

THE EFFECTS OF FOREIGN FILMS ON THE NIGERIAN CULTURE

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
THEATRE ARTS, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN
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AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A) DEGREE IN THEATRE ARTS.**

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DECLARATION

This project is based on a study conducted by me, Ezaga, Evi-Ben Ajirioghene of the Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under the supervision of Dr. J. N. Bardi (arpa). All findings and analysis in this study are a product of my personal research, and where the views of others have been used and expressed, they were duly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this Research was duly conducted by Ezaga, Evi-Ben Ajirioghene in the Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under my supervision.

Dr. J. N. Bardi (arpa)
Project Supervisor

Date

Dr. V. O. Diakpomrere
Head of Department

Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Almighty God for his grace and for giving me the strength and courage to go through this programme in spite of the challenges

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on studying the effects of foreign films on the Nigerian culture and society. It seeks to point out majority of the ills that these films have brought upon our cultural values and the youths. The study was carried out in the University of Benin, Benin-City, Edo state, Nigeria, using the students of Ekehuan campus as a case study. The research design embraces the survey methodology. Two hundred (200) respondents were randomly selected and sampled; the questionnaire is used as the instrument of data collection. The questionnaire was administered online. Data is analyzed in simple percentages and presented in tables. Research analysis indicates that Nigerian cultural values are fast diminishing because the youths who are supposed to keep up tradition and pass them from generation to generation have been negatively influenced by these films in their lifestyles and mannerisms. It is recommended that the Nigerian film industry (Nollywood) should start creating films that portray our rich cultural values and contain positive traditional ethics and also the National Broadcasting Commission should conduct studies to assess the effectiveness and influence of foreign films on the society as a whole.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Films are powerful mediums that can be used in transmitting different ideologies and preserving cultural values. Films are also forms of art and are referred to as motion pictures which involves projecting a series of images on a screen to create an illusion of motion. Films are one of the most popular forms of entertainment and has been one of the greatest influences in this modern world we live in. Culture refers to the values, traditions, mannerisms and artefacts that define a community as a whole. Every culture is unique and studying cultures can give insights into how diverse and complicated people are on a social level. Various scholars have defined the term culture in different ways. The various meanings of culture have a basis in the differences in the orientation of the individuals.

According to sociologists: "Culture consists of the values, beliefs, systems of language and the practices that people share in common and that can be used to define them as a collective." Kroeber and Kluckhohn (181) define culture as "the patterned way of life of a group of people, including their beliefs, values, customs, art and technology." Similarly, Hofstede (28) defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another".

Nigeria, with a population of over 200 million people, has a rich heritage that is influenced by its diverse cultural values and practices, ranging from the religious, traditional and societal norms. Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups, each of these cultures has its forms of identity, and this is reflected in their cultural elements. Onwuekwe (87) says, "The Nigerian Culture can be seen as the totality or summation of the way of life of Nigerians". Culture plays a significant role in shaping individual and group identities. People's sense of identity is shaped by their cultural background, language and socialization experiences. It provides a person with an identity and a means of standing out from the competition.

However, culture is a continuous process of change. Obiora (291) says the transformation of culture is gradual and not sudden. It evolves just as human beings do. It is dynamic, learned, acquired or spread through contact or communication flow from one person to another, no matter the distance. The rate of cultural development is influenced by the level of consciousness among its citizens, which means that adopting a new culture requires a shift in the social order

One thing that has continued to affect the sustainability of our culture is the fact that many youths have little or no knowledge about their culture. This problem is greatly brought about by the advent of the new media, which has made many of the youths not identify with their cultural practices such as language, dressing, food etc. thus embracing the contemporary culture.

The influence of foreign films has led to a significant shift in cultural values and practices, especially among Nigerian youth. The advent of new media technology has been seen as a major contributor to exposure to foreign films (especially social media and smart devices). These films' narratives depict events in the developed countries of Europe and America, thus influencing what we, as a third-world underdeveloped country, feel and think should be appropriate mainly because it has been perceived as acceptable and right by the media and by society.

The average Nigerian youths regularly watch films that depict countless acts of violence, drug and alcohol abuse, obscenities, indecent dressing, vulgar language, etc. and emulate the attitudes, behaviours and cultural values portrayed in them. These films, in large part, have infuriated the Nigerian cultural values by introducing their own culture to the country's society thus making our youths want to dress like them, speak and act like them and by fully identifying with them, they violate the society's cultural norms. Research carried out by Funke Soyemi, on the influence of foreign television programs on the cultural values of Nigerian youths, concluded that more exposure to these films will likely lead people to view Western television actors as role models, which is detrimental to society. In a study by other researchers, Faleye and Adebisi observed that participants who watch more foreign movies tend to engage in risky behaviours, such as substance abuse and sexual promiscuity.

This study specifically investigates the effects of foreign films on Nigerian

culture using students from the University of Benin, Ekehuan Campus as a case study.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Foreign films are now a regular part of our lives as they are now broadcast and distributed on every of our local cable/satellite tv stations as well as Multichoice's DSTV and GOtv. Daily films that undermine Nigerian native values and impose foreign cultural features on them are broadcast via these stations to these viewers, and these traits gradually become a part of our history. Those that do not have access to any TV station can get these movies/films on their smart devices by simply downloading with just small data charges.

While some viewers enjoy local films, the majority of them choose foreign ones because some of our local Nollywood filmmakers have begun imitating their Western counterparts. In turn, this inspires the viewers to get enthusiastic about foreign films. In other words, Western characteristics flourish while our local cultural values decline.

The effects of foreign films on Nigerian cultural values have reportedly been identified as a major issue for Nigerians. Some of these problems are:

- The imitation of Western cultures and ways of life by Nigerian youths.
- Inadequate policies made by the government to guard the Nigerian youths

against the negative effects of internalization of the media.

- The lack of official regulations in place to track or keep an eye on the importation or downloading of these films.
- The gradual decline of Nigerian cultural values.
- The unchallenged brainwashing of Nigerian youths due to excessive exposure to these films.

If these issues are not resolved soon, Nigerian cultural values would be completely neglected. Therefore, this research work would help investigate the extent to which exposure to these films has negatively affected Nigerian youths and also determine how greatly the youths adhere to and accept these foreign cultures relative to Nigerian cultural norms.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the influence of media imperialism and the notion that it has impacted and damaged local Nigerian values. The scope of this study specifically examines the effect of foreign films on the cultural values of Nigerian youths using University of Benin, Ekehuan campus students as a case study.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The aim and objectives of this study are to learn more about the effects of foreign films on the culture of Nigerian youths, particularly in terms of how they live, act and dress and find out specific reasons for the current predicament. The objectives

of this study include:

- To ascertain the youth's level of exposure to foreign films.
- Determining and evaluating to what extent foreign films have influenced the youths' lives.
- Discover if Nigerian youths prefer foreign films to indigenously made films (Nollywood).
- To find out if the youths adopt and adhere to Western cultural ideals at the expense of Nigerian cultural values.

1.5 Research Questions

- How exposed are Nigerian youths to foreign films?
- To what extent have foreign films influenced the lives of Nigerian youths?
- Do Nigerian youths prefer foreign films to their indigenously made films?
- Do Nigerian youths accept and practice the Western cultural values at the expense of the Nigerian culture?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The results of this study will provide insights into how foreign films are influencing changes in Nigerian culture, educating Nigerian youths on the dangers of adopting new cultural values thus eliminating the idea of imitating Western cultures and ways of life.

This research will also help in promoting the Nigerian cultural values and

cultural identity among the Nigerian youths. It will also add to the body of the knowledge in this area of study.

1.7 Definition of Terms

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

- Culture: refers to the set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterizes an institution and organization.
- Effects: refers to something designed to produce a distinctive or desired impression.
- Films: refers to a recording of moving images that tells a story and that people watch on a screen or television.
- Foreign: refers to belonging to or characteristics of some place or country other than the one under consideration.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Film

Movies, also known as films or motion pictures are forms of visual storytelling that use a series of moving images to tell a story or convey information. They combine various elements such as moving images, sound, music and dialogue, to convey a narrative or message to the audience. They can be fictional or based on real events and they can vary in length from a few minutes to several hours. Bordwell and Thompson (3) define film as “a form of visual storytelling that uses a series of moving images to convey a narrative or message.

Films are a form of popular culture that reflect and shape society's values, beliefs, and attitudes. They can be used to explore various themes and issues, including politics, social justice, love, war, and human rights. Films can also provide a glimpse into different cultures and ways of life, promoting cultural understanding and appreciation.

Films are produced by a team of professionals; including directors, writers, actors, cinematographers, and editors who work together to create a finished product. In an article in the Sunday punch of 28th August 2004, Yinka Ogundaisi, a major Yoruba film producer says that about 100 million naira goes into film production plus

the involvement of cast and crew members, thereby creating job opportunities for people.

The process of making a film involves several stages, including script writing, pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. During these stages, various techniques are employed to create a cohesive and engaging film, such as camera angles, lighting, sound design and special effects.

Films can serve various functions in society, such as providing entertainment, reflecting cultural values, shaping public opinion, and promoting social change. They can also have economic and political implications, both domestically and internationally. Films are shown in cinemas, and movie theatres or distributed through various media platforms, such as DVDs, online streaming services or television broadcasts. Although films are typically made for amusement, they can also have artistic, educational, or informational goals

The film is a unique means of communication and an effective medium that may be utilized to spread various views and uphold cultural values. Its visual bias gives it a universal appeal and impact. Films play important roles in the development of any group of people, ethnicity and race as a nation or country. It is a veritable tool for national development if used wisely. Films have been deployed as one of the methods used to propagate cultural values both locally and worldwide because of globalization. Globalization is the term used to explain how countries are becoming

more connected to one another and how people are traveling across boundaries via various methods, such as trade and technology.

In this age of globalization, films have become a tool of cultural transmission. Audio visual content is becoming more widely accessible to people around the world thanks to online streaming services like YouTube. Despite the fact that globalization brings individuals of various races together, there is a risk that western cultural norms will be emphasized as dominant and most favored. By increasing the range of information circulating in the media, globalization is frequently portrayed as a way to promote the diversity and richness of culture.

However, the worldwide media tends to be dominated by western ideals, products, perspectives, and culture, therefore the reality is quite the opposite.

Even after the Federal Military Government of Nigeria issued the National Enterprise Decree in 1972 to reduce foreign investment in certain economic enterprises in Nigeria, this allowed for the distribution and screening of feature films to Nigerians – the content of the majority of indigenous films still shift towards the reflection of foreign cultures rather than Nigerian cultural values (Enahoro, 102). Cultural imperialism is on the rise, and movies are its primary means of dissemination, with the spread of western films, which promote foreign cultures over Nigerian culture.

However, movies are not without their controversies and criticisms. Some critics argue that movies can perpetuate stereotypes, promote unrealistic beauty

standards, and glorify violence and other harmful behaviours. Others argue that movies can be used to promote propaganda and political agendas, particularly in authoritarian regimes.

There is a need to constantly tell the African story and preserve our histories and cultures. Our African heritage is discounted and considered less legitimate by comparison to western history, which is widely acknowledged around the world. There are now opportunities for filmmakers to promote our African stories locally and globally, as films are a powerful tool that can promote various ideologies. Sherak (11) says that as vehicles of communication, films can transport stories and ideas to the audience and can shape the global perception of cultural elements such as dress and language.

Films can be used to educate both local and international audiences about Nigerian culture, society and history. Through themes explored and issues addressed, films can promote cultural understanding and appreciation. Through historical films, the audience is allowed to experience past events. For example, the Nigerian-produced movie, “76” is a historical fiction directed by Izu Ojokwu, which dramatizes the assassination of General Murtala Mohammed and a coup that happened in 1976. Alongside history books, such films give the viewer a visual perspective of the political and social history of Nigeria in the 1970s and can help in the appreciation of Nigeria’s political history (76 The Movie, 2015).

Films can play a role in shaping and reinforcing Nigerian identity by depicting Nigerian values, beliefs, and aspirations. Films also play a descriptive role in the exploration of global societies and cultures and have been used to educate others about world culture while dispelling cultural misconceptions.

The American movie, *Coming to America* produced in 1988 is another cinematic example that explains cultural diversity through its thematic plot by showing the difference between cultural values in the homeland of an African prince and the American way of life (Akinseye, 17; Mckenzie, 18).

Films play a vital role in social mobilization and information. It is used to popularize government policies and ideologies among the masses. Supporting the local film industry can contribute to economic growth by creating jobs and generating revenue. By promoting both cultural and economic development, films can have a positive impact on Nigerian society.

Films also help in documenting political development in the country. This is because it preserves the history and records the traits of the ruler of the time, aids in predicting the political undertone of the day, prevents future leaders from making the mistakes that their forerunners did, and instils the proper attitudes and character essential for leadership. Several advantages that Nigeria has now come about because of the brave and patriotic actions of our ancestors.

2.2 History of Film in Nigeria

The history of movies in Nigeria can be traced back to the late 19th century and into the colonial era in the early 20th century, with the introduction of motion pictures by colonialists. Films arrived in Nigeria in the late 19th century in the form of peephole viewing of motion picture devices..

The Nigerian film industry began to gain momentum at the attainment of independence. Filmmaking in Nigeria, began in the 1960s with the release of the film "Kongi's Harvest," directed by Ossie Davis and produced by Wole Soyinka (Adesokan 32). It was in this period that indigenous filmmakers like Ola Balogun and Hubert Ogunde emerged, producing films that depicted the Nigerian culture and addressed societal issues such as corruption, poverty and social injustice. However, it wasn't until the 1990s that Nollywood began to gain international recognition with the release of films such as "Living in Bondage" directed by Chris Obi Rapu (Ademoju 245). Nollywood has experienced a rapid growth and has become the second largest film industry in the world, behind Bollywood (Ogunleye 101). This growth was due in part to the low cost of production and the increasing popularity of home video technology (Haynes and Okome 5).

Nollywood films portray the culture of Nigerians. They are known for their unique storytelling style, often centred on social issues, cultural values and moral lessons. The themes of Nollywood films which include family, love and spirituality, often resonate with the local audience, which has contributed to their popularity.

Nollywood has made a profound impact on the Nigerian society, being that it has become a significant source of employment, providing opportunities for actors, filmmakers, technicians, marketers and others. Nollywood has also played a significant role in shaping the Nigerian culture and identity by showing the local customs, traditions and languages in their films and also bringing the Nigerian culture to a wider audience. These films help in documenting history for the future generation. Nollywood has served as a medium for social commentary and activism, bringing to light neglected important social issues and advocating for social change. Nollywood films has gained significant recognition and influence on the global stage, receiving several awards, both home and international.

2.3 Concept of Culture

According to Asemah (108), “Culture is the learned behaviour of members of a given social group. It is learned, socially acquired traditions and lifestyles of the members of society, including their patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling and acting”.

The concept of culture has been widely studied by scholars from various disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, psychology, and cultural studies. The concept of culture is the particular set of standards, viewpoints, customs, methods, and goals that members of a certain society have received from their ancestors, created themselves or adapted from outside sources. Ogungbemi (100) defines culture as the

“sum total of the materials and intellectual equipment whereby man satisfies his biological and social needs and adapts himself to his environment”. The anthropologist, Edward Tylor defined culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1). This definition highlights the broad scope of culture and its influence on human behaviour. The study of culture has complex relationships that provide social information in a given society.

Culture is dynamic and constantly evolving, which is why Yusuf (173) opined that culture “has its own personality and identity, like humans, culture is dynamic – it changes the same way human beings do”. Culture is shaped by historical, social, economic, and political factors, and can change over time. For example, the culture of a society may change as a result of migration, technological advances, or exposure to new ideas and values, thus prompting Obiora (291) to contend that, “Culture is a continuous process of change”, that continues to give a community a sense of dignity, continuity, security and binds society together”.

One of the key functions of culture is to provide a sense of identity and belonging for individuals within a society. Cultural practices and traditions help individuals understand their place in the world and their relationships with others. Culture also helps to shape social norms and expectations, providing a framework for social interaction and behaviour.

The concept of culture is a multifaceted and dynamic concept that plays a crucial role in shaping human behaviour and societies in terms of their values, conventions, traditions, morality, folkways, language, race, ethnicity, technology, fads, and laws, among other things. While culture provides a sense of identity and belonging, it can also create conflicts and tensions within society. Understanding and appreciating different cultures is crucial for promoting social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.

This part focuses on discussing crucial cultural concepts, including values, beliefs, norms, languages, folkways, morals, laws, traditions, and other ideas of a similar nature that will help readers gain a better understanding of how people interact with one another in society as a whole.

- Traditions are practices, beliefs, and customs that are passed down from one generation to the next within a specific civilization or ethnic group. Traditions might have a religious, cultural, or familial basis, and they are frequently intricately linked to ideas of identity and community. The preservation of cultural heritage and knowledge is one way that traditions can be possibly observed. Traditions can provide a sense of continuity and connection to the past, and can also help to pass on important values and beliefs from one generation to the next (Smith, 23).

Traditions provide a framework for social interaction and community building.

Traditions can bring people together for shared experiences and celebrations, and reinforce social norms and expectations.

- Values are the accepted moral principles in a civilized society where people can recognize right from wrong. They are beliefs or principles that individuals or societies hold as important or desirable. These are accepted guidelines for conduct in societal life, and disobeying them may result in sanctions and punishment.
- Beliefs are the thoughts, opinions, and attitudes of a certain social group. They are made up of fables, proverbs, myths, folklore, traditions, superstition education, etc. that shape how society members perceive the world. Beliefs play a role in shaping our attitudes and behaviours towards each other and our perception of reality. Beliefs influence the way we interpret and respond to events in the world around us, and can influence our emotional responses.
- Norms are social rules and expectations that guide behaviour and regulate social interactions within a society or group. Norms are undeniable guidelines for what society regards as appropriate and decent social behaviour. They are established social norms that ought to be adhered to because they are proper, moral, lawful, and ethical behaviour. They are often unwritten and implicit, and may be enforced through social pressure or formal sanctions.
- Languages are complex systems of communication that are used to convey meaning between individuals or groups. They can vary widely in structure, vocabulary,

and syntax, and are often deeply intertwined with culture and identity.

The importance of languages is discernible in the way they facilitate communication and understanding between different groups. Another importance of languages is in the way they reflect and shape cultural identity. The use of different languages can be a source of pride and connection to one's cultural heritage, and can influence toward attitudes towards other cultures and languages.

- Folkways are conventional, age-old ways of doing things that are widespread within a given community or ethnic group. These may not always be formally taught and are frequently learned through involvement in social interactions and observation. One example of the importance of folkways can be seen in the way they reinforce cultural norms and values. Folkways can reflect important cultural beliefs and practices and can help to maintain social cohesion and order within a group.

Folkways are observed in the way they influence individual behaviour and decision-making. Folkways can shape our perceptions of what is normal or acceptable behaviour and can influence our attitudes towards different social groups and activities.

- In a certain civilization or cultural group, morals are a set of ideals and principles that serve as a guide for behaviour and choice-making. According to Rachels, morals are concerned with “questions of right and wrong, good and evil, and the nature of the good life” (Rachels 2). They are frequently intricately entwined with religious, philosophical, and ethical traditions.

Morals are observed in how they affect societal norms and expectations. Morals can help to shape cultural practices and traditions, and can also influence attitudes towards different social issues and topics. As Rachels notes, they provide a guiding ideal “for human action and help individuals to navigate complex social and ethical issues (Rachels 4).

- Laws are a set of rules and regulations that are upheld by a governing body or legal system in order to control conduct and preserve social order. Laws can be very different in their reach and application, and they are frequently shaped by historical, social, and cultural circumstances.

Laws are observed to the point that they provide a framework for social and economic activity. Laws help in resolving conflicts and disputes and help to promote a sense of civic responsibility and accountability (Austin 7). Laws reflect and shape cultural values and beliefs and can also reflect societal attitudes towards issues such as crime, punishment, and justice, and influence public opinion and debate on these topics.

These are the common cultural concepts that can be used to better our understanding of human nature and social structure. Typically, it is the comprehension of social interactions as they occur among people in society. In general, it is a style of living that focuses on how individuals behave, think, and create things in their natural environments.

2.4 Cultural Values in Nigeria

Cultural values are the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours that are prevalent within a given society or cultural group. They frequently become deeply ingrained, influencing how people view and engage with the world. Cultural values can encompass, among other things, conceptions of the family, community, religion, morality, and social conduct.

Cultural values can differ significantly between countries and cultural groupings, and things like location, history, and religion can influence them. For instance, the cultural values of a rural farming community in Africa and an urban industrial civilization in Europe could be substantially dissimilar.

Communication across cultural boundaries and the development of relationships between individuals with various cultural origins depend on an understanding of cultural values. It can also aid in explaining why people do things.

Nigeria is a diverse country with over 250 ethnic groups, each with its unique cultural values and traditions. However, some shared cultural values are widely held across the country. Ernest-Samuel (202) observed that the importance of the culture of any nation could not be over-emphasized. He states that some of the various importance of the Nigerian culture in the society include:

- Providing a foundation for social cohesion and togetherness.

- Constructing and shaping social personality.
- Interpreting and incorporating Nigerian cultural institutions and values.
- Regulating social behaviour, preserving cultural values and social history.

One of the cultural values in Nigerian society includes deference to elders and authorities. Elders are considered the repositories of wisdom and experience and are treated with great deference, and respect. This respect is also extended to other authority figures such as teachers and community leaders.

Another core cultural value in Nigerian society is the importance of family and community. Nigerians place a great emphasis on the family unit and on maintaining strong relationships with extended family members. This emphasis on community is also reflected in the importance of communal activities such as festivals and celebrations.

Hospitality is also an important cultural value in Nigeria. Guests are treated with great warmth and generosity, and it is considered impolite to refuse food or drink that is offered to them. This value is also reflected in the importance of socializing and building relationships with others

There is a strong religious and spiritual dimension to Nigerian culture. Religion plays an important role in the lives of many Nigerians, with Christianity and Islam being the most widely practiced religions. Religious beliefs and practices are often intertwined with cultural values and traditions and can influence attitudes toward

issues such as morality, gender roles, and social justice.

In Nigerian society, cultural values have a significant role in influencing attitudes, actions, and relationships. Understanding these values is crucial for anyone looking to engage with Nigerian culture.

2.5 Cultural Imperialism

Cultural imperialism is a concept that refers to the spread or imposition of one dominant culture over other cultures, often through economic, political, or military means. Asemah (117) defines the concept as “a term used to describe the imposition of the western cultures on developing countries”. Tomlinson (32) also defines cultural imperialism as "the process whereby the culture of a particular society is spread or imposed on another society, usually with the aim of dominating or controlling it." In addition to frequently attempting to supplant or restrict the cultural expressions of other cultures, the dominant culture also frequently works to uphold and promote its own beliefs, values, and traditions and can be seen as a form of cultural domination. This can lead to a loss of cultural diversity.

Cultural imperialism has been a topic of debate in various academic disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies. Cultural imperialism is opposed because it can harm social justice, cultural identity, and political power systems, while it is supported because it can advance intercultural understanding.

One example of cultural imperialism is the spread of American popular culture

around the world, through media such as Hollywood movies and American music. Nigerians have debated the issue of cultural imperialism, especially in light of how Western cultural norms have influenced Nigerian culture. According to several scholars, the proliferation of Western media, particularly films, music, and television shows, has resulted in cultural imperialism in Nigeria. For example, Nwosu (98) argues that Western media has had a significant impact on Nigerian culture, particularly on the younger generation. He suggests that this has led to a loss of cultural identity and the adoption of Western values and norms. Similarly, Okome (540) argues that the influence of Western media has contributed to a decline in traditional Nigerian culture, particularly in relation to family and gender roles.

The way we dress, the food we consume, and even the ways we worship in churches all show how many individuals in developing countries today prefer western cultures to their own. Nigerians, especially the youth, now emulate values like alcoholism, drug use, gang membership, semi-nudity, etc. Youths in the third world who ignorantly adopt them as a way of life are subject to highly serious consequences because of these values.

According to Adesina and Ajakah, Nigerian youth are becoming “alienated” from their traditional roots. Adesina (195) writes, “Mode of dressing expressed through the exposure of various parts of the body is now common among youth”. Ajakah (21) identifies Western culture’s impact on Nigerian wedding ceremonies,

fashion trends and orientations towards community, where he notices a change from considering the community as a family to recognizing the differences between the core and extended family.

Ajakah (21) recognizes the discrepancy by arguing that the West defends its ideals while encroaching on those of other nations.

Patrick's (138) semi-structured interview with young Nigerians, however, showed a growing contempt for their country's art and culture because of American media consumption. Nigerian youths are the most vulnerable victims of cultural imperialism. The majority of them have abandoned their old cultural traditions in favor of western values and lifestyles. Their lifestyles are a reflection of westernization.

2.6 Negative Effects of Foreign Movies

- **Sexually explicit content:** Sexual content has increased in recent years and this growing trend has caused teenagers and youths to now consider the media as one of the forms of sex education thus leading to promiscuity. Studies have shown that promiscuity among Nigerian youths is associated with a range of negative outcomes, including sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies, emotional distress, and social stigma. For example, a study of female university students in Nigeria found that those who engaged in casual sexual relationships were more likely to report symptoms of depression and anxiety (Oshi, Oshi, Akinbami & Ikimalo, 15). Another

study found that Nigerian adolescents who had engaged in sexual activity were more likely to report experiencing negative social consequences, such as shame and disapproval from family and friends (Ahanonu & Adegoke, 73). These films pass messages and images that teach unhealthy practices that go against Nigerian traditional cultural values and ethical standards.

- **Drug and substance abuse:** Some researchers have shown that exposure to drug and substance misuse depictions in foreign films is highly linked to youths trying it. Drug and substance abuse is a significant problem among Nigerian youths. A study conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics in Nigeria found that an estimated 14.4% of Nigerians aged 15 to 64 use drugs (National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). Drug and substance abuse has a range of negative impacts on individuals, families, and communities, including physical and mental health problems, social and economic consequences, and increased rates of crime and violence. Research has shown that drug and substance abuse among Nigerian youths is associated with a range of negative outcomes, including increased rates of mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety, and psychosis (Daramola, Adebawale, & Adejumo, 30). Drug and substance abuse is also associated with increased rates of risky sexual behaviour, such as unprotected sex and multiple partners, which increases the risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

- **Violence:** There is a growing concern in Nigeria about the relationship

between exposure to violence in foreign films and the incidence of violent behaviour among Nigerian youths. According to a report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, exposure to media violence, including films and video games, is associated with increased aggression and violent behaviour (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2017). In Nigeria, there have been several cases of violent behaviour among youths that have been linked to exposure to violent foreign films.

Research has shown that exposure to violent media can lead to desensitization to violence, aggression, and reduced empathy for victims of violence (Anderson, Berkowitz, Donnerstein, Heusmann, Johnson, Linz & Wartella 95). This desensitization can lead to an increase in violent behaviour, particularly among youths who are more vulnerable to the effects of violent media.

One study conducted in Nigeria found that exposure to violent films was significantly associated with increased aggression among male youths (Nwosu & Onyemaechi, 585). The study also found that the level of aggression was higher among youths who had been exposed to more violent films. This results in the youths joining cults or gangs just to practice what they watch.

- **Vulgar language:** There is a growing concern in Nigeria about the use of vulgar language among Nigerian youths, which is often attributed to their exposure to foreign films and music. Vulgar language refers to the use of offensive, abusive, or obscene words or phrases in speech or writing. Words like females calling themselves

bitches, which are the female of dogs and using the *fuck* word.

Research has shown that exposure to media and other digital platforms, including films and music, that contain vulgar language can influence the language use and attitudes of youths. A study conducted in Nigeria found that Nigerian youths who were exposed to foreign films and music that contained vulgar language were more likely to use the vulgar language themselves (Okon and Umoren 127).

The use of vulgar language among Nigerian youths is often viewed as a form of rebellion against traditional cultural values and norms that promote respect for elders and authority figures. However, the use of vulgar language can have negative consequences, including damage to personal relationships and social disapproval.

To curb these excesses, the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) should ban foreign films with corrupt content and encourage the local television programs to transmit knowledge-driven programs that are participatory, competitive and rewarding to the Nigerian culture. Instead of producing films that represent and advance Western cultural norms, our own film industry, Nollywood, should focus on producing more films that highlight Nigerian customs.

In addition, the Federal Government of Nigeria should participate in the youth development agenda through socialization agents.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The most suitable theory for this study is the cultivation theory. Cultivation theory was developed by George Gerbner in 1969. This theory argues that the more time individuals spend consuming media content, the more likely they are to adopt the ideas, values and beliefs presented in that media content.

Cultivation theory is a social theory that suggests that media, particularly television, shapes individuals' perceptions and understanding of the world around them. The theory posits that exposure to repeat patterns of media messages can gradually shape individuals' attitudes, values, and beliefs about social reality. Cultivation theory argues that media consumption is a primary contributor to the formation of cultural norms, beliefs, and values.

According to this theory, exposure to foreign movies can shape the attitudes and beliefs of Nigerian youths and may contribute to the erosion of traditional cultural values. According to Gerbner, cultivation theory operates through a process of “mainstreaming” and “resonance” (Gerbner 167). Mainstreaming happens when a lot of exposure to media information results in a shared knowledge and worldview among many social groups and Resonance happens when a person’s real life experiences and messages presented in media are consistent. These happenings are what strengthen the cultivation effect. It is assumed that watching these foreign films frequently or for extended periods will cause us to develop a distorted view of the world, making it appear as though television depicts it rather than how it actually is.

Western values are being introduced by television, modernizing the world while eradicating the true traditions of other countries.

According to its implication, capitalist forces, particularly those of small states, have the propensity to stifle cultural viewpoints.

Today, our traditional ways of doing things are outdated for foreign ones, and television and the new media achieve this because it is a seeing medium.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Research design is the basic plan that guides the data collection and analysis phase of any research. It involves the selection of appropriate methods, procedures and techniques for collecting and analyzing data in order to address the research question or hypothesis. Creswell defines research design as “a plan, a strategy, or a blueprint for conducting a research study with specific research questions or hypothesis, procedures and methods to be used” (Creswell, 18).

This study adopts the use of a survey research design. Survey design refers to the process of creating a survey instrument that collects data from a sample of individuals in order to study a particular research question or hypothesis. According to Okwechime (161) “survey research design is used to find out opinions, attitudes, preferences, knowledge level of people towards an issue being studied”.

This design will help in finding out the impact of foreign films on the cultural values of Nigerians. The researcher will extract information from the selected respondents through the questionnaire, which is one of the potent tools of survey design. This makes the use of survey design appropriate for this project work.

3.2 Study Area

This study focuses on the influence of foreign films on Nigerian cultural values and the youths using the University of Benin students, Ekehuan campus as a case study and the claim that it has affected and undermined our youths on the norms and values of Nigerian youths. The geographical location of this research work is the University of Benin, Ekehuan campus, which is the study area.

3.3 Population of the Study

Population refers to any group of people or variables that share one or more characteristics with the topic of the study. Study population refers to all components that are included in the topic to be examined and have a common trait such as age, sex, beliefs or attitude. The study population comprised of undergraduate students in the University of Benin, Ekehuan campus from the four (4) departments, Theatre Arts, Mass Communication, Fine and Applied Art and Early Childhood Education.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size of this research is 200 questionnaires which comprised of 50 students from Theatre Arts, 50 students from Mass Communication, 50 students from Fine and Applied Arts and 50 students from Early Childhood Education. This is to ensure that only respondents who have sufficient influence in the study region to offer the required information are picked as respondents.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

The sampling technique outlines how the components of a study are chosen in order to ascertain the prevalent opinions of the study's target population. For this study, purposive sampling was employed. Ohaja (197) posits that purposive sampling is used when a researcher seeks certain characteristics in his sampling elements and wants to ensure that those chosen have such characteristics.

3.6 Instrument for Data Collection

The research instrument adopted for this study is the questionnaire. The questionnaire is a set of questions designed to obtain written answers from the respondents to determine the effects of foreign movies on Nigerian cultural values. The questionnaire contained (15) items, divided into two sections, A and B. Section A contained information on the demographic data of the respondents and section B focused on finding out what the respondents think about the effects of foreign movies on the Nigerian cultural values.

Section A was structured in a close ended format, while items in section B were designed on a YES and NO format. This was chosen because it best reflects the strength of respondents' opinions and perception of the items presented in the questionnaire.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

The researcher submitted the measuring instrument (questionnaire) to the supervisor for study and approval and to ensure that the research work measures what it is set to measure. The questionnaire was tested on a few members of their selected sample before finally administering the questionnaire via the internet to them. This was to ensure that the respondents understood the questions posed in the questionnaire for providing correct and relevant answers to them.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The online questionnaire was employed as the instrument for data collection for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire was administered via the internet by the researcher to 200 respondents within the four (4) departments in the University of Benin, Ekehuan Campus.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

All data collected from primary sources (questionnaires) would be statistically presented in tables and analyzed. This method gives us a simple and direct way to measure and understand the opinions of the respondents towards the subject of the research and makes simple the data presentation and analysis and its comprehension on the part of the readers of this work.

The percentage being applied for calculation is:

$$\frac{\text{no. of respondents}}{\text{no. of questionnaire}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Analysis of Demographic data

Items 1 to 4 in the questionnaire answered questions on the respondent's demography.

Table 1: The gender of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Male	85	42.5%
Female	115	57.5%
Total	200	100%

On the table above, 85 respondents (42.5%) are male, while 115 respondents (57.5%) are female. Research analysis indicates that majority of the respondents are female.

Table 2: The age of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
15-20	90	45%
21-25	106	53%
26 & above	4	2%
Total	200	100%

On the above table, 90 respondents (45%) fall under the age of 15-20 years, 106 respondents (53%) fall under the age of 21-25 years, and 4 respondents (4%) fall

under the age of 26 and above years. Analysis shows that majority of the respondents are within the ages of 21-25 years.

Table 3: The various departments of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Frequency
Theatre Arts	50	25%
Mass communication	50	25%
Fine and Applied Arts	50	25%
Early Childhood Education	50	25%
Total	200	100%

On the table above, it signifies that the questionnaires were administered equally to each department. Each department got 50 (25%) questionnaires.

Table 4: The different levels of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
100 level	58	29%
200 level	54	27%
300 level	21	10.5%
400 level	67	33.5%
Total	200	100%

From the above table, 58 respondents (29%) are from the 100 levels, 54 respondents (27%) are from the 200 levels, 21 respondents (10.5%) are from the 300 levels and 67 respondents (33.5%) are from 400 levels respectively. This shows that the majority of the respondents are 400 level students.

Analysis of data in section B

Table 5: Do you watch foreign films?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	190	95%
No	10	5%
Total	200	100%

In response to the question on if the youths watch foreign films, 190 respondents (95%) agreed that they watch foreign movies while 10 respondents (5%) opted that they do not watch foreign films. This shows that majority of the respondents watch foreign films.

Table 6: Do you prefer foreign films to indigenously made films (Nollywood films)?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	168	84%
No	32	16%
Total	200	100%

From the above table, 168 respondents (84%) agreed that they prefer to watch foreign films, while 32 respondents (16%) prefer local films. This research concludes that majority of the respondents prefer foreign films to locally made ones.

Table 7: Does the exposure to foreign films have more negative effects than positive effects on the Nigerian cultural values?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	168	84%
No	32	16%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that 168 respondents (84%) agree that foreign films have more negative than positive effects on the Nigerian culture, while 32 respondents (16%) did not agree to the question asked. Analysis indicates majority of the respondents agree that foreign films has more negative effects on the Nigerian cultural values than positive effects.

Table 8: Do you think the youths’ exposure to foreign films is high?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	185	92.5%
No	15	7.5%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that 185 respondents (92.5%) agree that the youths’ exposure to foreign films is high while 15 respondents (7.5%) did not agree to the question asked. This shows that majority of the respondents agree that the youths’ exposure to foreign films is high.

Table 9: Do you think the exposure to foreign films have increased violence and drug abuse among the youths?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	158	79%
No	42	21%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that 158 respondents (79%) agree that the exposure to foreign films have increased drug abuse and violence among the youths while 42 respondents (21%) disagree. The findings show that majority of the respondents agree

that the exposure to foreign films has increased drug abuse and violence among the youths.

Table 10: Has the exposure to foreign films influenced the youths on their choice of role models?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	178	89%
No	22	11%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that 178 respondents (89%) agree that exposure to foreign films have influenced the youths on their choice of role models while 22 respondents (11%) did not agree. Analysis shows that a large number of the respondents agree that exposure to foreign films has greatly influenced the youths' on their choice of role models.

Table 11: Do you think foreign films greatly influence the attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and general lifestyle of the youths in Nigeria?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	180	90%
No	20	10%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that 180 respondents (90%) agree that foreign films have influenced the attitudes, behaviors, beliefs and general lifestyle of the youths in Nigeria while 20 respondents (10%) disagree. The analysis shows that majority of the respondents agree that exposure to foreign films has greatly influenced the attitudes, behaviours and general lifestyle of the youths in Nigeria.

Table 12: Do Nigerian youths accept and practice the Western cultural values instead of their own indigenous cultures?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	169	84.5%
No	31	15.5%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that 169 respondents (84.5%) agree that Nigerian youths accept and practice the Western cultural values instead of their own indigenous cultures while 31 respondents (15.5%) disagree. Based on the data, analysis shows that majority of the respondents agree that Nigerian youths accept and practice the Western cultural values instead of their own indigenous cultures.

Table 13: Have foreign films changed your perspective on the Nigerian cultural values?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	102	51%
No	98	49%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that 102 respondents (51%) agree that foreign films have changed their perspective on the Nigerian cultural values while 98 respondents (49%) disagree. The analysis shows that majority of the respondents agree that foreign films have changed their perspective on the Nigerian cultural values.

Table 14: Have foreign films affected you positively?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
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Yes	120	60%
No	80	40%
Total	200	100%

This table shows that 120 respondents (60%) agree that foreign films have affected them positively while 80 respondents (40%) disagree. The findings show that a large number of the respondents agree that foreign films have affected them positively.

Table 15: Have foreign films affected you negatively?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	105	52.5%
No	95	47.5%
Total	200	100%

This table shows that 105 respondents (52.5%) agree that foreign films have affected them negatively while 95 respondents (47.5%) disagree. The analysis shows that the majority of the respondents agree that foreign films have affected them negatively.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

In this section, data collection from the survey and responses to answers on research questions would be discussed.

Research Question 1: How exposed are Nigerian youths to foreign films?

From the data collected, this research question was answered adequately in

tables 5 and 8. Analyzed data in Table in 5 confirm that a large number of respondents prefer to watch foreign films than locally made ones. Also in Table 8, 92.5% of the respondents agree that the youths' exposure to foreign films is high.

Based on the findings and views of the respondents, most of the Nigerian youths are greatly exposed to foreign films and they prefer to watch them than the locally made films.

Research Question 2: To what extent have foreign films influenced the lives of Nigerian youths?

From the data collected, this research question was answered in tables 9, 10, 11 and 15. Table 9 reveals that majority of the respondents agree that exposure to foreign films have influenced violence and drug abuse. Table 10 and 11 also reveal that majority of the respondents agree the exposure to foreign films have influenced the youths on their choice of role models, their attitudes, beliefs, behaviours and their general lifestyle. Table 15 reveals 52.5% of the respondents agree that foreign films have affected them negatively.

Based on the findings and views of the respondents, majority of Nigerian youths have been greatly influenced negatively by the exposure to foreign films.

Research Question 3: Do Nigerian youths prefer foreign films to their indigenously made films?

From the data collected, the research question was answered in table 6. Analyzed data in table 6 confirm that 84% of the respondents prefer to watch foreign films than the locally made ones.

Based on the findings and views of respondents, majority of Nigerian youths prefer foreign films to locally made ones.

Research Question 4: Do Nigerian youths accept and practice the Western cultural values at the expense of the Nigerian culture?

From the data collected, this research question was adequately answered in tables 7, 12 and 13.

Table 12 confirms that a large number of respondents (84.5%) agree that they accept and practice the Western cultural values. Also table 7 shows that the exposure to foreign films have caused more negative effects to the practice of Nigerian cultural values by the youths. Table 13 confirms that 51% of the respondents' perspective on the Nigerian cultural values have been changed due to the exposure to foreign films.

Based on the findings and views of respondents, majority of the youths prefer and practice Western values to Nigerian cultural values and the large exposure to foreign films have caused them to change their perspective on the Nigerian cultural values.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

It is argued that the impact of foreign films on Nigerian cultural values has led to a neglect of those values by individuals, and particularly by youths.

The study set out to investigate whether Nigerian youths prefer foreign films to locally produced ones. It also sought to ascertain the youth's level of exposure to these films and find out how these films have influenced their lives. The study also aimed to ascertain whether Nigerian youths adopt and uphold Western cultural ideals at the expense of Nigerian cultural values.

The study explored basically the effects of foreign films on Nigerian cultural values with the aid of survey design through a 15 item questionnaire to get response from 200 respondents in the University of Benin, Ekehuan campus. The study made use of the purposive sampling technique because the researcher sought certain characteristics in her sampling elements which could be achieved by this technique.

Through the review of relevant literature, the study found out that Nigerian cultural values are gradually diminishing as a result of the entry of foreign films into the country.

According to the study, youths in Nigeria enjoy easy access to and extensive exposure to foreign films. By accepting and upholding the Western values they witness in these films and rejecting centuries-old cultural practices that are meant to be passed down from generation to generation, the youths pose a threat to society. The study also discovered that these youths are more adversely impacted by these films, which leads them to embrace Western behaviors and reject their native cultures.

However, the study found that cultural imperialism is one of the main barriers to the decline of Nigerian cultural values. Youths in Nigeria are the most susceptible targets of cultural imperialism.

5.2 Conclusions

The investigation and findings of this study concluded that foreign films have a negative influence on the Nigerian cultural values and youths. The findings have also

have shown that Nigeria can confront the problem of foreign films destroying our cultural values. Additionally, additional efforts should be made to uphold Nigerian cultural norms through the creation of Nollywood movies that showcase our vibrant cultural heritage and uphold moral principles.

5.3 Recommendations

As a result of the significance of the findings being so clearly highlighted in the preceding chapters, the researcher believes that immediate action should be taken to spread awareness of how quickly foreign films are undermining our cultural values.

Foreign films will only dominate our society if we allow them to. As a result, the researcher proposes that the following be done in order to stop the constant infiltration of western culture into our society:

1. The Nigerian movie industry should start creating films that portray our rich cultural values and contain positive traditional ethics.
2. Broadcasting organizations should create and enforce standards that require the minimal amount of exposure of imperialistic messages.
3. The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission should conduct studies to assess the effectiveness and influence of foreign films on society as a whole. She will be able to develop policy declarations with the aid of this study endeavor that will support our cultural norms and values for the benefit of society.

4. A policy should be created to ensure that only experts manage the business of film productions.

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APPENDIX

Department of Theatre Arts,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Benin,
Benin City,
Edo State, Nigeria
July, 2023

Dear Respondents,

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am EZAGA, EVI-BEN AJIRIOGHENE with the matriculation number ART1802130, a student of the above named department. I am conducting research on the topic: THE EFFECTS OF FOREIGN FILMS ON THE NIGERIAN CULTURE. This is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree in Theatre Arts.

I hereby request your assistance to fill out this questionnaire sincerely. All responses and information given in this questionnaire will be treated with extreme confidentiality and would be used only for the purpose of this research.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

EZAGA, EVI-BEN AJIRIOGHENE
Researcher

QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: Please tick [] against your choice of option to answer each question below:

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Age: 15-20 years [] 21-25 years [] 26 years and above []
3. Department: Theatre Arts [] Mass Communication [] Fine and Applied Arts [] Early Childhood Education []
4. Level: 100 [] 200 [] 300 [] 400 []

SECTION B:

5. Do you watch foreign films? Yes [] No []
6. Do you prefer foreign films to indigenously made films (Nollywood films)? Yes [] No []
7. Does the exposure to foreign films have more negative effects than positive effects on the Nigerian cultural values? Yes [] No []
8. Do you think the youths' exposure to foreign films is high? Yes [] No []
9. Do you think the exposure to foreign films have increased violence and drug abuse among the youths? Yes [] No []
10. Has exposure to foreign films influenced the youths on their choice of role models? Yes [] No []
11. Do you think foreign films greatly influence the attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and general lifestyle of the youths in Nigeria? Yes [] No []
12. Do Nigerian youths accept and practice the Western cultural values instead of their own indigenous cultures? Yes [] No []

13. Have foreign films changed your perspective on the Nigerian cultural values?
Yes [] No []
14. Have foreign films affected you positively? Yes [] No []
15. Have foreign films affected you negatively? Yes [] No []