THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN TELEVISION PROGRAMMES ON THE DRESS CODE OF IMO STATE UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES

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Abstract
This study examines the influence of Western Television Programmes on the dress code of Imo State University undergraduates and the resultant effects of such exposure on the life styles of Imo State University undergraduates particularly as it concerns their mode of dressing. The survey and observation method were employed and instruments of the questionnaire was used for collecting data. Findings revealed that Imo State University undergraduates prefer foreign media and mode of dressing and this preference is largely attributable to the exposure to foreign cultural values through the mass media. It was therefore recommended among others that: the protagonist and custodians of traditional culture and heritage should co-opt the mass media in their campaign. Also, regulating agencies in Nigeria should ensure that mass media organizations comply with the mandatory local programme quota as contained in the Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) code, and that producers of Nigerian movies should make it a point of duty to promote local cultures as youths tend to imbibe what they watch in movies.

Keywords: Television, Dress code, Undergraduates
Introduction

For Schramm (1955) as cited in Konkwo (2012) the term “communication” takes its roots in the Latin word “communis”, signifying common. This means that when we communicate, we are trying to establish commonness with someone. In other words, we are trying to share information, an idea or an attitude. Communication is a social interaction through messages, (Gerber, 1967) or a process of shared meaning (Baran, 2002). In the process of transmitting a message, the sender initiates a process of transmitting an idea or a thought.

In the Columbia Encyclopedia, communication is defined as the “transfer of thoughts and messages as contrasted with transportation, the transfer of goods and persons”. Kogah (2007) notes that: The mass media are important element of socialization in the society, with the power of reaching heterogeneous audience simultaneously and transmitting of information on socio-cultural heritage of the people. The mass media empower the society for social change and national integration. The satellite cable networks in providing instantaneous information tend to breakdown the social and ethnic barriers between people of different nations, by familiarizing everyone with everyone. Nigeria for instance has traditionally been exposed to international media more than many other nations in Africa.

Fab-Ukozor and Nwodu (2003) notes that: the mass media are modern channels of mass communication used to disseminate news and information to very diverse cum large numbers of people simultaneously. This means that mass media messages easily cut across geopolitical boundaries. Certainly, these instruments of mass communication abound in Nigeria in the forms of Radio, television and films cum cinema which constitute the electronic media and newspapers, magazines and books, which belong to the print media class.

Prior to the emergence of large scale system of mass communication, pioneered by Guttenberg's invention of the printing press in the mid-15th century, culture as a way of life of a group of people was very distinct
and peculiar to every society. This was so because most societies then operated on a close system, with little or no contact or interaction with foreign cultural values. According to Osakue and Elo (2010), in most cases the influence of the western media programmes appears to be heavily consumed in developing countries, instead of countries producing their own programme for local consumption, countries are forced to view the world through the eyes of western values, ideas and civilization. Every information that flows across national boundaries has been an issue of concern to nations in the international scene in recent times. Some western countries like the U.S.A advocates free flow of information across its national boundaries. They believe that information should not be restricted by anybody as this will amount to infringement on press freedom. The third world countries like Nigeria completely disagrees with this, arguing that nations should be free to regulate and scrutinize whatever foreign information package to be sent from one nation to another. Five international news agencies include: Associated press (AP), United Press International (UPI), Reuters (RT), Agence France presse (AFP) and Russian Tass.

However, citing kogah (2007), the development of the mass media over the years has had an important influence on individuals and the collective cultural experience of many societies. In recent times, the press, film, cinema, television, radio and the internet have developed to become suppliers of large scale means of public communication so much, so that our once situated culture (local culture) now exist within a much wider mediated world, as the force of global communication powered by mass media and networks of inter connected computers (internet) are fast eroding tradition and national cultures.

Today more than ever before, students are to a large extent dependent on regular contact with the mass media for information, entertainment, opinion etc. As such, the totality of their ways of life is shaped. Every society has its own dress code, which differs from other countries. Lomax (1977) notes: Remove culture from man he becomes a being without identity. Ekeanyanwu (2015) also notes that, the globalization and
proliferation of the mass media confronted the risk of cultural uniformity with the possibilities of unprecedented cultural integration. The effect of television commercials, entertainment programmes and fashion have influenced the behaviour of Nigerians, especially students, that it now constitutes issues of great concern since it’s advent on the screen.

Nigerian clothing before civilization was unique and attractive, presenting responsible cloths for women like buba, kaba, iro, gele and iborun or ipele and Nigeria clothing for men include buba, fila, sokoto, abeti-aja and agbada, showing Nigeria’s culture, but presently youth especially Imo State University undergraduates prefer to dress like the western cultures and values have been made popular to the detriment of real African values and norms.

It is against this background that this study focuses on the extent the international media have influenced the dressing code of Imo state university undergraduates. It also aims at outlining the damages done to both undergraduates, the Nigerian culture and ways out of this trend.

**Statement of the Research Problem**
The media play important role on students, this means that much of what youths learn about the world are things they got from exposure to the media. The cultivation theory says that the frequent exposure to certain media contents leads audience to behave according to what they are exposed to (McQuail, 2005).

Over the years, there has been overt concern regarding the mode of dressing of youths. Such concerns are anchored on both social and religious grounds. The dressing habits of some people are not socially reprehensible, but also morally and ethically objectionable.

The influence of western Television programmes on dress code of undergraduates in Imo State University has been a serious problem facing the State, especially indecent dressing pattern, erosion of our
cultural values and morals of dressing. Hence, to what extent have the media affected the dress sense of undergraduates?

**Objectives of the Study**
The general objective of this study is to examine the influence of international media on the dress code of Imo State University undergraduates. The specific objectives include:

1. To ascertain the extent Imo State University undergraduates are exposed to foreign TV programmes.
2. To find out what motivates Imo State University undergraduates towards international TV programmes.
3. To examine the extent Imo State University undergraduates' attitude on dress code are influenced by content of foreign TV programmes.
4. To find out if Imo State University undergraduates' dress code is influenced by content of foreign TV programmes.

**Research Questions**
Based on the objective of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. To what extent are Imo State University undergraduates exposed to foreign TV programmes?
2. What motivates Imo State University undergraduates towards international TV programmes?
3. To what extent are Imo State University undergraduate's attitudes on dress code influenced by content of foreign TV programmes?
4. Have foreign TV programmes influenced Imo State University undergraduates' choice of dress code?

**Significance of The Study**
The relevance of this study in the Nigerian society cannot be over emphasized. Specifically, it will be of benefit to students at all levels: This study will enable them know and understand the impact and spiral effect of international media on their dress code and its attendant
implications. Also, it will enlighten the government and policy makers on the need to put measures in other to control and regulate international media programmes in the State. Again, its professional significance lies in the fact that media practitioners will censor and produce programmes that will not lead to derail of morality and erosion of cultural and moral values among media consumers. Academically, the study will add to the existing body of literature on effects of media programming on young viewers.

Literature Review
Culture is the customs and beliefs, arts, way of life and social organization of a particular country or group. Kluckhon (1905-1960), an influential American anthropologist also defines culture as the total way of life commonly followed by the members of a society. Taylor (1871) explains that culture is that complex whole which include knowledge, belief, arts, moral, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Also Heartzas cited in Taylor (1991) notes that culture is a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbolic forms by means of which people communication perpetuate and develop their knowledge about attributes of life. As Baran (2002), puts it:

Culture is the world made meaningful. It is socially constructed and maintained through communication. It limits as well as liberates us. It differentiates and as well as unites us. It defines our realities and thereby shapes the way we think, feel and act.

Daramola (2005) explains that virtually all definitions of culture recognize that culture is learned. Creation and maintenance of a more or less common culture occurs through communication, including mass communication; when we talk to our friends, when teachers teach, grandparents pass on legends, parents raise children, religious leaders instruct followers, Politician's campaign or media professions produce content that we read, listen to and or watch, meaning is being shared and culture is being constructed and maintained. Culture also serves other
purposes, it helps us categorize and classify our experiences, it helps define us, our world and our place in it.

Morgan (1988) averts that even if the media systems are not the most powerful agents for social change, they are in many cases, the most pervasive and visible agents. The need to see the chances of foreign media influence in abrasionary terms and not in terms of the fear of complete cultural domination or substitution cannot be over emphasized. In any case, such effects should not be seen as the consequences of media agents alone, rather as Varan (1988) notes, we can begin to understand this exchange as part of an interaction between agents and cultural terrain which becomes a part of people’s daily life. Defleur (1991) observes that people hum the latest tunes, makes the latest hair styles of popular artists, and try to dress like them. These media output is an integrated and important part of popular cultures.

Daramola (2005) explains that culture of dressing in Nigeria was unique and attractive before civilization. For instance, for the Yoruba people of Nigeria, it was common in the past to see people dressing in “Aso-oke” to festivities. But today they simply dress in lace materials and “buba” with headties (for women) and “buba” and “agbada” (for men) which is not necessarily “Asooke”. The hitherto offending trousers by female members of the society are now in vogue, to the extent that youths now wear torn trousers, crop tops, exposing their stomach and other sensitive part of their body, all in the name of fashion.

Okechukwu (2012) conducted a study on the "The influence of Western media on the dressing pattern of undergraduates in Nigeria". The study aimed at finding the extent to which western media have influence the dressing pattern of undergraduates in Imo State University. The study employed the survey method. The study found out that western media have influenced the dress pattern of Nigeria Students. The study recommended that programme producers should add some creativity to their programmes, so as to capture the attention of the people thereby exposing local culture and government should make provision for cultural
promotions in colleges and Universities, to sensitize them so as to appreciate their culture.

Nnemeka (2006) also conducted a research on "The influence of the media on Students mode of dressing". The study aimed at evaluating the influence of the media on students' mode of dressing. The study recommended that Nigerian Films and Video board (NFVCB) should set a ban on all musical works or videos that celebrate obscenity, since such works promote sexual immorality amongst our youth, students, and in the society at large.

Furthermore, Ejiogu (2000) conducted a study on "The influence of media Imperialism on the dress code of youth in Owerri Municipal". The study aimed at finding whether Owerri Municipal Youths dress sense is influenced by content of foreign TV programmes. The study adopted the survey research method. The study recommended that regulatory agencies in Nigeria should ensure that media organizations comply with the mandatory local programmes quota as contained in the NBC code. Be that as it may, the present study will explore the situation in Imo State University to check for similarity or differences in finding.

Theoretical Framework
The study was anchored on social learning theory and cultivation theory. Social Learning Theory: Also known as observational learning and modeling theory, was developed mainly by Albert Bandura and his associates in the 1960s and it remains one of the most widely used theories of media effect (Bandura and Walters 1963). Tan (1985) as cited by Konkwo (2012) noted that social learning theory explains how we learn, not only from observing and modeling individuals and events we see in the media, but also from direct experience in the non-mediated environment as well. Moreover, the set of behaviour we learn is the result of both environmental and cognitive factors. Bandura's original investigations found that, under certain circumstances, young ones can learn aggressive behaviour from films and television.
Several components of the social learning process have been articulated by Bandura and Walters (1963) and Bandura (1977) as follows:

- An individual must select or at least be exposed to an event or the behaviour of another, either directly or symbolically through the media, events or behaviour that are simple and distinctive elicit positive feelings and are observed repeatedly are most likely to be modelled. Several characteristics of an observer may also influence attention.

- An individual must be capable of mentally retaining observed behaviours or events. This retention is achieved by imagery, storage of mentally representing events using verbal codes or a common language.

- An individual is expected to possess the cognitive ability and motor skills needed to initiate the observed and learned behaviour. Helpful practices in refining a reproduction of the behaviour are achieved by repetition, self-observation and feedback from others.

- Finally, the individual must be highly motivated to perform the learned behaviour. Key to such motivation is, according to Bandura (ibid), reinforcement, which also increases the likelihood that a behaviour will be modelled.

The social learning theory is most appropriate for this study on the influence of international media on the dress code of Imo State University undergraduates. The theory was adopted because, undergraduates especially in Imo State University, have role models who are mostly public figures in various works of life. The audio visual medium of communication in their discharge of their responsibility to the society, monitor and cover global events showing people who have made landmark success in their fields. Through the television, socio-cultural heritage of the people is communicated to the global village. Youth on receiving this content consume it and imitate their role models because they want to be like them. They watch and apply it to their everyday life.
Cultivation Theory according to the cultivation theory (or cultivation analysis), television is partially responsible for shaping or “cultivating viewers” conceptions of social reality. Notable scholars associated with the cultivation theory are George Gerbner, Larry Gross, Michael Morgan, Nancy Signoreli, and others. The background to this theory is derived from the thinking that:

1. Television has become the world's dominant storyteller
2. The content of television is relatively uniform as far as its dominant, values and images are concerned.

According to theorists, “television is the source of the most broadly shared images and messages in history. It is the mainstream of the symbolic environment into which we live out our lives. Its mass ritual shows no signs of weakening and its consequences are increasingly felt around the globe. The term “cultivation” is used by this researcher to describe the independent contributions that television viewing makes to viewer conceptions of reality, between light and heavy viewers in the same demographic subgroups.

The relevance of Cultivation Theory to the study is that there is every tendency that the mode of dressing of youths have been influenced because of how they have been exposed to foreign television programmes, that they tend to emulate what they have seen through television as a real way of doing things, because of the independence contribution that television viewing makes to viewers' conception of reality between light and heavy viewer in the same demography subgroup.

Television is responsible for shaping or cultivating a viewer's perception of reality. The combined influence of massive television exposure by viewers overtime subtly shape the conception of social reality for individuals and ultimately for our culture as a whole.

Research Methodology
The study adopted the survey research design. Survey is a research design that focuses on a representative sample derived from the entire population of study. The population of this study is the entire population
of Imo State University students in Owerri Campus. According to the University registrar, Imo State University has a total of 15,078 students. It should be noted that this is only the first degree students of the university. The areas of study covered are faculties of Social Sciences, Education, Law, Business Administration and Sciences. The faculties were chosen using a simple random technique to ensure equal chance of being selected.

Considering the large number of the population, a sample size was drawn mathematically by applying Taro Yemane’s formula which gave the size as 389. Stratified sampling technique as a type of probability sampling technique was used by the researchers. The instrument of data collection was principally the questionnaire. It was divided into two sections. Section A contained personal information (age, sex, department, faculty, level) while section B contains the subject matter of the study. Also observation schedule was used as a supplementary instrument. This was in a bid to observe the dressing of the students within the periods of the study. Data was properly presented in tables with the use of simple percentages and for descriptive purpose. The data was based on the response from respondents in the school.

Findings
RQ1: To what extent are Imo State University undergraduates exposed to foreign TV programmes?
Data showed that 169 (45.80%) respondents confirmed that Imo State University undergraduates are exposed to foreign TV programmes as almost every household do have cable satellite receiver which has more of foreign TV stations. However, 110 (29.81%) respondents were moderately exposed to foreign TV programmes, while 90 (24.39%) could not quantify their level of exposure to foreign TV programmes. Hence we conclude that Imo State University undergraduates are highly exposed to foreign TV programmes.

In the opinion of the researchers, too much exposure to foreign media will to a large extent have significant impact on Nigerians dress code that
will certainly cause abandonment of our culture, tradition and values for foreign dress. If one go theorize with the cultivation theory, then it becomes glaring why the dressing identity of Nigerians are being speedily replaced to foreign based style of dressing.

RQ2: what motivates Imo State University undergraduates towards foreign TV programmes?
The answer to this research question revealed that 130 (35.23%) respondents of Imo State University confirmed they were motivated towards foreign TV programme to improve their general knowledge and that is where they learn the recent trends on dress code. The finding of Konkwo (2014) citing Berelson (1948) where he asserted that “some kinds of communication on some kinds of issues, brought to the attention of some kinds of people under some kinds of condition have some kinds of effects” is in line with this study’s findings. However, 80 (21.68%) of respondent said they were motivated towards foreign TV programmes for fun, 100 (27.10%) respondent said passing time, while for 59 (15.99%) respondents, it was a hobby. Does it mean that undergraduates cannot unwind and be entertained by home-based media contents?

In the opinion of the researchers, certain motivations to foreign media will have significant impact on Imo State University undergraduates' dress code because that is where they claim to learn recent trends on dress code. However, over dependence on foreign media content can also be largely due to inferiority complex. Africans have been mentally colonized into believing that anything labeled African is inferior to foreign based. If more media consumers depend on foreign programmes, how will the domestic media industry bloom?

RQ3: To what extent are Imo State University undergraduate’s attitudes on dress code influenced by content of foreign TV programme.
From different responses, the answer to this research question revealed in that 200 (54.20%) respondents of Imo State University undergraduate’s attitude on dress code are to a large extent influenced
by content of foreign TV programmes. The finding of Konkwo (2004) asserted that a situation of large Western media export to Nigeria is likely to compel Nigerians to know and believe more about the West than Nigeria. Besides, there are these staple matters of anxiety like the state of culture and morals or the power of the media to brainwash or educate. However, 120 (32.52%) respondent said foreign TV programme has moderately influenced their attitude on dress code, while 49 (13.28%) could not say if foreign TV programme has influenced their attitude on dress code.

It is the view of the researchers that too much exposure to foreign media will to a large extent have significant impact on Imo State University Undergraduate’s attitudes on dress code and this will certainly make them to start dressing indecently thereby exposing sensitive parts of their body. At this juncture, the issue of culture and values comes into play. An attempt to juxtapose developed and developing countries will reveal that what is considered indecent dressing in Nigeria for instance, will not be labeled same in America. Now if a particular style of dressing is considered decent in America and it is portrayed in their productions, will it also be okay for Nigerians to copy that style of dressing knowing that it will be in dissonance with what is culturally accepted in Nigeria?

RQ4: Has foreign TV programme influenced Imo State University undergraduates’ choice of dress code?

The answer to this research question revealed by 180 (48.78%) respondents forming the majority confirmed that foreign TV programme has influenced their choice of dress code. However, 60 (16.26%) respondents disagree that foreign TV programme has influenced their choice of dressing, 100 (27.10%) respondent said moderate, while 29 (7.86%) can’t say if it has influenced their choice of dressing.

For the researchers, the reason for the present finding is because people believe more in the west and so feel foreign TV programmes will enable them learn more of recent trends on dress code and this certainly will take our tradition into extinction.
Summary and Conclusion of Findings

It was revealed that 45.80% of Imo State University undergraduates are exposed to foreign TV programmes, as almost every household do have cable satellite receiver which has more of foreign TV stations. Also, 35.23% of Imo State University undergraduates are motivated towards foreign TV programmed to improve their general knowledge and that is where they learn the recent trends on dress code. Again, 54.20% of Imo State University undergraduate’s attitude on dress code is to a large extent influenced by content of foreign TV programme. Finally, foreign TV programme has influenced Imo State University undergraduates on their choice of dress code very well with 48.78%.

In conclusion, Imo State University undergraduates have been influenced by western television programmes on their dress code to a large extent of 48.78%.

Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

Since the rate of Imo State University undergraduates’ exposure to foreign TV programme is high, the regulatory agencies in Nigeria should ensure that media organizations comply with the mandatory 60% local content programmes as against 40% foreign content programme quota as contained in Nigeria broadcasting corporation (NBC) code. This will enable our culture and tradition not to go into extinction.

Since most Imo State University undergraduates are motivated towards foreign TV programme in order to improve their general knowledge, it is recommended that TV producers and those responsible for packaging local cultural products should always put students/youths tastes into consideration when packaging such products. This will go a long way in making such programmes more appealing to the youths, thereby attracting their viewership.

It was revealed that Imo State University undergraduate’s attitudes on dress code are to a large extent influenced by content of foreign TV programmes, and it is recommended that traditional institution and other custodians of Nigerian’s cultural heritage and the protagonist of the
protection of authentic local Nigerian cultural values, should find ways of co-opting modern mass media communication into their campaign for the preservation and transmission of authentic Nigeria cultures. To achieve this, traditional folktales stories and cultural practice can be packaged in the form of books or recorded on tapes or discs and broadcast to large guidance to make up for the dying culture of tales by moonlight and other forms of oral communication traditions.

Foreign TV programme has influenced the choice of dress code of Imo state University undergraduates and so owners, managers and operators of media organization should strive at all times to live up to their social responsibility of preserving and transmitting the cultural heritage of the society within which they operate. To achieve this, it is advised that presenters and newscasters should be on traditional attire when appearing on screen. This is very important because observation has shown that many youths look up to these television personalities as role models, particularly in the aspect of dressing.

Youths imitate easily and put into practice advert covering ladies with flirty, skimpy dresses and this should be discouraged. In musical, films and videos, all hands must be on deck to check indecent dressing in the society. Parents, teachers and the entire stakeholders should check the excesses of their children in the area of outing habits, and watching of films, so that they won't be influenced by their visit to the website, internet and parties, which could metamorphose into pilfering, prostitution, in order to purchase skimpy outfits or pornographic films.

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