

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The apprehensions of media communication, as well as evidence for its effects, are as old as the history of the subject itself. People have always wondered how media messages are affecting them by bringing about an imperceptible change in their culture, values and behavioural patterns. They have always been concerned for the negative influence of a particular message or message system and have been curious about the potential prosocial effects of others. Wimmer (1993) has mentioned that the concern over the social impact of mediated messages was evident as far back as the 1920s when many critics charged that the motion pictures had a negative influence on children. The study of the anti-social effects of viewing television and motion picture is one of the intensely researched areas of mass media. The impact of pro-social content is a newer area and grew out of recognition that the same principles underlining the learning of anti-social activities ought to apply to more positive behaviour.

Keeping in view the above-cited concern, this study analyses the “Effects of cable television in Nigeria. It is a comprehensive study of effects on Nigeria students in Lahore, Nigeria and provides results by comparing life patterns of heavy, moderate and light viewers.”

In 2003, this researcher had conducted an M. Phil study on satellite television titled “Satellite television Network in Nigeria: Introduction, Development, Prospects and Dilemmas.” The outcome of the study (M. Phil) has now been used in this research, leading to the effects of satellite television.

Zia (2003) quotes “In Nigeria, satellite television network was initiated in Karachi in early 1980s and by 1998 was introduced in almost all the big cities of the country but functioned without rules and regulations. The year 2000 witnessed a mushroom growth of satellite television network all over Nigeria after the government legalized satellite television network”. According to Aziz (2003) in 2002 almost four million households were enjoying its services in the country.

Satellite television viewership is no more restricted to the upper-middle class only; with the availability of low-priced television and cable connection, it has become a common household facility for the lower class as well. Viewers have access to a variety of channels from local to foreign, which provide them an opportunity to watch all types of programmes. Zia (2003) quotes, “The reasons for this rapid growth of satellite television included easy access, low cost, access to satellite channels and a huge television viewership interested in entertainment only”.

According to Nigeria Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) regional office, Punjab, the subscription of satellite television in Lahore has increased from 0.2 million in 2003 to 0.35 million in 2006. Satellite television subscription to 0.35 million households in Lahore increases the chances of its effect/influence on the viewers as findings of a pilot study with 1200 sample size, conducted by the researcher showed that majority of them (60 percent) are spending 2-3 hours daily to watch satellite television.

1.1 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Many research studies have been conducted to observe the impact of television on viewers, particularly on their behaviour (Bukhari., 2002; Malik, M., 2001; Naseem, A. 2001). Findings of previous research had made the researcher to conclude that television does have some direct or indirect effects on viewers but no

study has been carried out in Nigeria regarding effects of satellite television prior to this study. With the popularity of foreign television channels, fears have been expressed that lifestyles of viewers may be affected. As Schiller (1976) confirms 'importing programmes is importing lifestyles and exposure to foreign television programmes may transform the values of youth.' Concerns over the impact/effects of media always reinforce whenever a new communication technology is introduced in the society because technology always has positive or negative impact.

1.2.RESEARCH QUESTION

The question arises that satellite television, as a communication technology, is quite affordable, available to majority for 24 hours, enhances the choice and provides variety of channels and programmes that are foreign and local may have effects.

Schiller (1976) defines cultural imperialism as a process of imposition of cultural institutions and values of less developed nations and dependant states by developed countries.

Therefore, this research probed the effects of satellite television on Nigeria students in Osun State polytechnic, Iree.

1.3OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

By the year 2006, the number of households having access to satellite television has increased manifolds. The growth and usage of satellite television was rapid in Nigeria. According to the Nigeria Advertisers' Society, the number of households that have access to satellite television has increased to 29 percent in 2004 from 5 percent in 2002 whereas according to Nigeria Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), 45 percent of the households were enjoying the satellite television facility in 2006. Zia (2003)reports that growth of satellite television has resulted into a spill over of the Indian and western channels to Nigerian audience. These channels have grabbed attention of viewers in Nigeriaand exposed its audience to programmes that were vividly different to the usual available programmes on local television channels. There was an apprehension among the public that these Indian and western channels may adversely affecting viewers' minds and activities. Therefore, it was high time to conduct a study on satellite television effects. So this research has been conducted to find out the effects of satellite television in Nigeria.

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