ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Youths' Perception of the Portrayal of Materialism in Nigerian Films: A Study of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Students

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Abstract

This study examined youths 'perception of the portrayal of materialism inNigeria films with a focus on students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The main objective of the study was to ascertain how undergraduate students of NnamdiAzikiwe University, who are all categorized as youths, perceive the theme of materialism as portrayed in Nigeria films. The agenda-setting and cultivation theories served as the theoretical framework of analysis. The survey research design was employed with the questionnaire used as the instrument for data collection. A sample of 400 respondents was randomly selected for the study. The study found among others that Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates were exposed to Nigerian films and have truly watched the home videos that portray materialism; that NnamdiAzikiwe University undergraduates know and understand what constitutes materialism in Nigerian films; that a significant number of the respondents perceive themes of materialism in Nigerian films as being interesting; and that exposure to materialism in Nigerian films does not necessarily influence the viewers. The researcher recommends among others that regulatory authorities such as the Nigerian Film and Video Censor Board (NFVCB) should be alive to their responsibilities vis-à-vis portrayal of negative local culture for public consumption; that the home video producers should be more alert and proactive in packaging movies that have sound moral lessons to teach rather than just making a mockery of our cultural values; that the Nigerian government should not sit down and watch our culture being portrayed in a bad light; and that portrayal of themes such as materialism in Nigerian films should be for positive cultural portrayals and preservation.

Keywords: Youths, Perception, Portrayal of materialism, Nigerian films.

Introduction

The film is a medium of communication which many individuals, people and organizations can utilize for different purposes, advantages (and disadvantages). As a popular culture, it tells stories of the societies which it subsists. It depicts the lifestyles, attitudes, environments and activities within and around them (Adenugba, 2007). From the above, the mirroring and influencing potential of films are clearly seen. Films have also been used to indoctrinate people to imbibe certain beliefs and act in certain ways (Oloisadebe & Ekeanyanwu, 2014). The film is produced by the people of the milieu who can put forth actual representations and portrayals with defined objectives (Asemah, 2011).

According to Ekwuazi (1991) cited in Ezebuenyi, Ezeaka and Chukwuemeka (2017), the film is a cultural index: a cultural reflector, a socializing agent and therefore the instrument of cultural dynamics. He further explains that the film constitutes an industry whose production is directly ideological. What this means is that the film, in this case home video, projects what it seeks to communicate to its audience, what it seeks to sell, what it wants its audience to understand and what it wants its audience to imbibe. This is why it is pertinent to review the home video as an image maker for Nigeria. Adenugba (2007) further opines that as "film is a popular culture and as expected, it must recreate and tell stories which reflect the people's way of life. The Nigerian film industry is no exception." In their exhibitions, the Nigerian films depict certain ways of living that emphasize and callattention to ostentation devoid of spirituality.

Uduakobong (2012) observes this trend when he noted that "the film industry in Nigeria is replete with activities that do not emphasize spirituality or enhancement of our rich cultural values. These

activities include witchcraft, fetishism, fraud, get-rich-quick syndrome, rituals and sex. Haynes (2000, p.18) had earlier observed that "Nollywood film characters are saturated with a depiction of witchcraft practices." Other themes that are visible in Nigerian home movies are armed robbery, prostitution, wife-snatching, kidnappings, brutal vengeance, assassination, ritual killings, dubious acquisition of wealth, man's inhumanity to man, different kinds of violence and negative side of family and societal relationship among others. All these themes tend to portray materialism.

There are two schools of thought on the perception of the portrayal of materialism in Nigerian films. One school of thought holds that the portrayal is healthy, since it is a reflection of the practices prevalent in our society. On the other hand, some scholars think that the dominant portrayal of materialism in Nigerian films is unhealthy and certainly not a correct portrayal of an African cultural value system. All Africans are not materialistic. These films are watched by children and their minds get affected (Ojeifo, 2011).

The home video can serve as a possible loud speaker for the purpose of projecting the Nigerian image in a positive light just as the advertisers and marketers would. This can be attributed to its wide reach (Akashoro, 2010; O'Donnell, 2007). The Nigerian film industry has helped a great deal in the projection or portrayal of certain ideals that have influenced the Nigerian youths. The extent materialism has been portrayed from the stable of Nollywood with Nigerian storyline, culture, costumes, accoutrements, locale and so on have become a great concern especially in relation to how the youths swallow these portrayals without recourse to reality.

In the words of Dictionary .com (2011) "Materialism means preoccupation with or emphasis on material objects, comforts, and considerations, with a disinterest in or rejection of spiritual, intellectual, or cultural values". Also, Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary defines materialism as a way of thinking that gives too much importance to material possession rather than to spiritual or intellectual things. The above exposition, which underlies the true nature of portrayals of materialism in Nigerian films becomes necessary to first limit the scope of the word in relation to the study and to also enhance its operationization in the study. Indiscriminate watching of films has dastardly dealt with the psyche of our youths who have absorbed everything they hear and watch from these films (Ekeanyanwu, 2011).

In spite of its wide reach, Nigerian films do not seem to have corrective measures as they display contents that even lower the nation's moral and ethical values as well as leave our youths in a world of make-belief (Oloisadeba & Ekeanyanwu, 2014). The way Nigerian youths perceive materialism as portrayed in Nigeria films can be seen in our national life today. The spate of kidnapping, armed robbery, bunkering, credit card scam, Internet fraud, ritual killings, occultism, secret cults, and incessant quest to travel overseas (get-rich-quick syndrome) are all indices of exposure to Nigerian films. This study therefore seeks to investigate youths' perception of the portrayal of materialism in Nigerian films.

Statement of Research Problem

The tendencies of Nigerian youths acting the scripts of Nigerian films can no longer be over-emphasized. The unrestricted exposure to and portrayal of materialistic tendencies in Nigerian films call for concern vis-à-vis the damning consequences of doing anything (no matter how negative) to make money and live a good life.

Hovland et al. (1949) cited in Akashoro (2010) reported a larger scale of experimental studies that assessed the value of using film material to 'indoctrinate' American military recruits into awareness and support for the aims of the second world war. Any other medium could have been used as a means of indoctrination but it was film that was used because of its ability to reflect individuals rather than the society at large. The problem therefore is that excessive and unrestricted viewing of films more often than not makes the viewers want to practisewhat they have seen. Portrayal of materialism and materialistic tendencies in

Nigerian films seem to be the order of the day. Based on the above, this study seeks to examine how Nigerian youths perceive the portrayal of materialism in Nigerian films. Can it be said that Nigerian youths' exposure to materialistic tendencies in Nigerian films influence their perception?

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives are to:

1. Assess Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates' frequency of exposure to Nigerian films.
2. Ascertain Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates' knowledge and understanding of portrayal of materialism in Nigeria films.
3. Find out Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates' perception of the portrayal of materialism in Nigeria films.
4. Determine whether Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates are influenced by their exposure to materialism in Nigerian films.

Research Questions

1. What is Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates' frequency of exposure to Nigerian films?
2. Do Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates know and understand what constitutes materialism in Nigerian films?
3. What is Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates' perception of materialism in Nigerian films?
4. Does Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates' exposure to materialism in Nigerian films influence them?

Theoretical Framework

The study is situated within the framework of Agenda-setting, cultivation theories, Social learning theory and Attitude change theory. Through the explanation of agenda setting theory offered by McCombs and Shaw (1972) which Folarin (1998) summarizes, the mass media predetermine the issues that are regarded as important at a given time and in a given society. They also have the power to determine what people are thinking about without having the power to determine what they actually think. The elements through which the media undertake such roles as revealed by the theories are:-

(i) quality or frequency of reporting;
(ii) prominence given to the reports – through headline display, pictures and layout in newspapers, magazines, films, graphics or timing on radio and television;
(iii) the degree of conflicts generated in reports, films, etc.;
(iv) cumulative media - specific effects over time.

Cultivation Theory

Following this, with continuous interaction with home video films, the viewing audience would be drawn to give thought to the messages or the medium. According to Demers, Saliven, Potter and Hobert (2001), cultivation theory originally propounded by George Gerbner and expanded by Gerbner and Gross (1976) says that TV has been the main source of storytelling in today's society. They classify those who watch for four or more hours a day as heavy watchers and those who watch for less hours as light viewers. According to the author of *Mass Communication from Theory to Practical Application* (undated), cultivation theorists posit that TV viewing can have long term effects that gradually affect the audience (Ekeanyanwu, 2007).

The primary focus falls on the effects of viewing in the attitudes of viewers as opposed to created behavior. Many times, the viewers are unaware of the extent to which they absorb media, often viewing themselves as moderate viewers when in fact they are heavy viewers. The theorists suggest that TV and media possess a small but insignificant influence on the attitudes and beliefs of society about society. Those who absorb more media are those that are more influenced. The home video can indeed affect the viewing audience to think in the manner the elements are portrayed. The home video is an ancillary that exhibits its offerings through the television receiver which has been the scapegoat of cultivation studies and media violence among others. Simply put, video tells its stories through the television screen (Mba, 2006).

Social Learning Theory

The theory was developed by Albert Bandura. It is a general psychological model constructed to explain human behavior (Bandura, 1973 cited in Ezebuenyi et al., 2017). The basic premise of social learning theory is that it approaches the explanation of human behavior in terms of a continuous, reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental determinants (Bandura, 1977 cited in Ezebuenyi et al., 2017). That is, observed stimuli, personal experiences, and individual cognitive processes all work together to determine a person's values and behaviours. Social learning theory draws upon the notion of reinforcement, whereby individuals come to adopt those values and behaviors that are perceived as rewarding and discard those that are not. Bandura, cited in Ezebuenyi et al. (2017) suggests that as a general rule, seeing behavior succeed for others increases the tendency to behave in similar ways, while seeing behaviour punished decreases the tendency. Bandura strongly rejects the view that his interpretation of reinforcement is mechanistic, making the point that "both people and their environments are reciprocal determinants of each other" (Bandura 1977 cited in Ezebuenyi et al., 2017).

This process of vicarious learning through observation of models, in real life or the media, involves noticing or attending to the modeled behaviour. This includes verbal or facial expressions. It also involves coding the behavior in memory visually or verbally and enacting the behaviour as well as motivation. This is the basis of evaluating the consequences (Bandura, 1977 cited in Ezebuenyi et al., 2017). According to social learning theory, the first step in acquisition of sex-typed behavior is observational learning from symbolic models such as television, radio, films and books. A study by Haynes (2000) suggests that television is a prime vehicle through which children learn about appropriate behaviour, especially gender appropriate behavior. These authors observe that this is achieved through the process of observation of other people's behavior and its reinforcement contingencies, that is, through the process of modeling (Bandura, 1973 cited in Ezebuenyi et al., 2017).

Attitude Change Theory

The study is also based on Attitude Change Theory. The theory explains how media influence people ŝ behavior toward a particular thing which affects their existence. This theory was propounded by David Kartz, Living Sanoff and CharlseMelitock in the year 1960. Attitude is an acquired and learned behavior that has accumulated overtime.Zinbardo (1980) in Nzegbulam (2000, p.31) posits that it is a relatively stable emotionalized predisposition to respond in some consistent way towards some persons or group of people or situation. Commenting further on attitude Nzegbulan (2000) notes by implication that an attitude is a favourable or unfavourable evaluation which is likely to influence action or reaction (behavior or response) towards a person, object or situation concerned.

However, behavior (Attitude) is beliefs and feelings that may influence our response to subject positively or negatively, about people and events. The burden at this juncture is therefore relative. Deception regulates behavior. Akpan (2011) observes that behaviours are sometimes shaped by people ŝ frames or references, thus political actors seek to control the behaviour of the governed by first seeking the shape their perception in a certain manner, knowing that perception would affect the thoughts, feelings and actions of constituents in a predetermined manner.

The theories used in this study are considered apt because they all emphasize what happens when one is exposed to a particular theme or phenomenon. Cultivation theory means internalizing what you see, social learning theory means understanding from what you see others do while attitude change theory reflects the influence these exposures have on the audiences. This study is on youths' perception of portrayal of materialism in Nigerian films with particular focus on students of NnamdiAzikiwe University.

Literature Review

An Overview of the Role of Perception in Communication The way people make sense of the words and images they get in messages informs their perception of that message. Mass communicators want audiences to pay attention to their messages, learn the contents of the messages, and make appropriate changes in attitudes or beliefs or make desired behavioral responses (Bandura, 1994). Perceptual theory tells us that the process of interpreting messages is complex and that the communicators' goals may be difficult to achieve. Perception has been defined as the process by which we interpret sensory data (Haris& Lester, 2001). Sensory data come to us through our five senses.

Research has identified two types of influences on our perception: structural and functional. Structural influences on perception come from the physical aspects of the stimuli to which we are being exposed—for instance, the closer together a series of dots, the more they are seen as forming a line. Functional influences are the psychological factors that influence perception, and therefore, introduce some subjectivity into the process (Haris&Lester, 2011).

Selective perception is the term applied to the tendency for people's perception to be influenced by wants, needs, attitudes, and other psychological factors. Selective perception plays an important role in communication of any sort. Selective perception means that different people can react to the same message in very different ways (Lester, 2011). No communicator can assume that a message will have the intended meaning for all receivers or even that it will have the same meaning for all receivers. This complicates our models of mass communication. Perhaps mass communication is not just a matter of hitting a target with an arrow, as some models suggest (Wogu & Odoemelam, 2013).

Historical Overview of Nigerian Films

The development of the Nigerian movie industry dates back to the colonial era in the part of the twentieth century. According to Owen-Ibie (2004, p.186) "The first screenings in Nigeria took place at Glove Memorial Hall, Lagos on ten consecutive nights from 12 August 1903. Film production, however, started in Nigeria in the 1960's. This was plotted by the likes of Ola Balogun and Hubert Ogunde two of Nigeria's pioneer film makers.

The first Nigeria films were made by filmmakers such as Ola Balogun and Hubert Ogunde in the 1960's but they were frustrated by the high cost of film production. However, television broadcasting in Nigeria began in the 1960's and received much government support in its early years. By the 1980's, every state had its own broadcast station. Many of the foreign films brought into Nigeria were circulated on video movies. Nigerian films produced locally by the video movie industry are called home movies.

However, the fledging Nigerian film industry was only the experience and remerged renaissance in 1990 with the release of the block buster titled "Living in Bondage" by Kenneth Nnebue an Onitsha based business man. The film was recorded to have sold more than seven hundred and fifty thousand copies and this set the pace for the producers taking off from the revolutionary point a visible radical growth over the years to bring it to the internationally limelight. The industry is known to release about two thousand film titles into the market annually, making it to rank as the third largest film industry in the world behind Hollywood and Bollywood, the America and Indian film industries respectively. The Nigerian movie industry now nicknamed "Nollywood" produced film that locally outset foreign ones and is also viewed internationally. The international popularity of the Nollywoodhas been intensified (Adesanya, 2006, p.26).

Nollywood appeal has reached far beyond Nigeria. Its films are watched all over Africa and beyond. In South Africa, Multi-choice, a satellite television business offers a channel devoted to Nigerian films and recently ,Zenith films ,a British Company which distributes Nigerian programming to audiences said it would launch a new channel called Nollywood movies on B sky B ,a British Day television operator controlled by Rupert Mudorch

(Asemah, 2011)

The general economic success story taking the Nollywood experiences is so great to elude scholars and commentators. In the words of Adesanya (2006) the industry currently employs about a million people in the country "making it the biggest employer after agriculture" and recording tremendous "sales of N200 million to N300 million a year. Such has been the success story of the Nollywood. "

Ritual Killings as a factor of materialism in Nigerian Films

In recent decades, ritual killings in Nigeria has taken another form altogether. It is not done for the good of the community anymore but for self-uplifting and personal satisfaction. Whilst ritual killings were initially performed within the confines of tradition and religion, they are now performed within the confines of modernity and private space. Igwe (2001) indicates that "among Nigerians, there is a belief in a special kind of ritual, performed with human blood or body parts that can bring money or wealth". It is this kind of ritual that is excessively portrayed in Nigerian video films.

In the video films, some characters that may belong to a cult may kill their relatives so as to gain wealth. Ofeimun (2003) explains that "the dominant refrain in these films is the utilisation of rituals and grotesque characters to generate contexts in which wealth and riches transport the characters from a normal reality to a world of fantasy". Most of these ritual sacrifices are placed within an urban context in which moneymaking and possession of riches position the characters on the top of the social strata. As Ofeimun (2003) indicates, however, the moral of the films is to place ritual sacrifices as inimical to society.

The ritual killings in the video films mostly open the plot up to other themes. For instance, most of the people who practise ritual killings belong to cult groups. The activities of the cult are mostly evil. A good example can be drawn from *Blood Money,* a Nigerian video production. In this film Mike, played by Zack Orji, joins a cult called the Vulture Men to find money. Mike kills his mother as a condition upon which the money can be relinquished to him. The narratives brings out the fact that once a character is involved in one ritual killing, chances are high that he will be involved in more so that he can make more money.

Ritual killings in Nigerian video films are not only undertaken for riches and wealth but may sometimes aim at a different desirable outcome. For instance, in the film *Angel of Darkness,* a man joins a cult and conducts ritual killings so as to win a political position as a state senator. Sometimes ritual killings may be done to increase one's lifespan (Akande, 2009). In most cases, ritual killings may be committed merely because the perpetrator wants a certain part of the body of the victim or human blood. It is asserted that for the ritual killings to be effective, the killer has to kill a close relative such as wife, mother or children. The question, however, that one may ask is whether the imagery of the ritual killing is a true representation of real-life scenarios?

Okomo (2008) observes that stories and issues of ritual killings pervade the cultural landscape of the Nigerian media. For instance, Igwe (2001) narrates an unfortunate story of a 13 year old Nigerian boy, Adam, who was killed in London for ritual purposes. He further observes that in 2001 there were so many real-life cases of ritual killings "in the Lagos metropolis that one of the nation's major newspapers, *The Punch*, published a scary headline: 'Ritualists Lay Siege to Lagos." The films' themes of ritual killing therefore "succeed in the local market as audiences want to be conversant and updated with the daily mysterious realities (Okomo, 2008). Ofeimun (2003) argues that "I dare say the video films are actually giving back to us a mirror image of the way we are, the ways in which we behave and misbehave…" (p. 13). This, therefore, implies that the themes and images of the video films are a mere representation of everyday realities.

As a celebrated emergent art, a veritable and accessible means of communication, the home video which has been described as a burgeoning industry and a success story (Owuamalam, 2007; Alawode, 2003) has been widely viewed by researchers, reviewers and other media

practitioners. Akeh (2008), Akande (2009), Alawode (2007) and Adenugba (2007) amongst others have done extensive works on the home video and its relevance in the Nigerian socioeconomic development. Akande's works are a collection of articles which he published at different times spanning December 21, 2008 to September 25, 2010 in *The Nation* Newspaper. They are reviewed amongst others in this study.

Methodology

The survey research method was used in this study. According to Nwodu (2017) survey research method focuses on representative sample derived from the entire population of study. For Ohaja (2003, p.11), survey is a study of the characteristics of a sample through questionnaire that enables a researcher to make generalization concerning his population of interest.

The undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University form the population of this study. According to the office of the Registrar Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka the undergraduate population is 25,564 (2018-2019 academic session) .

The sample size for this study is 400. The Taro Yamane's formula for determination of sample size was used to arrive at the sample. Out of the 11 faculties in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, eight faculties were selected using simple random sampling without replacement.

* Faculty of Arts *Faculty of Agriculture * Faculty of Education* Faculty of Engineering
* Faculty of Environmental Science * Faculty of Law * Faculty of Management Science
* Faculty of Natural Science * Faculty of Pharmaceutical Science * Faculty of Natural Science * Faculty of Social Sciences

The eight faculties and departments randomly selected for the study were as follow:

1. Faculty of Arts (Department of English)
2. Faculty of Social Sciences (Department of Mass Communication)
3. Faculty of Management Sciences (Department of Accountancy)
4. Faculty of Law (Department of Private Law)
5. Faculty of Education (Department of Physical and Health Education)
7. Faculty of Physical Sciences (Department of Computer Science)
8. Faculty of Engineering (Department of Electrical Electronics Engineering)

The disproportionate allocation formula was used in allocating the same number of samples to all the eight departments selected for the study. Thus, each of the departments was allocated 50 samples.

The questionnaire is the instrument used in collecting data for this study.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question One:

What is Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates' frequency of exposure to Nigerian films?

Table 1: Assessment of respondents' frequency of exposure to Nigerian films

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	164	41.6
High	110	27.9
Fairly high	60	15.3
Low	40	10.1
Can't say	20	5.1
Total	394	100

Analysis of data in table 2 above shows that a majority of the respondents numbering 164 representing 41.6 percent of the respondents answered very high when asked their level of exposure to Nigerian films. 110 or 27.9 percentage answered high. 60 or 15.3 percent answered fairly high. 40 or 10.1percent answered not high while 20 or 5.1 percent answered can't say. This analysis points to the fact that quite a high number of the respondents were exposed to Nigerian films.

Research Question Two

Do NnamdiAzikiwe University undergraduates know and understand what constitutes materialism in Nigerian films?

Table 2: Assessment of whether the respondents know and understand what constitute materialism in Nigerian films

Responses	Frequency	percentage
Yes	279	70.8
No	14	3.6
Can't say	101	25.6
Total	394	100%

Analysis of data in table 3 indicates that less than one third of respondents numbering 279 or 70.8 percent answered 'yes' when asked whether they know and understand what constitute materialism in Nigerian films, 14 or 3.6 percent said 'no' while 101 or 25.6 percent answered can't say. This is a clear indication that a majority of the respondents know and understand what constitutes materialism in Nigerian films.

Research Question Three

What is NnamdiAzikiwe University undergraduates' perception of materialism in Nigerian films?

Table 3: Assessment of respondents' perception of materialism in Nigerian films

Response	Frequency	percentage
Very interesting	150	38.1
Interesting	100	25.4
Not interesting	44	11.1
Disgusting	28	7.1
Can't say	72	18.3
Total	394	100

Analysis of the data in Table 3 shows that 150 respondents representing 38.1percent answered 'very interesting' when asked to indicate their perception of materialism in Nigerian films. 100 or 25.4 percent said 'interesting.' 44 or 11.1 percent said 'not interesting.' 28 or 7.1 percent said disgusting while 72 or 18.3 percent had no opinion on the question. This means that a majority of the respondents perceive materialism in Nigerian films as quite interesting.

Research Question Four

Does NnamdiAzikiwe University undergraduates' exposure to materialism in Nigerian films influence them?

Table 4: Assessment of whether respondents' exposure to materialism in Nigerian films influence them

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	113	28.7
No	180	45.7
Can't say	101	25.6
Total	394	100%

Analysis of data presented in Tables 6 shows that 113 or 28.7 percentage of the respondents answered 'yes' when asked whether their exposure to materialism in Nigerian films influence them. 180 or 45.7 percent said 'no' while 101 or 25.6 percent answered 'can't say'. This shows that exposure to materialism in Nigerian films does not have influence on a majority of the respondents

Discussion of Findings

From the data presented and analysed, it was found that more than two thirds of the respondents were quite exposed to Nigerian films. This means that a majority of the respondents have actually watched themes of materialism in Nigerian films. This finding as contained in table two of the study agrees with earlier findings in the study carried out by Adenugba (2007) which observes that most adolescents spend the largest part of their time watching videos and films.

The study also found that more than two-thirds of the respondents accede to know and understand what constitutes materialism in Nigerian films. This finding as contained in Table 3 of the study shows that the theme of materialism is very common in Nigerian films. This is evident from the percentage of the respondents who actually indicated their knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon. The study equally discovered that more than two-thirds majority of the respondents perceived

materialism in Nigerian films as quite interesting. This finding, however, goes contrary to an earlier observation made by Mba (2006) that in Nigeria today, governments, parents and even consumers have cried out against negative contents of our movies. Also, the finding agrees with the uses and gratifications theory which holds that people seek out and use the media and/or content depending on the gratifications they desire to get.

The study also revealed that a majority of the respondents were not influenced by their exposure to materialism in Nigerian films. This finding is as contained in table four of the study. This finding also agrees with the basic tenets of the uses and gratifications theory. It, however, contradicts earlier findings by Okafor (2008) and Bandura (1994) which contend that people repeat things that give them pleasure and, by so doing, they consciously or unconsciously copy values they see. This actually means that the respondents do not watch the film for no reason. This finding is also in tandem with the submission made by Chukwuikpe (2011) that films have specific themes as the central ideas which any literary work intends to convey to the audience. He further said that themes are didactic in nature. The audiences are expected to grasp and digest the moral lessons.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn: First, it can be inferred that Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates were exposed to Nigerian films and have truly watched the home videos that portray materialism. This is evident in Table 2 of the study where majority of the respondents agreed to have had quite a high level of exposure to Nigerian films.

It can also be concluded that Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates know and understand what constitutes materialism in Nigerian films. This finding as contained in Table 3 of the study shows that the theme of materialism is very common in Nigerian films. This is evident from the percentage of the respondents who actually indicated their knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon.

Thirdly, it can be concluded that a significant number of the respondents perceive themes of materialism in Nigerian films as being interesting. This is a fair conclusion and can be attributed to the fact that people selectively use, recall and may be internalize media contents that can gratify their desires.

Again, it can be concluded from the findings of the study that exposure to materialism in Nigerian films does not necessarily influence the viewers. This points to the fact that consumers of media contents are active users who know exactly what they want from a particular content.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions in this study, it becomes imperative to make the following recommendations:

1. The regulatory authorities, the Nigerian Film and Video Censor Board (NFVCB) should be alive to their responsibilities vis-à-vis portrayal of negative local culture for public consumption.
2. The home video producers should be more alert and proactive in packaging movies that have sound moral lessons to teach in the society than just making a mockery of our cultural values.
3. The Nigerian government should not sit down and watch our culture being portrayed in a bad light. Our local culture should be showcased in these films with a view toensuring objectivity, balance and fairness and not just for entertainment purposes.
4. The portrayal of themes such as materialism in Nigerian films should be for positive cultural portrayals and preservation.

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