

# An Assessment of Nigerian Musical Videos' Representation of Nigerian Culture

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## Abstract

This study investigates Nigerian music video representation of Nigerian culture. Experiment research design was conducted with 25 control and 25 experiment groups. The experiment group was exposed to ten selected music video that were considered as running contrary to Nigerian culture. After which both groups were asked the same questions. The result showed no significant statistical difference in the scores of control group ( $M=1.5600$ ,  $SD=.50662$ ) and experiment group ( $M=1.7600$ ,  $SD=.43589$ ) ( $p>0.05$ ) as both groups reported that Nigerian music video represent Nigeria culture in bad light. The result also showed no significant statistical difference in the scores of control group ( $M=1.2000$ ,  $SD=.40825$ ) and experiment group ( $M=1.2800$ ,  $SD=.45826$ ), ( $p>0.05$ ). Both groups reported that Nigerian music videos corrupt public morals. Findings further showed no significant statistical difference in the scores of control group ( $M=1.5200$ ,  $SD=.50990$ ) and experiment group ( $M=1.8400$ ,  $SD=.37417$ ),  $t(48)$  ( $p>0.05$ ). Both groups reported that Nigerian music videos do not promote Nigerian culture. Based on the result of this study, the researcher recommends among others that the Nigerian Film and Video Censorship Board should step up efforts in monitoring the quality of music video that are released into the Nigerian market.

**Keywords:** culture, music, Nigeria, representation and video

## Introduction and statement of the problem

Nigeria is rich in culture. The culture of Nigeria is unique in several ways such as the way they dress, sing, address elders, eat, their mode of expression as well moral values. Culture is the total way of life of people. It covers everything about a group of people such as the way they eat, dress, their value, language, the way they speak among others. Culture is a derivative of individual experience, something learned or created by individuals themselves or passed on to them socially by contemporaries or ancestors. A nation without a culture is as good as dead. A nation which cannot boast of a unique cultural identity or whose culture is under threat has reason to be worried. Culture is a summation about a group of people. It is their culture that represents them Ademola and Okunola (2013, p.179) summarize culture thus

culture comprises the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, intellectual and emotional features that characterize society, our thought about life, and our ideas. Culture shape the way we see world, it has capacity to bring about the change of attitudes needed to ensure peace and sustainable development which we know form the only possible way forward for life on planet earth

In contemporary society, culture has been accepted as an important indicator of development. Marañá (2010, p.2) corroboratively submits that culture has been studied as a necessary element for the full development of people and communities. Development, as overcoming poverty, has also increasingly opted for a broader concept of the term poverty: hence a broader approach to poverty includes, amongst others, the cultural sphere.

With the understanding of the important of culture to in lives of any nation, any threat to the future of people's cultural heritage should be a thing of worry to many concerned citizens. Music is one of the ways through which people express their culture. Music in Africa is a natural phenomenon. It is an essential expression of life beginning with gentle lullabies heard in infancy and continuing with the games of childhood and the songs and dances associated with adult responsibilities. Music accompanies and celebrates every rite of passage, birth, and christening, initiation into adulthood, and finally death and mourning (Onwuekwe 2009). Christopher (nd, p.78) shades light on the relationship between music and culture thus "Music embodies culture, expressing relevant features of a people's life. Music is an integral aspect of African culture, occupying a special place in the celebration of birth and death and other events in-between"

Before the advancement in technology which came with modern music, traditional music was often used by singers to portray their cultural identities. Music can also be used to fight social ills in the society. Olatunji (2007) identifies the stimulating or motivating role whereby the music serves as a stimulant or motivator, moving the people into action against oppressive and repressive forces in society. There is also the propaganda role by which the exponents criticise governments, systems and society, with the purpose of forcing them to change anti-societal programmes. Olorunyomi (2005) corroborates that Afrobeat, a subversive musical and cultural performance, had to shoulder the task of the brewing post-independence confrontation in Nigeria. Beyond being a voice for the voiceless, music play a very essential role in cultural promotion and preservation. Adegoju, (2009) posits that artistes can be seen as 'town criers' who satirise social foibles in order to make human society and living worthwhile which is an important cultural element of developing countries that face extreme social and

economic hardship. Music exerts great influence the populace. Railton and Watson, (2005) corroborate on the influence of music thus

If a song is played over and over and everybody likes it, then it becomes normal and acceptable and by extension whatever is being represented in that song becomes acceptable in turn with time. For example, if an artiste uses a derogatory term to refer to a woman in his song, chances are that other people will start using the same term to refer to women. It could also work in another way; if women are wearing a revealing outfit in a music video then young girls will think that they should be wearing the same kind of clothing.

The submission above paints a vivid picture of the influence of music. Recently, the representation of Nigerian culture by Nigerian musicians have been a source of worry with some people arguing that Nigerian musicians are not properly representing Nigerian culture. This has led to a ranging argument on the representation of Nigerian culture by the Nigerian musicians. This argument has been strengthened by the perceived moral decadence among Nigerian youths. The situation has been compounded with the emergence of smart phones and mobile technology devices which make it possible for people to listen and even watch musical videos wherever they may be. The problem of this study posed as a question is what is the representation of Nigerian culture by Nigerian musicians?

## Literature Review

### Nigerian Music and Vs Nigerian Culture

Music and culture are very related. Though music basically entertains people, the manner of the entertainment speaks volume of the culture of people. It is an expression of the cultural values of people. Music is the entertainment aspect of culture. It acts as a sort of therapy for both the body and the soul. In some societies and some countries, music is as important as food. Christopher (2012). Ani, Aro and Okorie (2014) lists the following as music forms in Nigeria traditional music. imported Afro-Music. reggae and classical Music. However, the emphasis of this study is not really on the types of music but how Nigerian culture is portrayed in Nigerian music. Some studies have attempt to investigate the influence of on Nigeria culture with emphasis on different aspects of Nigerian culture like dressing, sexual behaviour among others. This study considered and reviewed some of the studies thus.

First, Martino, Collins, Elliott, Strachman, and David (2006) conducted a study on “Exposure to degrading Versus non degrading music lyrics and sexual behaviour among youth.” The study tested the prospective relationship between exposure to degrading and non degrading sexual music content and subsequent changes in adolescent sexual behaviour The researchers conducted a national telephone survey in spring 2001 (T1) and re-interviewed the same group 1 and 3 years later, in the springs of 2002 and 2004 (T2 and T3, respectively). The survey measured media use, sexual knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour and a large set of demographic and psychosocial variables known to predict sexual behaviour or media use. Participants were interviewed at baseline (T1), when they were 12 to 17 years old, and again 1 and 3 years later (T2 and T3). At all of the interviews, participants reported their sexual experience and responded to measures of more than a dozen factors known to be associated with adolescent sexual initiation. A total of 1242 participants reported on their sexual behaviour at all 3 time points; the researchers further identified a subsample of 938 as virgins before music exposure for certain analyses. Participants also indicated how frequently they listened to each of more than a dozen musical artists representing a variety of musical genres. Data on listening habits were combined with results of an analysis of the sexual content of each artist’s songs to create measures of exposure to 2 kinds of sexual content: degrading and non degrading Multivariate regression analyses indicated that youth who listened to more degrading sexual content at T2 were more likely to subsequently initiate intercourse and to progress to more advanced levels of non coital sexual activity, even after controlling for 18 respondent characteristics that might otherwise explain these relationships. In contrast, exposure to non degrading sexual content was unrelated to changes in participants’ sexual behaviour. The missing gap in this study is the inability of the researcher to portrayal of Nigerian culture by Nigerian musicians. This current study will address this gap.

In the same vain. Wright, and Craske, (2015) investigated “Music’s Influence on risky sexual behaviours: Examining the Cultivation Theory” The researchers examined the relationship between sexual content in music lyrics and music videos and the sexual behaviours of Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic emerging adults from a cultivation framework by assessing 715 male and female college students. It was hypothesized that there would be a negative association between sexual content in music and sexual behaviours and that the cultivation framework could be used to partially explain these findings. Findings indicated variations in sexual behaviours based on participant race/ethnicity. Results from hierarchical regression analyses indicated that sexual lyrical content and sexual content in music videos, along with participant gender and race/ethnicity, are correlated with the dating and sexual behaviours of participants. A series of repeated measures analysis of variances were conducted to assess the extent to which the cultivation framework can explain the risky sexual behaviours of participants. This study, also failed to investigate portrayal of Nigerian culture.

Another study that is relevant to the current study is the one by Devadas and Ravi (2013) on “Cultural impact of television on urban youth – An empirical study” The main purpose of the study was to gain an insight as how youth make use of television and how they adapt their culture according to their TV viewing habits. The specific research objectives were, to understand the television viewing habit of urban youth, to find out the relationship between viewing of television programmes and its implication on cultural norms of urban youth, and to compare the cultural impact of television between urban male and female youth. Survey method was adopted while questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The data was analysed in terms of average time spent on viewing television and cultural impact. Descriptive statistical analysis such as Mode and Standard deviation was used in the study. The hypotheses were tested using Kruskal-Wallis test and MANOVA. Factor analysis using Varimax rotation was employed to classify similar items before proceeding for MANOVA. The result of the study revealed that 38% of the respondents reported that they watch television a minimum of one hour to a maximum of 2 hours in a day. Another 25% of them were reported spending less than an hour and 26% of respondents reported spending two to three hours per day while 11% of the respondents reported spending more than three hours in a day. The researcher further reported that 41% of respondents viewed television in Kannada – which is native language. This was followed by Hindi language where 23% of respondents viewed and another 19% as expressed their choice of preference as English language. Similarly, 10% were found to have preferred Telugu and another 6% preferred Tamil language. And only 1% was found preferred to view TV programmes other than these languages. To determine the cultural impact indicators, the following statements were presented on a five point likert scale and endorsed by the respondents; After watching TV, I became more aware of fashion and trends.; after watching television programmes, I feel there is nothing wrong in boys having friendship with girls and it is a good culture, after watching TV, I became more aware of certain festivals such as Holi and prefer to celebrate it, after watching television nowadays, I prefer to practice certain events such as Valentine’s Day, Mothers Day, Women’s Day. Others are, by watching television present days youth practice certain habits like drinking, smoking, by watching TV, nowadays I listen to western, Hindi, Tamil etc music increasingly than before; The storyline with pre-marital and extramarital affairs are common in programmes on TV and it is common in real life as well, I Feel that nowadays I use certain words which I learned from watching TV, Viewing TV will help to learn different cultures that will definitely help to improve one’s life in society. The result further showed the mean rank scores of male and female for three sub components of cultural indicators. Accordingly, for cul\_fac\_1, the mean rank score of male respondents was 379.05 while for female the mean rank score was found to be 420.57. It was observed that the mean score was significant (the chi-square test value  $\chi^2 = 6.473$ ,  $p = 0.011$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In essence, as far as the Life Style and Music is concerned, there is no significant difference between male and female respondents. With respect to views on cul\_fac\_3, the mean rank score of male respondents was 391.31 while for female the mean rank score was 407.94. It was reported that the mean score is not statistically significant (the chi-square test value  $\chi^2 = 1.040$ ,  $p = 0.308$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) at 5 % level of significant. In essence, as far as the impact of television on adoption of western culture is concerned, there is statistical evidence to conclude there is a significant difference between male and female respondents. This study relevant to the current study because it look at issues bothering on the culture of a group of people. The only difference is that the study did not investigate whether music can play a role or not.

Seyi Shay’s vocal dexterity is in no doubt, but same cannot be said of this music video which has many question marks over it. The visuals have various sexual scenes blended with provocative dance steps. In a particular scene, Wizkid is spotted in a romantic position with Seyi Shay. This short scene has Seyi Shay seizing Wizzy’s crotch. In another scene, Seyi Shay can be seen twerking on Wizkid. The video is directed by Meji Alabi.

Mr2kay –*Bad girl special* – 2015 (featuring Cynthia Morgan and Seyi Shay)

Weeks before the video was officially released, the behind-the-scenes pictures were unveiled to the public. A particular steamy picture of Mr2kay and Cynthia Morgan went viral, getting everyone thinking there could be more between the duo than just music. For starters, the video begins with Cynthia Morgan seductively walking towards Mr2kay in a revealing top.



#### Mr2kay

In this scene, the *German juice* sensation shows off her curves and cleavage, affirming that she is a 'Bad' girl for real. Another notable part in the video is a scene where the duo are in the kitchen caressing each other with Cynthia taking a sniff of her cigarette. There was a time when Nigerian music videos had a message and brilliant concepts, it seems those days are long gone. The video is directed by Clarence Peters.

#### Davido –*Fans Mi* – 2015

What comes to mind when you see guns, lots of cash on a table and ladies dressed seductively in a music video? This image portrays violence, gangsterism and sensuality. Davido's new video depicts these negative vices in no small way. In the visuals, the young popstar tries to seal a deal to supply cocaine, while the leader of the gang hands him stacks of dollars for the business transaction. He goes back to his house where he is welcomed by scantily dressed ladies arranging the cocaine. If music videos are meant to be a vehicle to pass positive messages for the good of the coming generation, this video has done nothing but just the opposite. The video is directed by Sesan.

#### Cynthia Morgan-*German Juice* 2015

The title says it all. *German Juice* connotes buttocks. The ladies in this video swings it from the beginning to the end. It was shot on a sunny and summer-themed location. Cynthia Morgan sings on a groovy dancehall beat while the ladies were just shaking their big bums. The video is poor in concept and lacks the needed depth that should be displayed in a music video. The video is directed by Clarence Peters and Jude Okoye.

#### Skuki-Silifa 2014

This video is reminiscent of Timaya's *Shake your bum bum* where 'White' video vixens were shaking their assets. Shot sometime last year, the song's lyrics is empty and the video has no storyline. The only shocking aspect of the visuals is the brazen manner the video vixens were shaking their buttocks. Little wonder, it was tagged 'Not suitable for work'(NSFW).

#### Flavour-Ololufe (Featuring Chidinma) 2015

Flavour made headlines years back when he passionately kissed Tiwa Savage in the video of the song 'Onyi remix'. It generated lots of controversy and sparked dating rumours between these two hit makers.





This is 2015, and the suave singer is back to his kissing antics. This time his partner in crime is the petite Chidinma Ekile and the video is ‘Ololufe’. Since the video hit the public domain, she has been heavily condemned. Though, Chidinma has revealed that she is not dating Flavour, her fans are yet to recover from the shock of seeing her engage in such an offensive act. The video is directed by Godfather productions. Based on the above presentation by Jose (2015) and other empirical studies reviewed herein, this study postulates the following hypotheses

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no statistical significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control groups on Nigerian musicians’ negative representation of Nigerian culture.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no statistical significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control groups on Nigerian musicians corruption of public morality.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no statistical significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control groups on the extent Nigerian musicians promote Nigerian culture.

### Methods

This study adopted experimental design to investigate the subject matter. To do this 25 experimental respondents and 25 control respondents were purposively selected. The objective of the experiment was to find out if there is a difference in the assessment of Nigeria music videos vis-a-vis Nigerian culture. The selection of the respondents was done based on the following criteria; respondents who were willing to participate in the study, respondents who were literate to understand the words from the music, respondents who had knowledge of Nigeria culture. For the control group, such respondents must not have been previously exposed to the tracks that were used for the experiment. This was to enable the researcher make sure that the control group was not exposed to the treatment. As a follow up, the experimental group was then exposed to the ten musical videos explain above to confirm the assumption of Jose.

To achieve this, the researcher got the videos and invited all the respondents in a class room at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka where they were exposed to the experiment after which they were give the study instrument- the questionnaire. The control group was also given the same instrument. It should be noted that the instrument was self developed and faced validated by three research experts at the university of Nigeria, Nsukka. In the analysis of data for the study, the researcher used t-test which is a statistical tool that determine the difference in the mean scores of two groups. The analysis were done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0

### Results

The result of this study is hereby presented. It should be noted that in respondents’ demographics were not relevant for the study.

**Table I: Group Statistics on Nigerian music video representation of Nigerian culture**

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Representation Control	25	1.5600	.50662	.10132
experiment group	25	1.7600	.43589	.08718

Source: Field Survey 2015

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the respondents assessment of Nigeria music video representation of Nigerian culture. Both the control and the experiment groups were asked the same question- do Nigerian music video properly represent Nigerian culture? The respondents had only two options (yes or no). The outcome showed no significant statistical difference in the scores of control group (M=1.5600, SD=.50662) and experiment group (M=,1.7600, SD=.43589),  $t(48)=1.496$   $p=0.141$  two tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (means difference=,0.20000, 95% confidence interval:-- 0.06875-0.06891) was very small (eta squared=). Table II presents data on Nigerian music video and the corruption of public morals.

**Table : II Group Statistics on Nigerian video corruption of public morals**

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Corruption of morals Control	25	1.2000	.40825	.08165
Experiment group	25	1.2800	.45826	.09165

Source: Field survey 2015

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the respondent’s assessment of Nigeria music video corruption of public morals. Both the control and the experiment groups were asked the same question- do Nigerian music video corrupt public morals? There was no significant statistical difference in the scores of control group (M=1.2000SD=.40825) and experiment group (M=,1.2800SD=.45826),  $t(48)=652$ ,  $p=0.518$  two

tailed) The magnitude of the differences in the means (means difference=,0.08000,95% confidence interval:- 0.166880--0.1668) Was very small (eta squared=).Table III presents data on Nigerian music promotion of Nigerian culture.

**Table III: Group Statistics On Nigerian Musicians Promotion Of Nigerian Culture**

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Promotion of Nigerian Control	25	1.5200	.50990	.10198
culture experiment group	25	1.8400	.37417	.07483

Source: Field survey 2015

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the respondent's assessment of Nigeria music promotion of Nigerian culture. Both the control and the experiment groups were asked the same question- do Nigerian music video promote Nigerian culture? There was no significant statistical difference in the scores of control group (M=1.5200,SD=.50990) and experiment group (M=,1.8400,SD=.37417),  $t(48)=2.530$ ,  $p=0.015$  two tailed) The magnitude of the differences in the means (means difference=,0.012649, 95% confidence interval:- 0.06508--0.06567) Was very small (eta squared=)

### Discussion of Findings

This study investigated Nigerian music video promotion of Nigerian culture .Results from table one showed no significant statistical difference between the control and the experiment groups. Both the control and experiment groups reported that the Nigerian music video do not properly represents Nigerian culture, Therefore, the first null hypothesis was accepted ( $p$  value=>0.05).The implication of this result is that, there is already a general perception that Nigerian music video represents Nigerian culture in the negative light. The result of this study also showed no significant difference between control and experiment groups on Nigerian music video corruption of public morals ( $p$  value >0.05).There was also no significant difference between control and experiment groups on Nigerian music promotion of Nigerian culture. The result of this study is a confirmation of the perception by some scholars that Nigerian music videos are not promoting Nigerian culture. The result of the study confirms the assertion of Jose (2015) who regrets thus:

Music videos are mediums for artistes to showcase their looks, dance steps and tell a story of their songs.

In the Nigerian music landscape, it has grown beyond that into a medium for display of gangsterism, sex and violence. Our videos have become bad deal for our impressionable youths who tend to copy most of what they see on TV and the internet. And the Nigerian cinematographers are pushing the limits and becoming more expressive in their shots.(para,1)

The submission above gives more light to the regrettable situation among Nigerian artistes. Nigeria's culture has been ridiculed by her citizens and this is a sad reality that all well meaning Nigerians should condemn.

### Conclusion/ Recommendations

Culture is a symbolic representation of a group of people. It is a form of identity that usually differentiates one group of people to the other. Even though Nigeria made up of different ethnic groups, certain things are similar among the Nigerian culture. Such things include respect for elders, decent dressing, avoidance of vulgar language among others .It is however regrettable that the Nigerian music videos have failed to promote the Nigerian culture .Rather, what is common among most music video is exposure of sensitive parts of the body among others. To address this problem, the researcher makes the following recommendations.

- The Nigerian film and Video Censorship Board should step up efforts in making sure that music content released into the Nigerian markets do not corrupt the Nigerian culture.
- Nigerian artiste should refrain from producing music videos that do not promote the Nigerian culture.
- The Nigerian Public should stop patronizing music contents that corrupt public morals
- Subsequent studies should be carried out to determine why Nigerian artiste produce videos that do not portray Nigerian culture in good light.

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