

Globalisation of Foreign Media and Eroding of Cultural Heritage: The Nigerian Perspective

By

Nwala, Bigman Amaonyeze

Department of English and Communication Arts

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt.

nwalabigman@gmail.com

08065634621

&

Daniel, Progress Umor

Department of English and Communication Arts

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt

Progress.umor@iaue.edu.ng, danielprogress31@gmail.com

08063507748, 08052812242

Abstract

The mass media contents and portrayal do not only serve economic and political gains, they change people's cultural values. Hence, making the receivers of these messages the prisoner of their cultures. The study examines the globalization of foreign media and eroding of cultural heritage in Nigeria. The study was anchored on the dependency theory and adopted library research method. The finding reviewed that globalization of foreign media has eroded Nigerian cultural heritage through consist supply of media hard and soft wares into Nigeria. The findings also reviewed that foreign contents such as music, language, drama, dress, and advertisement have taken the place of our traditional and cultural ways of life. It found that imbalances in news flow and its agencies are responsible for the cultural dominance. It concluded that Nigerian cultural heritage should be instituted into foreign media programs since the culture of the people gives them distinctive identity. The study

*recommended consistent trans-cultural and cross cultural balances
in media contents and portrayal.*

Introduction

The ability to communicate, integrate and globally transmits beliefs, norms, rules, modes of dressing and values of a given society from one generation to another and from place to place has placed the media as hotbed of manifold tension in the world today. Hence persuading the receiver of message to imbibe them through cultivation and consistent exposure, thereby making them the prisoners of their cultural norms and idiosyncrasies portrayed in the global media. This development in the global media has inevitably become a big influence on every one's life and culture. Since every thing that affects our communication affects our ways of life; mode dressing, family belief system, language, beliefs, values and identity. Persons are bound to share from the values which provide identity for them and define their cultural mien (Obukoata 2012, p. 97).

Obukoata (2012, p. 97) sees the communicate values media portray as family lifestyle, economy, food, clothing, shelter, communication, governance, belief as system, education and habitation. These cultural heritage and lifestyle of citizens in a community is learned and passed on the media. Nwaolikpe (2013, p.63) maintains that media are important factor in dissemination of cultural heritage, cultural education and national development. This supposes why Okunna and Omenugha (2012, p.215) posit that mass media is powerful vehicle for the dissemination of cultural; there has always been fears that massive flow of foreign mass media content into the society other than those in which such content are produce will negatively influence local culture. The media offer learning ground for people, and are used to learn about what is happening around the world (Turow, 2009, p. 21). Okon (2001, p. 41) warns that the mass media must serve leaders by helping them see the community needs, supporting and to make improvements and by holding over them the constant threat to

exposure should they become negligent of their duty or attempt to defraud the public. This according to Ndolo (2011) through organized dissemination of facts, opinions, entertainment and other information through newspapers, magazines, books, films, radio, television, the world wide web, bill boards, CDs, DVDs videos cassettes, computer games, social media and other forms of publishing.

The media do not operate in vacuum, individuals of different cultural make up owe and operate the media. If these individuals are taken from different cultural background, it means that they ought to reflect their cultural heritage by the ways of their lives. This will also affect their presentation in the media. The media need to reflect the socio-cultural. Political and economic conditions of the people within they operate (Okon, 2018). Baran, (2013, p. 15) notes that the mass communication has become a primary forum of the debate about our culture, logically then, the most powerful voices in the forum have the most power to share our definitions and misunderstanding.

Research Questions

1. To what extent has foreign media eroded Nigerian cultural heritage?
2. What area of foreign media content dominated Nigerian cultural heritage?
3. What are the factors that necessitated globalization of foreign media to Nigeria?

Theoretical framework

This paper considered media dependency theory. The theory was propounded by an American communication researcher, Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin Delfleur in 1976. The theorists belief that people turn to media to experience a social changes. Nigerian audiences depend on the foreign media for the choice of role models, modes of dressing, to learn modern and contemporary way of English usage and behavior. These traits

subsequently become part of them and they pass them on to others. Anaeto (2010, p. 9) explains that the present state of underdeveloped states of the world country by examining the pattern of interaction among nations and by arguing that underdevelopment and ingenuity among nations is an intrinsic part of those interactions as portrayed in the foreign media. Nwaolike (2013, p. 63) posits that the message of the media are influential and they could influence negatively or positively depending on the intention of the message communicated.

The theory states that, the cultural poverty of the countries in the periphery is not because they are not integrated into the world system, but because of the influence the developed countries use their media to change the cultural heritage of the underdeveloped countries. This is through the use of music, films, drama, modes of dressing, languages, advertisement, pattern of eating and dressing. The distinction between the underdeveloped and developed countries is that, the developed countries place information of poorer countries of the world in an unlike historical context (Assmah, 2011, p.76). The media as watch dog of the society should be credible and objective in the portrayals in the areas of cultural heritage and peoples' belief. This will lead to public acceptance devoid of eroding peoples' cultural heritage.

Review of Related Literature

Mass media

These are devices or channels of communication. Merrill and Lowenstein in Okunna and Colleague (2012) call it 'artificial channels' since they have set up to act as (or for) persons; they are, in effect, institutionalized channels and are generally considered to be newspapers and magazines, radio, television, films and books. Obasanjo and Babogunje (1992, p. 44) maintain that mass media are agencies, modern or traditional that operate for the articulation and dissemination of ideas and information generally with the intention to influence or control an audience or institutions that constitute

power and authority. They are carriers of culture. Nwala (2014, p. 9) avers that the media are agency responsible for dissemination of information.

The belief, values, norms, languages, mode dressing, eating dance and steps are portrayed in the media. Rodman, (2012, p. 7) classifies books, magazines and newspapers as print media, radio and television as broadcast media; digital media (sometimes referred to as new media including the internet, cell phone and any other medium that uses computer-based technology); and the entertainment media (all of these, plus movies, recordings and video games).

Globalization

Globalization is the process that has two major aspects; the broadcasting and the deeping of interactions and interdependence among societies and states throughout the globe (Cohn, 2002, p. 10). Asemah (20011, p. 189) opines that globalization is becoming an inescapable process; it confers certain benefits and imposes certain costs on all who embrace it. He further explains that all countries of the world are affected by globalization through several channels; international migration, diffusion of technology and information communication technology. The world is so connected today that each that values, norms, beliefs, behavior, language and modes of dressing and eating are globally transmitted and imbibed. Globalisation and media software managed by Europe and America has not given fair treatment to peoples' culture especially to developing nation like Nigeria. This resulted in gap in information and communication dissemination leading to dominant of culture known as popular culture. This is the reason Okunna and Colleague (2012) maintain that globalization is setting the pace in the interaction of cultures with consequence that local cultures are overwhelmed.

Culture and cultural heritage

Culture is the whole complex which includes, knowledge, moral, religion, customs and habits or any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of the society Anasah (1974 in Okunna and Colleague 2012). Culture is a total way of life of a people (Ndolo, 2006, p.8). Taylor (1991 in Baran 2004, p. 10) argues that culture is an historical transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbolic form by means which (people) communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about attitude towards life. In Asemah (2011), the contents of international mass communication are cultural materials, which reflect alien ways of life and promote foreign values of life and promote foreign values, attitudes and behavioural patterns in third world countries.

MacBride (1981) found that mass communication is the carrier of cultural heritage and the mass communication media are cultural instruments which supply the cultural fare and shape cultural experience of many millions of people in the modern world. This domination group (s) through uneven distribution of information, wealth, opportunities in political and economic matters, discriminatory treatment and the differences has resulted to relative disintegration of people. Udoakah (2004, p. 36) quarrels that for ideal of integration suggest that society to be integrated is made up of different race, culture, religion, language, etc and that there is a hostile relationship existing between the different groups that make up that society. Okigbo and Udejah, (2005) call modes of dressing, gestures, smiles, strings and formal and informal nuances of behavior which are cultural values transferred over time media through as silent language. Asante, (1983) calls them non-verbal forms of communication, software communication.

Epirical Review

Acolonu (2011) did a study on the mass media and cultural imperialism. The aim was to find out how foreign program dominates our television

screens. The study adopted library research method. The findings reviewed that there is widening gap on the level of development on media programs. While the industrial world grows vibrantly in economic, social and political prosperity and stability, African has been left to wallow in abject poverty and economic retrogression. The media introduced distorted perceptive and civilized and everything local is primitive. It concluded that Nigeria should acknowledge benefits of acculturation since we can not close eyes to its impediments. It recommended that the exchange of media products from developed nations to developing nations and vice versa.

Nwaolikpe (2013) conducted a study on culture and Nigerian identity in the print media. The aim of the study was to examine the impact of the print media have made in sensitizing, promoting and educating the Nigerian public on their cultural values thereby helping to understand their identity and maintain it. The study used library research method. It found that the print media has given adequate media coverage to create awareness of Nigerian cultural heritage, building a consecrations of the various forms of cultural development. It concluded that people feel their cultural heritage if they read them in an article in the print media irrespective of where they are. It recommended that the mass media should intensify campaign about cultural change and integration of electronic, print and digital media to sustain and preserve Nigerian culture. Broadcast owners and government should pay salaries when due and train the personnel on cultural values, norms, beliefs to sustain programs to reflect our cultural issues.

Discussion/findings

Research Question 1:

To what extent has globalization of foreign media eroded Nigerian cultural heritage?

To a great extent through the domination of her cultural heritage using cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism is the domination of cultural heritage of a people by foreign culture. This is done through consistent

exposure or over dependence on their media hard ware and soft ware. Rodman (2012, p.13) calls the displacement of their traditional culture with American culture. This dominance was the reason why United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1980 set report known as New World Information Order (NWICO). Baran (2013, p. 397) maintains that individual nations should be free to control the news and entertainment that entered their lands, it call for monitoring of all such content, monitoring and licensing of foreign.

This is seen as a gift and threat. This is because the American concepts like freedom, democracy, equality and human rights are perceived as values and beneficial to them but on the contrary, they are considered threats. A man's wife can sue him for raising voice on her. In fact a culturally and respected disciplined person in Nigeria who travels to America or developed countries with such mind set, will end in prison. What we see as culture is considered barbaric and what they see as one we considered as modern and modernization. Hence resulting to dominance, this dominance is mostly caused by the supply of communication technology which Okigbo and Friend (2005) call media hardware.

Cebel (1976 in Acholom, 2011) agrees that cultural imperialism is a situation where foreign culture dominates a local one such that the local sees their culture as inferior to the foreign one. This informed the current changes in our belief system, if I don't travel to Europe, America or other developed countries, I can't make it in life. Nigerian young men and women are dying on daily basis in desert, rivers and seas in a bid to get to Europe. Others are engaged in trafficking and prostitutions. We no longer dress in our cultural attires and habitations. These are not our ways of lives. Okon, (2018) calls it centripetal tendencies of the media. There is ample evidence to prove that African cultures have been submerged by their European and American counterparts Usua (2012, p.113). This is according to Udoudo (2010) they have undergone mutation in response to global communication functionality and thus become peripheries. African languages are given

way for English language (Usua 2012, p.113). Best and Kombol (2009) aver that this dominant culture exerts pleasure and force on other culture that are perceived to be less significance even by members who belong to the culture. This informed the abolition of killing a woman who gives birth to twins. This abolishes savagery and barbaric to bring moral decadence. Okon (2018) gives it centrifugal tendencies of the media.

From around the late 1960s and through the 70s, scholars and leaders in Africa become conscious or even apprehensive of the dominance of the continent by values from Europe and America (Usua, 2012, p. 111). Okoye (1993 in Okunna and Friend 2012) posit that heavy viewing of foreign culture in video films could overwhelm Nigerian culture among Nigerian children, resulting in their alienation from their local surroundings; hence making them strangers in their own country. Okoye warns that, this alienation will not augur well for national development because the preservation of people's culture essential in their development.

Research Question 2

What area of foreign media content dominates Nigerian cultural heritage?

Media imperialism: In spite of the use of media for economic and political gain on Nigeria, foreign media through their programs such as films, music, dance, advertisement, news, features in various media psychologically and mentally control Nigerians. This supposed the sagging trending in Nigeria, eating 'iba' with fork and destruction of African shrines. Agbanu (2012, p. 424) argues that 20th century has encompass the amalgamation of traditional media such as film, images, music, spoken words with the interactive power of computer and communication technologies. The way society consume music changed from generation to generation (Shapero 2012, p. 20).

Nevertheless, media imperialism implies over concentration of mass media from developed nations as significant variables which negatively affects under developed nations. This makes the cultural identity of these smaller nations inferior and unimportant due to homogeneity inherent in communication hard ware and soft ware in developed countries. Ndolo (2013) posits that this dependency relationship established through importation communication hard and soft wares along with engineers, technicians and related information protocols that veraciously established a set of foreign norms, values and beliefs which alter the traditional cultural heritage and socialisation Information only flows in form of a one way traffic and it is usually from the West, that is ,the developed countries of the world to the third countries and rarely from the from latter to the former (Asemah, 2011)

Udoudo (2012) The result of this differences is beautiful culture of Africa become fragmented among the existing ethnic line, thereby eroding the power underlying a collective front that would have made possible the development and presentation of the beautiful African cultural for global consumption and competition (p. 85). Asemah (2011, p. 185) further states that the import of the Western nations dominate the media around the world which in turn, have a powerful effect on the third world culture by imposing on them Western values and thereby, destroying own nature culture. Ndolo (2013) calls it electronic colonialism.

There are two ways media could bring to the society; continues presentation of media through the provision of some solution to a situation or problem the society has suffered over time and through adoption and innovation of some new technology Okon (2007, p.38). The lasting solution to unending challenge is to establish a uniformity distribution of message given system that would circulate evenly around the world. The gap is wide, it can be closed, although efforts made to closed it has instead increase the gap thereby making the poor countries to be poorer. The rich

are getting richer. The music, dance steps, films, speaking the nose, drama and advertisement aimed to erode our cultural heritage is inherent today.

Research Question 3: factors that necessitated globalization of foreign media to Nigeria?

Western marriage and education: educational and marriage values acquired in the Western world are part of their cultural heritage. In traditional societies, social learning is embellished in activities such songs, dance, story-telling, drama, masquerade display, festivals and related efforts (Usua, 2012, p.115). These values are commonly copied by Nigerian citizens who are studying in Western world and cultivate such values to their children, family members and friends and it passes from generation to generation.

Imbalances in news flows and news agencies: the one sided flow of information and its agencies have hindered development and negatively affected Nigerian cultural norms and values. McaQuail (2000, in Usua, 2012, p. 112) indentified the result of this imbalances thus;

1. A situation where there will be continues dependency, rather than economic growth of weak nation.
2. The imbalance that characterized media imperialism will under mind cultural autonomy or hold back cultural development.
3. The one sided flow of news information which increases the global power of wealthy nations while hindering the growth, national identities of self image of poor and weak nation.
4. A rise in cultural homogenization or synchronization that can only lead to a dominant cultural outlook that has no specific connection with the real expectation of developing world.

However, the Associated Press (AP), United Press international (UPL), TASS, Agence France Presse (AFP) and Inter-Press Service (IPS) who international recognized agencies which offer extensive world news

coverage and distribution and subscription are all from America, Europe, none are from Africa or other developing countries.

Conclusion

The beliefs, norms, values, modes dressing, pattern of eating talking, food, social stratification, political life, marriage, family kingship, socialization, religion, dance, language and other behavioural traits are what give a society distinctive identity from another. These are communicated to the citizens through the mass media in various programmes (soft ware) like features, drama, music, films, education, economy and politics which have the capacity influence the belief system of the audience who expose them self to these media contents.

It is therefore necessary to protect and strengthen the threatened Nigerian culture by instituting trans-cultural and cross cultural communication line that would open up the alternative as an antidote to the this unending pressure of domination of cultures by developed countries. This will prevent safeguard the developing countries especially Nigeria from cultural imperialism.

The following recommendations were made:

1. Media soft ware (programmes) in global arena should include the cultural heritage of the developing countries in positive light to give their cultural heritage identity.
2. Developing countries should be allowed to owe, distribute, and subscribe to International News Agencies like America and Europe.
3. Traditional social learning should be embellished in all its activities and forms such as in songs, dance, story-telling, drama, masquerade display, festivals and related efforts to project the cultural heritage of the Nigerian society.

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