Nigeria. It identified cultural imperialism as the most significant impact of global television achieved through programmes like sports, drama, musicals, and violent movies transmitted to Nigeria and other third world nations. These programmes are transmitted under the guise of informative, educational and entertainment programs while the Nigerian youths are the most affected victims. Through careful analysis of previous researches and literatures, the study posits that Nigerian youths are caught between the dilemma of the foreign cultures and their indigenous cultures in terms of dress codes, speech, dance and the general ideologies.

Also, most Nigerian youths are affected by the accent and language of the pop stars, actors and actresses and the characters in the advert they watch on the global television. Girls are accepting being called “bitch” (a female dog). The youth copy suggestive dance steps, nude modes of dressing, and images that incite young men and women. Most youths copy violent behaviours from what they view on global television. They learn how to be unnecessarily aggressive. In addition, they prefer to watch the European league to the detriment of their own local league. No more “tales by moonlight” as parents also retire early to bed after a hard day’s job. Nigerian ladies prefer foreign creams, soaps and cosmetics to the local counterparts. In Nigeria, the youths are young persons of between childhood age and the period before adulthood. They are the majority dependants on their parents for food, clothing and shelter. They are the most idle and unemployed persons who depend on any available information to satisfy their insatiable quest for knowledge that would prepare them for life in future. They depend on local and global media especially television and the internet because of their features of visual, audio, motion and easy

accessibility. Their continuous patronage of global television programmes has robbed majority of the Nigerian youths of the Nigerian culture. The Nigerian youths have adopted foreign cultures in forms of manners of speaking, dressing, acting, behaving, eating, loving, thinking, dancing, singing and more.

Research

For the purpose of testing hypotheses or answering questions, a closed-ended questionnaire “Influence of Satellite Television on the Cultural Value Orientation of People in the South-Eastern states of Nigeria (ISTCVOP)” was adopted. The questionnaire contained two sections. The first section dealt with respondents’ demographic data such as age, level of education and gender. The second section aimed at determining the knowledge and views of participants on media imperialism through Satellites Television programmes and its effects on indigenous culture. The rating techniques were based on a 4-point Likert type scale ranging from strongly agree (SA) with 4 points to Strongly Disagree (SD) with 1 point such as Strongly Agree (SA) - 4 Points, Agree (A) - 3 Points, Disagree (D) - 2 Points, Strongly Disagree (SD) -1 Point

Results and Analysis

A total of One Hundred and Eighty (180) questionnaires were administered and all were retrieved. Below shows the presentation according to the research question raised from the study.

Section 2 presents the relationship that exists between Satellite Television programs and food habits by the people in South-East, Nigeria. The result shows that 56 respondents representing 31.1%

of the total sample strongly agreed that Nigerians appreciate foreign meals as of preference for Satellite Television. 47(26.1%) agreed, 35(19.4%) disagreed while 42(23.3%) strongly disagreed. On whether preference for foreign diets cuts across all and sundry in Nigeria, 116(64.4%) respondents strongly agreed, 27(15%) agreed, 26(14.4%) disagreed and 11(6.1%) strongly disagreed. 62(34.4%) respondents strongly agreed that Nigerian government promotes the consumption of western diet through commercial patronage, 85(47.2%) agreed, 37(20.6%) disagreed and 4(2.2%) strongly disagreed. On whether the respondents derived much pleasure in western diet based on preference for Satellite Television, 72(40.4%) respondents strongly agreed, 38(21.1%) agreed, 16(8.9%) disagreed and 54(30%) strongly disagreed.

Section 3 presents the effects of Satellite Television preferences on cultural values of people in South-East Nigeria. The result shows that 46(25.6%) of the total sample strongly agreed that preference for Satellites television programme has led to massive conflict with the indigenous cultural values of the Nigerian people, 69(38.3%) agreed, 27(15%) disagreed and 38(21.1%) strongly disagreed. On whether preference for Satellites Television Programmes has affected youth behavioural approaches, 59(32.8%) strongly agreed, 61(33.9%) agreed, 41(22.8%) disagreed and 19(10.6%) strongly disagreed. 71(39.4%) respondents strongly agreed that preference for Satellites television had impacted negatively on Nigerian sexual orientation, 33(18.3%) agreed, 29(16.1%) disagreed and 47(26.1%) strongly disagreed. On whether foreign television programmes have adjusted the mode of greetings of an average Nigerian, 48(26.7%) respondents strongly agreed, 71(39.4%) agreed, 29(16.1%) disagreed and 32(17.8%) strongly disagreed.

Section 4 presents the relationship that exists between influence of Satellite Television programmes and viewers' beliefs. The result reveals that 68(37.8%) of the total sample strongly agreed that Nigerians no longer give due respect to leadership as a result of preference for Satellite television, 91(50.6%) strongly agreed, 10(5.6%) disagreed and 11(6.1%) strongly disagreed. 100(55.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that wide coverage of Satellite television has reduced the fear Nigerians have in ancestral gods. 37(20.6%) agreed, 21(11.7%) disagreed and 22(12.2%) strongly disagreed. Regarding exposure to varieties of information making the children to lose interest in old tales, 47(26.1%) respondents strongly agreed, 86(47.8%) agreed, 43(23.9%) disagreed and 4(2.2%) strongly disagreed. 26(14.4%) respondents strongly agreed that globalization played a vital role in changing the way marriages are conducted, 99(55%) agreed, 16(8.9%) disagreed and 39(21.7%) strongly disagreed.

Section 5 presents the effects of Satellite Television on morals of subscribers in South-East Nigeria. Result shows that 41 respondents representing 22.8% of the total sample strongly agreed that foreign media should be held responsible if indecent dressing persists in Nigeria, 68(37.8%) agreed, 34(18.8%) disagreed and 37(20.6%) strongly disagreed. On whether the emergence of Satellite television has drastically affected language of an average Nigerian viewers, 81(45%) respondents strongly agreed, 27(15%) agreed, 31(17.2%) disagreed and 41(22.8%) strongly disagreed. 29(16.1%) respondents strongly agreed that cultism on Nigeria campuses is traceable to preference for Satellite television, 79(43.9%) agreed, 51(28.3%) disagreed and 21(11.7%) strongly

disagreed. On whether Satellite television has led to unprecedented rise in criminal activities among the Nigerian youths, 64(35.6%) respondents strongly agreed, 102(56.7%) agreed, 27(15%) disagreed and 13(7.2%) strongly disagreed.

Discussions

The study x-rayed the cultural value orientation and Satellite television influence in the South-Eastern states of Nigeria. It was found that Satellite Television programmes have influenced and changed food habits of the people in South-East Nigeria.

The study also revealed that massive conflict with the indigenous cultural values of the Nigerian people; negative behavioural approaches of the youths, negative sexual orientation and adjustment in the method of greetings of the citizens were prominent effects of Satellite Television preferences on cultural values of people in South-East Nigeria.

The study also revealed an inverse relationship between Satellite Television influence and beliefs in South-Eastern Nigeria. Nigerians, especially the youths, no longer give due respect to leadership, have reduced the fear in ancestral gods, have lost interest in old tales, have also changed the way marriages are conducted.

Another finding revealed that extinction of decent dresses, increased corrupt languages, persistent cultism on campuses and unprecedented rise in crime rate are negative influence of Satellite Television on morals of subscribers in the South-Eastern Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that since most viewers in the South-Eastern Nigeria have been strongly influenced by their preference towards watching Western entertainment television programmes,

this is responsible for continuous downward tune in the food habits, customs beliefs and morals of an average viewer. It is obvious therefore, that the main reason for exposure to the foreign cultural values is as a result of concentration on Satellite Television.

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Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please Tick (√) the appropriate option to the questions below in each section.

1. Name:

2. Age. (a) 16 – 19years (b) 20 – 23years (c) 24 – 27years (d) 28years and above
3. Level of education. (a) School Leaving Certificate (b) SSCE (c) BSC (d) MSC and above.
4. Gender. (a) Male (b) Female (c) Transgender (d) Others

Section 2

Relationship that exists between Satellites Television Programmes and the food habits of subscribers in South-East Nigeria.

SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree)

5. Nigerians appreciate Western diet more than Indigenous type due to Influence of Satellite TV. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
6. Preference for foreign diet cuts across all and sundry in Nigeria. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
7. Nigerian government promotes foreign diets through commercial patronage during various functions. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
8. Nigerians derive much pleasure in foreign diets than local meals. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD

Section 3

Relationship between Satellite Television preferences and customs of people in South-East Nigeria.

9. Preference for Satellite Television Programme has led to massive conflict with the indigenous cultural values of the Nigerian people. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
10. Preference for Satellite Television Programmes has affected youth behavioural approaches. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
11. Preference for Satellite Television has impacted negatively on Nigerian Sexual orientation. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
12. Foreign television programmes have adjusted the mode of greetings of an average Nigerian. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD

Section 4

Relationship that exists between influence of Satellite Television Programmes and viewer's beliefs.

13. Nigerians no longer give due respect to leadership as a result of influence of Satellite Television. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
14. Wide coverage of Satellite Television has reduced the fear Nigerians have in ancestral gods. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
15. Exposure to varieties of information has made children to lose interest in old tales. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
16. Globalization played a vital role in changing the way marriages are conducted. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD

Section 5

Relationship between Satellite Television and morals of subscribers in South-East Nigeria.

17. Foreign media should be held responsible if indecent dressing persist in Nigeria. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
 18. The emergence of Satellite Television has drastically affected language of an average Nigerian viewer. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
 19. Cultism on Nigerian campuses is traceable to influence of Satellite Television. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD
- Satellite Television has led to unprecedented rise in criminal activities among Nigerian youths. (a) SA (b) A (c) D (d) SD