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# Cultural Imperialism, TV and Children Spectatorship in Contemporary Ghana.

Aba Micah

anmicah@dons.usfca.edu

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**In Cultural Imperialism, TV and Children Spectatorship in Contemporary Ghana.**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts in International Studies

By Aba Nhyira Micah  
May 2018

University of San Francisco

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all member, this thesis project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

**Adviser**

**Date**

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**Academic Director**

**Date**

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## **ABSTRACT**

A content and discourse analysis of television programs is performed to show that Ghanaians do enjoy their local programs but very little time is allocated for children's content on both the public and private stations. Instead, foreign content has flooded the TV channels for both adult and children's programs and this is concerning because culture is being lost amongst the new generation. Also, in an era where representation matters, African children should be represented in the media. This paper centers on cultural and media imperialism and representation of the African child in the media and we find that TV programs being aired on Ghanaian TV could be as a result of cultural and media imperialism.

**Keywords:** Cultural Imperialism, Media Imperialism and Representation.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The problem being discussed in this thesis concerns the under- representation of children on African television and how this could be as a result of cultural imperialism. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines a child as “ a human being below the age of 18”; unless under the law applicable to the child, some societies would have a different age limit for a child. In Ghana, the former is used.

It's been known across the world that the images one sees in the movies, television series and advertisements may influence an individual consciously or subconsciously (Xin Cheng, 2001). Since media is such a big part of people's everyday lives, and in some ways may influence how people perceive themselves and the world, this research seeks to identify how current television programs affects the perception of the African child. These images, known or unknown, may have an important impact on how people view life and how their identities are created. Thus, it is highly improbable to think that the media does not affect people, their way of thinking, and the way they perceive the world and themselves (Gauntlett, 2008).

The main focus of this thesis is to establish how important representation of the African child on TV really is, and how this underrepresentation maybe as a result of cultural imperialism in the media. We do this by performing a content and discourse analysis of TV shows from different TV stations across Ghana and consequently observe the effects of this underrepresentation as constituting forms of cultural imperialism. It is especially interesting

considering that we are in the era where representation is being advocated for across the entire world from different phases, ranging from the academia, politics, medicine and most importantly the media; (Wilson (1987), Olivas (1988), Nakanishi (1993), and Smith, Wolf, and Busenberg (1996) (Meyers (2004) Turner,2016)

In chapter 1 of this paper, I author introduce the main idea and concept raised in this research paper. In chapter 2, I discuss past literature that has been conducted in the areas of representation of children on TV, cultural and media imperialism, globalization in the media and the political economy of the media in Africa. The aim is to ascertain the importance of representing the African children on TV as well as strengthen the relevance of this theses. Following through to chapter 3, I discuss the methodology used in conducting this research. Chapter 4 gives insight into the media scope of Ghana and the portions allocated to children within this scope. Chapter 5 analyzes scope of the media and how TV content in Ghana is as a result of cultural imperialism. In this analysis, I examine how some shows have succeeded on the local Ghanaian market and the resources that may have caused their success. I also evaluate how locally produced shows are received on the Ghanaian and African market.

Shows such as “Talented Kidz, (2010)” “Khumkhum Bagya, (2015)”, “By The Fireside, (1995)”, “Things We do for Love, (2000)” and “Yolo (2015)” are also discussed in this study . The reason these shows were selected was because, I want to show that there is a need for children’s programs among the Ghanaian community and how much cultural imperialism is determining what goes on air resulting in less attention being paid to children’s media in the Africa region.

Research by (Osei-Hwere,2008) shows that there is insufficient data concerning African children in the media and the few that keep coming up discusses how the African children and youth are the future and hope for Africa. The question is, do they believe they have that hope or they would rather leave to seek better opportunities for themselves and their families? This realisation makes us believe we need to stir up a discourse on African youth in general through the media. According to (Carter & Steiner, 2004), buttress this point as they discuss that the media, children and the youth are areas that would consistently produce new data that could be collected and observed in many beneficial ways. According to IMDB, there over 5000 movies produced each year but how many of them focus on African children or the African youth ? Moreover, I would like to argue that representations may be political in the sense that they are power-laden. Proof of this can clearly be seen in literature pertaining to the history of Hollywood film and representation (Ryan & Kellner 1990, Benshoff & Griffin 2004).

Following this introduction, a literature review is presented to show results of previous studies performed regarding representation, globalisation and the media and to build upon this existing literature, I apply quantitative content analysis and qualitative discourse analysis in the methodology for this study. A discourse/content analysis of the various shows are conducted in order to answer our research question. Last but not least, a brief conclusion is drawn regarding the results of this thesis.

## **1.2 MOTIVATION**

In November 14, 2017, the world woke up to the terrible news of modern day slavery happening in Tripoli, Libya. In the exposé from CNN, some men were being auctioned for about



\$400 to serve as manual labour workers and more, whilst going through very dehumanizing and degrading acts; this was happening in 9 different locations.

Every year, tens of thousands of people try to cross the Mediterranean sea to get to Europe and its surrounding areas. As at January 2017, the UNHCR had in their records that about 18,401 Nigerians, 13,488 Ivoreans, 8,650 Gambians, 11,626 Moroccans had tried to cross the Mediterranean sea. According to the Human Rights Watch, most of these people who try to cross the sea are basically seeking a better life amongst other reasons. They believe that moving to parts of Europe would help them economically. A popular African parlance states that there are a ton of factors that make Africans see the West as “the greener pasture, the economic haven, and the place to make it”, and I will add that the institution that frames this image the most: the media. Whether intentional or not, media industries circulate ideas, attitudes and information in the society and their products are important in shaping and framing civic discourses and perceptions of different cultures in ways that affect public policy, elections and everyday lives ( Havens & Lotz, 2009).

Over the years and especially growing up, we constantly watched Hollywood produced content, i.e News, movies, TV shows, cartoons, etc. We knew more about Denzel Washington than Denzel Washington knew of himself. We’ve always known more about news from other continents than ours. Right from the get-go, images of the West, were embedded in our minds; thus the dream has always been to travel and seek greener pastures outside home. This has even affected what we prefer to trade in as a country, due to the demand of the buyers within the countries (USDA,2012). According to USDA, agricultural imports went to a record high of \$43.6 billion in 2011, and in 2012 with an estimated \$37.7 billion worth of agricultural imports,

Sub-Saharan were the second highest on record exceeding markets such as Canada, Mexico, South Africa, Mexico, South Korea and Indonesia. Amongst ourselves as Africans, Africa is not an option.

Also a large school of thought proposes that Africa's continual underdevelopment over the years, has had little to do with lack of capital, access to the world markets, technical experts, or the unfair global economic system, but rather the poor decisions made by African leaders across the continent (Poncian & Mgya, 2015 Mbah, 2013; Afegbua & Adejuwon, 2012; Mills, 2011; Mills, 2010; Heleta, 2007). Many of these writings have held African leaders responsible for much of the continent's economic, political and social woes. As much as companies, organizations and nation-states pay attention to grooming leaders for the next generation, they should pay more attention to the most impressionable demographic of all time which are children. Lang, (2009) & Piaget,(1952) place claims that a child picks up cognitive skills such as a second language, leadership and a keen understanding of the world between ages 2-11. This could be a good time to give children some core and basic leadership training.

Clearly, children are the most malleable when they are at their early ages. A research conducted by Kärkkäinen et al (2008) suggested that the notion of the 103 children used in the research, concerning the malleability of their academic competencies became more pessimistic as they progressed in their school years. Even children are aware that the malleability of their competencies become harder as they progress. The purpose of this study is to review representation of African youth in the media, using Ghana media as the point of focus and representation through the lenses of cultural and media imperialism, globalization of the media and the political economy of the media.

## **Process and Limitations**

I first analyzed content and themes from both the public and private stations in Ghana. There is only one public television station in Ghana, so we did not randomly select as it was our only option in terms of the public television station. For private stations, I gathered data from a few relatively reputable websites from Ghana and run some surveys to find out which of these stations are the most watched within the country. After finding out the most preferred stations within the country, I gathered various TV schedules from both the public and the private stations. Some I gathered online and the rest from the television station itself. I went on to observe the content of some of these stations to see, what the children's content entailed on the TV stations in the countries.

The most pressing limitation I faced with this thesis was my absence from Ghana during the duration of the paper. Being there would have allowed me to capture some very cultural moments to have added to this paper. Also, I could have gathered some data concerning the thoughts of parents and children on representation of children TV in Ghana. Nonetheless, the data gathered for this research was enough to argue out that what we have on our TV is as a result of cultural imperialism and how representation of children on TV is important.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

My thesis seeks to create and evaluate the discourse on children's representation in Ghana, but first let's look at other debates other scholars have discussed in these areas. I first discuss the political economy of the media in general and then across Africa. This helps us to understand the communication dynamics between the mass media in Ghana and the public. Secondly, I observe globalisation in the media and how it has affected Ghanaian market. This also includes cultural and media imperialism found across Africa and then Ghana. And lastly I briefly discuss the representation of children in the media; touching on what could have been, whilst raising awareness on representation of children in the media.

#### **2.1 Political Economy of the Media.**

Political economy of the media or communication as described by (Flew, Terry et al, 2014), is a particular branch in communication or media studies which assesses the power relations (political economy) that constitute the communication of information from mass media to its publics. It can also be defined as the study of the social relations, particularly, distribution and consumption of resources (Mosco, 1996). Mosco (1996) explains that the political economy is about survival and control or how societies are organized to produce what is necessary to survive and how order is maintained to meet societal goals and communication systems which are emerging as central areas for profit making in modern capitalist societies.

Political economists of media assume that the media is an important factor in understanding how societies work, but not the most important factor that affects it (McChesney, 2003). McChesney assesses the different variables of social and political theories that affirm the fact that a good communication system is the cornerstone of any modern society. He concluded that communication systems have a dual role. One is that they serve as a pivot or play an active role for the emerging global economy and the other is to serve as the foundation for political democracy at any stage.

The salient questions asked by most media political economists however, is how should the media be optimized? Should the media be state or privately owned ? Does the media serve to promote democratic institutions and practices or vice versa? Are they a force for social justice or oligarchy? If people knew how the media operated, what would their options be to address the situation? In finding solutions to these questions is the reason why the political economy of the media is discussed under the reigns of media ownership within a state, support mechanisms and the governmental policies. (Djankov et al, 2012). This thesis subtly seeks to find if the ownership of the media also affects children's programming.

## **2.2 Political Economy of the Media in Africa**

Freedom of the press or media is the concept that emphasizes that an individual's ability to communicate and express himself/herself freely through various mediums, including printed and electronic media, especially published materials, should be considered a right to be exercised without prohibition and infringement (Powe,1992). In a study conducted by Ogbonday(2012), he proposes that a free press is vital for the development of the political economy of the sub-Saharan region. He demonstrates how a controlled press, such as some parts of the African

press, is incapable of unearthing graft, fraud, theft, corruption, bribery, embezzlement, smuggling and export-import swindles inherent in the ruling bourgeois class. His results showed that corruption and other illicit economic ventures by the dominant African bourgeois class have been identified as part of the reasons for the failure of development projects in Africa

Supporting Powe (1992), African leaders argue that given the continent's subservient position in the global economic system, a colonial legacy and the fragility of newly independent African countries, a free press in the Western sense can too easily lead to instability of government to function and into internal chaos (Aggarwala 1977; Mboya 1970 & Sommerlad 1966). African leaders argue that press control is necessary for national development and political stability. But according to Olukayode (2014), curbing press freedom is not the panacea for sociopolitical stability and national development especially with regards to children.

Any meaningful discussion of the mass media's role in any society must take into account the political, economic, and social environment within which the media agencies must operate (Rwomire, 1992), and as Altbach has put it: "In countries divided by linguistic, tribal and ideological factors, and in which the traditions of national independence are recent and fragile, the mass media and the education system play an important role in defining the society." The mass media in all of South Africa do indeed reflect a society riddled with economic imbalances, racial tensions and political polarization. And this can be seen in all of Africa. Due to different cultures, (neo)colonialism and, the entire continent is divided on so many beautiful and distinct levels.

Another factor affecting the direction of Africa's media industry is its economic rise and continued integration into the global economy. The economic crisis of the 20th century between

states and markets drastically impacted the entire media landscape of Sub-Saharan Africa resulting in a change of hands in media ownerships as well as models, structures and audiences (Workneh, 2010). Workneh proposes that the factors or settings that led to the emergence of the multi-million dollar multinationals in the media industry included the privatization and the liberalization climate in the 1980s and 1990s which paved way for some African media conglomerates to rise such as MTN, Naspers etc., the dissolution of the former Soviet Union in 1991 which sealed the supremacy of the neoliberal order that conditioned the economies of many developing regions including Sub-Saharan Africa and the end of the apartheid in South Africa which allowed the South African economy into the rest of the continent and the world, encouraging the South African Multinationals to proliferate into markets that were unwelcoming before.

## **2.3 Media Ownership**

### **Owned by the government or private and what have been the effects of the years.**

The public interest theory denotes that every market failure or inefficiency could be controlled or handled with regulation (Aranson, 1990). State ownership of the media is usually found in poor, autocratic and non-democratic countries where governments have interests in controlling the flow of information (Djankov, La Porta, 2002). Also countries with rather “weak” governments usually do not possess the ability to break up the monopolies of state media (Price, 2004).

Government ownership of the media is more desirable on the basis that dissemination of information is a public good and withholding it is more costly. Also, costs involved in dissemination of information is high but once the major costs are catered for, the subsequent

cost involved in providing information is low. Most importantly, state media ownership can be less biased (Djankov, McLeish, Nenova, Scheifer, 2003). In their study however, Djankov et al (2003) contradict themselves in making recommendations. They propose two conflicting ideologies. They first advocate that more governments that have lax holds over the media should increase their control of the media which would in turn increase press freedom as well as economic and political freedoms, however, they propose that such policies would prevent the public from making well-informed decisions because there exist the possibility that state-owned media would manipulate and distort information in favour of the ruling-party, while establishing its rules. Thus, they propose that governments should have less control of the media which would increase these freedom of information and healthy conversation. According to them is important because it would enhance the concept of choice in which people get to choose politicians, goods and services without fear.

Media control relatively works hand in hand with state ownership in the economy (Djankov, 2002). In most parts of Europe the press is mostly private and free of state control and ownership. The role of the press in relation to national and societal issues have been the responsibility of the private media in the United States and Australia since the early days of media establishment in these countries (Hoffman & Wolfgang, 1993). On the other hand, you will find high levels of state ownership in African countries, the Middle East and some Asian countries. Most certainly, you would expect full state monopolies in countries like Burma and North Korea. (Djankov, 2002).

Studies show that worse outcomes are associated with higher levels of state ownership of the media. This however contradicts the Pigouvian theory or public interest theory which states



that government ownership of the media cures market failures. The news media are more independent and fewer journalists are arrested, detained or harassed in countries with less state control, (Djankov 2003). Harassment, imprisonment and higher levels of internet censorship occur in countries with high levels of state ownership such as Singapore, Belarus, Burma, Ethiopia, China, Iran, Syria, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (Djankov, 2003). Countries with a total state monopoly in the media like North Korea and Laos experience a "Castro effect", where state control is powerful enough that no journalistic harassment is required in order to restrict press freedom (Djankov, 2003).

There are however, problems associated with private driven media. There are complications with press freedom and strong inadequacy in objective journalism. "Authoritarian or Totalitarian media outlets" such as China's CCTV, Russia's R T and Venezuela's TeleSUR take advantage of both domestic and foreign media due to the censorship under regimes in their native countries and the openness of democratic nations to which they broadcast(Walker, 2016).

## **2.4 Civil and political rights**

The public interest theory in general terms, seeks the protection and benefit of the public at large (Domas, 2003). The theory further states that state ownership of the press enhances civil and political rights; Contrary to this ideology the public choice theory, suggests that high to absolute government control of the media is primarily associated with lower levels of political and civil rights, higher levels of corruption, quality of regulation, security of property and media bias (Djankov, 2003 & 2008). The independent media usually has a higher oversight by the media of the government (Simon ,1998) & (Djankov, 2003). For example, increased reporting of

corruption in Mexico, Ghana and Kenya after restrictions were lifted in the 1990s, but government-controlled media defended officials.

## **2.5 Economic freedom**

According to (La Porta et al,1997) it is common for countries with strict control of newspapers to have fewer firms listed per capita on their markets and less developed banking systems. (Beck, Demirguc-Kunt & Levine, 1999), in their findings support the public choice theory, which suggests higher levels of state ownership of the press would be detrimental to economic and financial development.

## **2.6 Media Concentration Within A State**

Also according, (Havens et al. 2012) in their book, discuss concentration of ownership in media industries as a result of convergence and media conglomeration under neoliberal economics and how they have become a concern for media diversity and democratic discourse . According to (Downing, 2014) contemporary research keeps showing increasing levels of consolidation, with many media industries across the world, concentrated and dominated by a tiny number of large firms. Globally, these large firms include The Walt Disney Company, Time Warner, National Amusements (Viacom and CBS Corporation) AT&T, Hearst Communications. And Forbes 2017, states that AT&T stood as the biggest media conglomerate.

In Africa, media conglomerates would include Naspers and Silverbird Productions. These companies range from their online presence to print media. Naspers, for instance, also holds one of the largest telecommunication industries in the world, MTN and the largest pay-tv DSTV are found across Africa. According to statistics on their website in 2017, DSTV alone had about 11.9

million subscribers all across Africa, with majority of the subscribers found in South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Angola, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Tanzania and Botswana. The channels on their decoder include MNet, SABC, MGM, Turner Classic Movies, TNT Sci-Fi Universal, SuperSport, ESPN, SelecTV, Travel Channel, KTV, Cartoon Network, BBC World News, CNN International, Sky News, Rhema Network, MTV, VH1 and TV5Monde. Most of which are international content. Thus, the fact still remains that most of the media companies across Africa still use imported content primarily from the West and a bit from India and Korea. Castells and Arsenault(2008) confirm this in their research. Their quote states

**All of these corporations remain rooted in the West, just as the majority of media organizations remain regionally or locally focused. However, local and regional players are actively importing and/or re-appropriating foreign products and formats while corporate transnational media organizations are pursuing local partners to deliver customized content to audiences. While capital and production are globalized, the content of media is customized to local cultures and to the diversity of target audiences. So, in ways that are typical of other industries, globalization and diversification work hand in hand. In fact, the two processes are intertwined. Only global networks can master the resources of global media production; but their market share depends on their ability to localize their content and/or to connect to national and local distribution channels. Capital is global; identities are local.**

## **2.7 Support Mechanisms For Media Organizations**

According to (Obar and Wildman 2015) amongst other authors suggest that advertising, marketing, subscription, social media, and crowdfunding revenues are examples of economic support for media organizations. (Rosen Jay 2006) discuss that such mechanisms influence what types of content are published or not published, the nature of the commodity (content vs. the audience vs. advertisers) and are thus relevant to PEC studies.

According to (Schweizer et al 2014) in a policy brief state that measures support media are normally described as being direct or indirect as well as general or selective. While direct support refers to payments to media organisations; indirect support includes measures that help create a favourable economic situation for media organisations (e.g. tax breaks). In contrast, general measures favour all members of an industry (e.g. all newspaper publishers), whereas selective measures benefit only media organisations that meet certain requirements.

According to the authors, it should be noted that general measures cannot prevent media ownership concentration as they benefit small and big media companies equally. While selective measures can potentially help weaker media, they cannot solve the problems of failing companies, and mostly develop into permanent support to news organisations that would not survive in the market alone. Financial support for media raises fears of political or government influence. However, as Colin Sparks noted: **“Just as subsidy does not necessarily mean government intervention in the content of the press, neither does its absence guarantee non-intervention.”** (2014). Press Freedom Indices support this statement as countries with a long tradition of financially supporting the press regularly rank in the top places .

## **2.8 GLOBALISATION AND CULTURAL IMPERIALISM**

According to Tomlinson(2012), cultural imperialism refers most broadly to the exercise of domination in cultural relationships in which the values, practices and meanings of a powerful foreign culture are imposed upon one or more native cultures. In this sense, cultural imperialism is used to describe examples of an enforced adoption of the cultural habits and customs of the West from ancient times down to the twentieth century on minor countries.

Cardoso & Faletto, (1979) discuss that cultural imperialism has its roots in dependency theory, with the core nations (developed) keeping periphery nations (developing) dependent on their core media. And it is relatively logical to expect a nation that has economic and political influence over other countries to directly or indirectly exert cultural influence as well. If the influence is reciprocal or balanced we could see great and admirable intercultural exchange but when the culture of a dominant country is strongly felt and seen over the culture of the periphery country at the expense of their cultural integrity, then we can see a case of cultural imperialism as said by Salwen, 1991 and Beltran 1978.

According to Tomlinson, 2012, the term first became popular during the 1970s in the work of critical media theorists such as Herbert Schiller (1973) whose emphasis was primarily on the dominance of Western capitalism – in the form of multinational media corporations – in the flow of global communications. This emphasis on the role of media institutions, practices and discourses in the exercise of cultural imperialism led to the coining of the term “media imperialism” which, though actually a subset of the more general concept, has in practice often been used as a synonym. Cultural imperialism theories of the 1970’s and 1980’s highlighted how the media in developing countries imported foreign news, cultural and television genre formats (i.e. talk-shows, sitcoms) and also values of capitalist consumerism and individualism.

It was also in the area of media and communications that one of the most significant events occurred in creating an institution that could handle cultural imperialism. This event was the proposal from UNESCO for the creation of a “New World Information and Communications Order(NWICO)”. In the 1970s, the Non-Aligned Movement pressed the case for a reform of global communications, which appeared as an attack on the cultural dominance of the West.

Supported by the McBride report called “Many Voices, One World,” countries such as India, Indonesia and Egypt argued strongly that media companies who have accrued a lot should have limited access to developing countries. This argument led to departure of the United States, United Kingdom and Singapore from UNESCO.

In an excerpt written by Liebes et al(2004), the authors discuss that during the 1980s and 1990s, as multinational media conglomerates expanded and became more powerful it became increasingly difficult for small, local media outlets to survive. Due to this, the authors predicted that a new type of imperialism will thus occur, making many nations subsidiary to the media products of some of the most powerful countries or companies. Some writers and thinkers who have strongly impacted this area include Ben Bagdikian, Noam Chomsky, Edward S. Herman, Armand Mattelart and Robert W. McChesney. However, critics have responded that in most developing countries the most popular television and radio programs are commonly locally produced. Critics such as Anthony Giddens(2004) highlight the place of regional producers of media (such as Brazil in Latin America); other critics such as James Curran suggest that State government subsidies have ensured strong local production which might be a very strong allegation. (Liebes et al 2004), further discuss that areas such as audience studies, has shown in the past that global programs like Dallas do not have a global audience who understand the program the same way.

(Peter Baofu 2009) in his findings suggested that a media source which blatantly ignores and/or absolutely censors important issues and events severely damages freedom of information. Many

modern tabloid, twenty-four-hour news channels and other mainstream media sources have increasingly been criticized for not conforming to general standards of journalistic integrity.

## **2.9 Media Imperialism**

Media Imperialism may not always be an international occurrence. In the case where a small number of companies or corporations have a major say in the controls of the media in a country, could pass for media imperialism. Countries where this is commonly found include Italy and Canada. These countries are often seen as possessing a strong imperial media structure, based on the fact that much of their media is controlled by a small number of owners.

Osama suggest that The United States over time has played quite a significant role in media imperialism (2001),. For instance, many forms of mass media demonstrate how the United States exerts media power over other countries, especially those lacking in a strong media presence. Furthermore, a major cultural influencer in other countries is television. (Campbell, 2016), discuss that television is a way to display news, movies, videos, pictures, etc. Movies, usually shown in movie theaters or television, have a distinctly American dominance. For example, Hollywood is a major producer of films, and they tend to produce blockbuster quality which is released internationally. Martin, Christopher et al, try to further prove Hollywood's dominance. They use the Indian movie industry as their case in point. They call their industry Bollywood, whiles Nigeria calls themselves Nollywood; adopting Hollywood as part of its namesake (2016).

However, television is not the only mass communication channel used for media imperialism. Another form of mass media used is music. Much of today's, and older, music finds

itself popular in other countries. Although, a time when the media imperialism seemed to shift from an American lens was during the 1960s and the overwhelming "British Invasion" of music from Britain to America. However, we have yet to see such a large shift of imperialism since then. Furthermore, some could argue that it wasn't that large of a shift of power, because it was still a dominance of Western influence.

Overall, American media imperialism can be seen as a positive and a negative. Part of the mixed beliefs stem from the negative connotation of the word 'imperialism. Boyd Barret, (2002) The use of this word seems to harken back to a negative viewpoint where large countries created empires of smaller ones. However, it can be seen as a positive when it is viewed as a way to create a consensus narrative. A consensus narrative is a result of, "products that provide us with shared experiences." Campbell et al(1949). By having similar experiences, it opens the gateway for communication and development of relationships. Yet, this can also become a problem when the cultural exchange is not balanced or reciprocated. Thus, American culture is being transmitted to other countries, but other cultures may not be received in return.

Therefore, this creates an atmosphere of cultural imperialism where American culture is dominating others and becoming the main one. Thus, cultural imperialism can be seen as a result of media imperialism. For example, "...numerous international observers contend that consumers in countries inundated by American-made movies, television, and images have even less control than American consumers." Moreover, these forms of mass media channels are not the only ones that have an American feeling to them, the internet also has somewhat of an American appearance. Specifically in relation to news and journalism, America also has a strong presence



in the international arena. American news networks like CNN often have large international staffs, and produce specialized regional programming for many nations.

Additionally, media imperialism has its own effects within the United States. Many news organizations are owned by a limited amount of corporations. One such example is Rupert Murdoch and his companies ownership of several notable media outlets, including: 21st Century Fox and the Wall Street Journal. Other large media corporations consist of The Walt Disney Company and Comcast. Recently, in 2017, however, the Justice Department did sue to block a merger between AT&T and Time Warner. Thus, blocking the creation of a large media conglomerate, which would further increase the influence of American media imperialism.

Eregare and Afolabi(2009) note that media imperialism is an essential theory with regards to the visible and invisible effects of globalisation on the world's media. They argue that when a corporation or a company controls the media in a country or across countries, standardization and commercialization of products and services from one culture becomes the media consumption of another culture and media imperialism comes to play in this case.

## **2.10 Cultural Imperialism in the World**

In relatively recent work, some scholars sought to examine the interplay between cultural studies, media studies and Caribbeanist anthropology and how this interface has impacted on the consumption cultures of the Caribbean peoples. Pertierra and Horst (2009) observe that although media consumption has become a factor of everyday life in most regions around the world, there are several specific reasons why the Caribbean makes a particularly interesting case study for

examining the cultural practices, relationships, micro-political encounters and identities that surround the distribution and use of media systems and technologies.

In much the same way that John Sinclair (1999) has reported for the region of Latin America, the history of Caribbean media is inevitably entangled in a relationship of dependence on the economies and industries of the United States, such that by the 1980s the Anglophone Caribbean was measured as the world region most penetrated by foreign media (Brown, 1995). While countries in the Caribbean share some underlying features that could shape the possibilities for how mediascapes develop through local creation and appropriation of media content, the cheerless fact remains that virtually the entire Caribbean mediascape is a footnote to the United States of America's and Britain's media imperialistic hegemonies. In other words, Caribbean media content tend to rely a great deal on programmes, programming and information from the United States (and to lesser degrees from Europe and Mexico). Thus, media consumers in the region are simply passive recipients of the output of the global North (Dunn, 1995). For example, Pertierra (2009) captures the Cuban scenario where media content has not been particularly controversial, as the vast majority of citizens have had relatively free access to the categories of capitalist-produced media programming and programmes that they mostly desire, namely Hollywood films, Latin American telenovelas, international sporting events and popular music from around the world. Perhaps, this scenario has remained unchallenged because local programmes and programming are trite and too pedestrian for the growing Cuban population. Pertierra corroborated this view when she affirmed that the residents included in her study, especially younger people, did frequently complain that most Cuban television and radio programming is boring.

Boyd–Barrett (1977) had previously pontificated that any academic analysis of international media activities has two outstanding features of the “influence process”. The first, according to him, is the unidirectional nature of international media flow. He argued that whereas there is a heavy flow of exported media products/technologies/content from the United States of America to; say Asian, African and Caribbean countries, there is only a very slight trickle of Asian, African and Caribbean media products/technologies/content to the United States of America. Even where there may appear to be a substantial return flow, as is sometimes the case in news and Nigerian home video dramas, the apparent reciprocity only disguises the fact that those who manage or handle this return flow are primarily the agents of major Western media systems, whose criteria of choice are determined first by their domestic market needs. The operations and activities of Western media behemoths such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC World), Cable News Network (CNN), Sky News, Fox News, Voice of America (VOA), among others, in relation to, and with other regions of the world clearly exemplify the point being made. In the theorizing of Boyd–Barrett, the second outstanding feature of the influence process which actually stems from the first is the very small number of “source” countries accounting for a very large share of all international media influences around the world. These countries are mainly the United States of America, then Britain, France, Germany, Russia, followed by relatively emergent centres of international media influence including Italy, India, China, Japan, Iran and Brazil. Eregare and Afolabi (2009) argue further that if “sources” are identified only by country of origin, however this obscures the fact that the real sources are even more limited, located as they were, in a handful of giant media conglomerates, then the rest of the world is under media iron-grip of some sort.

However, the concern here is not whether the idea of media imperialism in world media culture is desirable or has advantages or disadvantages. Rather, emphasis is on the historical development of the phenomenon, reasons for its prevalence as well as the obvious but regrettable fact that it will continue to be part of the African media arrangement, specifically the television system in Ghana for some time to come. A good way to proceed further in this discourse is to examine the issue from the three perspectives enunciated by Fejes (1981). According to him, media imperialism should be analyzed with reference to: (i) the role of the media in maintaining or changing a nation's power structure and how it is tied to the international system of domination and dependence. (ii) as a historical phenomenon; and (iii) under culture. The phenomenon is thus analyzed from these three perspectives. The different modes exhibited by the phenomenon are situated within them.

## **2.11 Media Imperialism in Africa**

Research on media imperialism in Africa has shown research on South Africa's effect on other states in Africa. This technically makes sense as South Africa has one of the biggest media industries in Africa, and their effects are felt around the Southern part of Africa. So can be said of Nigeria; as their media industry is felt in the Western part of Africa and across the entire continent.

According to (Ronwire 2000) , so far as South Africa has monopoly over the means of communication, it controls the creation and distribution of information. Such a monopoly is tantamount to cultural imperialism, which, as hinted above, reflects and reinforces economic imbalances on a regional scale. According to Ndlovu (2011), South African media regionalisation in southern Africa may not necessarily be imperialistic on its own, but it

definitely functions as an intermediary for extension of various forms of particularly western media and cultural imperialism(s). South African media content, especially popular and high cultural media products, are hardly 'South African'. While we might cautiously speak of typically India's Bollywood movies and Latin American telenovelas in their respective regions and in the Diaspora, it is difficult to speak of any enduring media product forms and formats that are idiosyncratically South African. Also, unlike in Latin America, Asia, Middle East, and North Africa, southern African-based regional media expansion scarcely seriously foster any new forms of cultural and linguistic cooperation among other developing countries such as programme exchange. Regionalisation of South African media does not create space for the development of indigenous languages; it, however, enhances the hegemony of colonial languages such as English, French and Portuguese

The international information and communication order is dominated and controlled by a few transnational corporations with their headquarters located in the former imperialist powers of Western Europe and North America. To be sure, the major publishing houses, large research centres, prestigious journals and other sources of knowledge are located in the Western industrialized countries. Likewise, the four major international news agencies are located in the West, namely, the Associated Press and United Press International (USA), Reuters (Britain), and Agence France-Presse (France). These agencies are sometimes accused of being responsible for the imbalances and distortions with regard to the creation and dissemination of news and information worldwide. Thus, these agencies have been accused of devoting only 20-30% of news coverage to the Third World, which comprises roughly three-quarters of mankind.

Although the principal internal news agency in South Africa is the South African Press Association (SAPA), the country's media work hand in glove with the Western media. Apart from the four news agencies cited above, the foreign bureaux in South Africa include Deutsche Presse-Agentur (Germany), Agencia-EFE (Spain), Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inter-Press Service (Italy), and Kyodo News Service (Japan). Accordingly, the bulk of the news in South Africa and in most of the SADCC states is transmitted by the Western news agencies. In the view of one author, the "Western news media are often the only source of information and these media tend to be accepted as authoritative sources of news and information."

### **Politics of Representation & Media Representation of Children.**

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines politics of representation as the activity of making citizen's voices, opinions and perspectives heard and present in policy making processes. Representation encompasses the idea that media plays a major role in how we construct, interpret and understand the way we perceive the world. As used in discourse analysis, representation refers to the language used in a text or talk to assign meaning to groups and their social practices, to events, and to social and ecological conditions and objects (e.g. Fairclough, 1989; 1995; van Dijk, 2002).

Implicit in this view of the role of language in social life is that meaning is not embedded in the reality that is perceived but rather that it is construed by linguistic representation (Fairclough, 1992; Goatly, 2000; Halliday, 1990; Hodge and Kress, 1993; Mehan and Wills, 1988; Muntigl, 2002; Shapiro, 1988; van Dijk, 2002; Wenden and Schaffner, 1999; Wodak, 2002). Of course, modes of representation will vary depending on the perspective from which they are constructed, whether biographical, historical, socio- cultural (Voloshinov, 1986 cited in

Mehan and Wills, 1988). Ideology will also influence the manner in which groups represent matters of import and relevance to the body politic (e.g. Fairclough, 1989, 1992; 1995; Hodge and Kress, 1993; Bloomaert and Verschueren, 1998; van Dijk, 1999; Goatly, 2000), including the achievement of a culture of peace. Moreover, in as much as linguistic representations determine the way in which we think about particular objects, events, situations and, as such, function as a principle of action influencing actual social practice (Shapiro, 1988; Fairclough, 1989; Hodge and Kress, 1993; Wodak, 2002; Karlsberg, 2005), there will be competition among groups over what is to be taken as the correct, appropriate, or preferred representation (Holquist, 1983; Fairclough, 1992; Wodak, 2001)

According to Shaw(2005), research on minority representation asserts that the entertainment industry especially the video game industry excludes certain audiences by not representing them. Nonetheless, the author suggests everyone should be provided with characters they can identify with especially considering that media representation has knowable effects in the past. The author further suggested that media producers, however, can take advantage of the fact that identities are complex, that identification does not only require shared identifiers, and that diversity in a non-tokenistic sense can appeal to a much wider audience than pluralistic, niche marketing. In sum, diversity can address both the market logic and educative goals of media representation

According to (Máire Messenger Davies & Nick Mosdell,) such uses of child models raise questions about the consent of the children concerned – an even more serious issue now in the context of the increase in child pornography available on the internet(1975). David Buckingham’s work has long argued that debates about the relationship between media and

children need to take place within a social, cultural and political context: this relationship should not be seen as a unidirectional one of simple modelling effects.

### **African Children in the media**

In a paper written by Oyero and Salawu,(2018) they try to justify the need for Child Journalism and Media Studies (CJMS). Their argument stands on the fact that the imperatives of CJMS are further justified by children's right to media entertainment. African children have not gotten the right doses of good entertainment from their own media. Television programs are generally skewed in favor of politics whereas children's needs are neglected. Most of the children's programs are foreign whereas local contents are limited to children's parties organized by schools and monthly birthday parties organized by media houses (Omotosho et al., 2014). It appears that African broadcast organizations lack the wherewithal, both in skills and commitment to produce quality children's program. Africa's airwaves are bombarded with children's programs from foreign countries like the United States and Britain. Nickelodeon, Disney, and Celebrity Big Brother have taken over the African's children media world because Africa has not lived up to expectations to provide viable local alternatives. Incidentally, the quality of production, the narratives, and other elements of these foreign productions are far better than the locally produced programs; hence, children have greater preference for them. The few local programs for children have not met the expectations of the receivers as they often complain of them as being uninteresting, unexciting, and boring.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3.1 METHODOLOGY- content and discourse analysis**

For this research, I focus primarily on analysing the content of both public and private television stations in Ghana. I observe the content of both public and private tv stations in Ghana, to have a sense of how much of their contents are geared towards children between the ages of 0 and 15.

#### **Why Content Analysis?**

According to (Weber 1990), content analysis is a “research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text.” A definition from UC Davis, School of Psychology (2002) defines it as a technique for systematically describing written, spoken or visual communication, Content analysis usually involves all sorts of media. This could range from “texts” from transcripts of interviews, print (including advertisements), television programs, video, movies and the internet; practically anything that could be recorded and reviewed fits into the content analysis frame.( Macnamara,2004).

Berelson, also suggests five main purposes of content analysis includes describing substances and forms of the characteristics of message content, whiles making inferences to producers and audiences of content as well as predicting effects of these content on audiences(1952). But for this research we are not just looking at the characteristics, inferences or effects of these to producers or audiences, we are analysing from the producers and audiences as well.

In this thesis I am interested in transforming or changing the perception the world has on Africa by honing in on the importance of representation of an and for African youth, especially

in a time where culture seems to be transforming quickly due to globalisation and other factors and how what we have is as a result of cultural imperialism within the state.

### **3.2 History Of Media In Ghana - Statistics On TV Stations In Ghana**

Before we move ahead, some insight into media in Ghana and how things have rolled out over the years. Ghana became an independent state in 1957 and a republic in 1960 under the leadership of His Excellency Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. At independence, there were 4 newspapers floating on the Ghanaian market and Kwame Nkrumah handled all 4 of these newspapers. His socialist ideas speared his passion for controlling the media, using the media as the tool for propagating nationalist ideas and gathering support for his ambitious developmental projects. His mode of transmitting information included a network of institutions which were the Ministry of Information, Ghana News Agency, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, and his own press, Guinea Press, Ltd., that published two daily newspapers, one free weekly, and several specialized publications.

In 1965, his government introduced television in collaboration with Sanyo of Japan. Though it was a collaboration, Sanyo had the power to promote television in Ghana to support his own commercial purposes; but in spite of this, Nkrumah insisted that television should be used to educate and promote national development rather than serve as a profit generator. Nkrumah's government ensured that radio and television broadcasting were centralized in a single unit which became the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation in Accra. This organisation became the target of coup leaders due to the corporation's access across the nation. They would

then seize the organisation for the announcement of regime changes. Because of this, the compound is surrounded by high walls, barbed wires and a strong military presence.

According to the history of the corporation, GBC-TV, or simply GTV, broadcasts from its central studios in Accra to transmitters at Ajankote near Accra, Kissi in the Central Region, Jamasi in the Ashanti Region, and a relay station in Tamale in the Northern Region. In 1986, another transmitter was added in Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region and since then others have been added in Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo Region, Han in Upper West Region, Amajofe and Akatsi, both in the Volta Region. Transposers or boosters operate at Ho, Akosombo, Prestea, Sunyani, Oda, Tarkwa, Dunk-wa, and Mpraeso. The Ghana television transmission standard is PAL B-5 with five low power relays. Through these transmitters, 95 percent of Ghana has access to GTV broadcasts. On weekdays, television programming begins at 5:55 AM and concludes at 11 PM. In addition, GTV provides a two-hour education program for schools on weekday mornings. On weekends and public holidays, GTV broadcasts from 6:50 AM to 11:50 PM.

In 1997, privatization of airwaves in Ghana begun and the government gave approval for frequencies to be allocated to private television stations. TV3 and MetroTV were the first to successfully go on air. There has been immense progress in the media such that in the Greater Accra Region alone, Multichoice Satellite System offers subscribers access to BBC World Service Television, CNN, Supersports, and M-Net, a South African commercial network offering mostly western movies, music videos, and television serials.

### **3.3 History Of Tv Shows In Ghana**

From the earlier section, I discussed how media unfolded in Ghana. The primary idea of the media at that time was to propagate nationalist ideas and developmental projects being done

by the government. Ultimately, that worked in the short run but as time evolved, the role of the media evolved, creating a demand for content other than developmental projects- based programs. This made Ghana Today Television, also known as GTV, the only national public broadcaster that delivered relevant source of information and entertainment. GTV was and is still under the control of by Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and begun operations in July 31, 1965. GTV's main production studio is situated in Accra and has affiliations nationwide and covers 98% of the airwaves in Ghana, making it the most powerful form of advertisement across the country. It is largely funded by the Government of Ghana and collects tv licenses from its viewers.

GTV successfully secured strong connections with international networks from USA, Europe, UK and Asia of which they started broadcasting shows from these networks. The channel eventually was flooded with shows such as: In The House, The Cosby Show, Taina, Becker, Everybody Loves Raymond, The Oprah Winfrey Show, Family Matters, Moesha, Soul Food, King of Queens, CNN, PBS (an American public broadcaster and television program distributor, program distributor that provides television content and related services to its member stations which includes Cartoon Network, NBA, Fresh Prince of Bel Air, Passions, Touched by an Angel, BBC Radio. Though most of these shows are not currently running on GTV, they once did or still are. GTV also shows a lot of foreign movies particularly American movies as well as African-American music videos.. The station also broadcasts live international events like the Olympic games, FIFA World Cup, Miss World and Miss Universe.

Till today, GTV is supposed to broadcast mainly local programmes. When they began, they started with original productions such as "*I told you so*"(1970), "*OBRA*(1987)",

*“Cantata(2000)”*, *“Key Soap Concert Party(1991)”* As part of their responsibilities, most of the shows produced by GTV are meant to be or once were either educational, or made an attempt to address pertinent issues rising in the Ghanaian community. Shows such as these entertained and addressed these issues coupled with Ghanaian humour and great acting. They were perfect family shows which still makes them some of the most talked about shows amongst the older generation. Unfortunately, these shows died down years ago. Socrates Safo, the Director of Creative Arts under the National Commission on Culture, insisted that the death of these shows occurred due to lack of advertisement on the shows and a disinterest for the local shows by the Ghanaian. Thus, producers could not renew the show. Advertisements rather came in for the foreign shows.



**Picture 1- A Part of the movie “I Told You So”    Picture 2 -A Part of the show, “Obra”**

### **3.4 Demographics**

The demographics and the class of the people definitely determined what stations the individuals preferred. This was important because some of the stations would broadcast only in the most common dialect within the country which is *Twɔ*, while some others would dabble

between *Twi* and English and then there are those that broadcast only in English. From living among the people of Ghana, I know for a fact that the majority of people who enjoyed the *Twi* broadcast were viewed as those who ranged from no education to primary or high school or were doing blue collar jobs like hairdressers, carpenters, mechanics, hawkers etc. Whereas those who enjoyed the mix between English and *Twi* were viewed as those who had more than basic education or some form of tertiary education, middle class etc. Those who usually watched purely english broadcasts were seen as the sophisticated folk who had enough money or could afford to buy bouquet or cable channels from DSTV, or from other international cable producers. This is not entirely cut throat. Because there are a ton of people and families who dabble between the different groups. This basically helps to frame our outlook of the television habits of the general audience in Ghana.

### **3.5 The Average Ghanaian Child**

From growing up and living amongst the fine people of Ghana, there is so much to say. Ghanaians are very cultural and religious people. It plays in the way they live their lives, make decisions, bring up their children etc. They try to live by a certain moral code which is usually taught to them from their upbringing in the home or from within their society. There are a ton of religions but the most you will observe are Christianity, Islam and Traditional worshippers. In a bid to bring up their children in the right way, parents try to teach their culture and religion to their kids. Thus, the Ghanaian child grows up with some form of cultural and or moral code.

The moral code constitutes whatever rules your religion suggests you follow and the cultural code constitutes whatever code your tribe or people suggest. Interesting thing is there are a number of attributes (cultural rules) that cut across cultures in Ghana. For instance, the rule that

you do not greet an elder with your left hand or you take off your shoes before you enter an elder's home cuts across all cultures in Ghana. Some of these rules, can be found in other parts of Africa and even the world. From these cultural and moral rules, there are somethings that are predominantly expected of a child. One is do not speak unless spoken to. You will therefore find that children grow up being afraid to openly share their opinions to adults but are free in speaking amongst friends and colleagues.

If a Ghanaian child is paired with another child from outside Ghana, you will realise that the Ghanaian child is very slow to speak and appears very timid and shy. As to why that is, we could look into that a bit later. It takes the average Ghanaian child some good amount of time, most likely in their teenage years or whiles in secondary school to come out of their timid selves. Inquisitive still, but not able to question the status quo thus being timid until years into their adolescence and sometimes into their youth.

Another significant characteristic of a child growing up in Ghana and most probably across Africa is the strong respect given to Science and Math and very little respect is given to the Arts. From the day a child is born, parents hone in on occupations such as being a doctor, lawyer, engineer or an accountant being the preferred job for their child. Very few parents from the older generation would give room for their kids to dabble in the arts. It definitely would not go without a fight. This even shows in the community level as there are very few organisations that search for kids in the Arts industry apart from the Advertising industry. This may be another reason why Ghanaian kids are not excessively active in the media.

### **3.6 Media Scope of Ghana.**

This section throws more light on the scope of the media in Ghana. The chances and possibilities that the country has, if a few media organisations take up investing in children's media. As of 2017, the National Communications Authority (NCA) has approved 93 stations of which only 51 are active. In spite of the rather high number of TV stations, the TV market is excessively concentrated. The major owning companies of the most watched TV station includes the Multimedia Group ( Adom TV, Joy Prime, Joy News) which has 36.7% of audience concentration; Despite Group of Companies/U2 Company Limited (UTV) takes up 16.4%; Media General Ghana Limited/TV3 Network Limited (TV3) constitutes 15.3% and Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GTV, GTV Life, GTV Sports, GBC 24, Obonu TV) take up 9%. These stations combined make 77.4% of the audience concentration in Ghana.

#### **How TV Stations Run In Ghana or How Do They Operate ?**

Being economically sustainable is a precondition for independent, quality media coverage. This is because financially independent media outlets are less likely to be at the mercy of the strong and mighty in politics and business across the state. According to the Media Foundation of West Africa, the overall economic environment within the country and the media-market structure is characterized by the emergence of new media outlets. Though they begin well, they face serious financial challenges as time goes on.

Like in many countries, television and radio depends on sales and advertisements. The state-owned Ghana Broadcasting Corporation has a financial advantage as it operates by people hired, paid and sustained by the state. Also the government places advertisements in the state-run corporation since it is cheaper for them and has the biggest audience share. They also get first hand government media contracts, job postings, press releases and other information of public



interest placed in the media for a fee. Meanwhile, the commercial broadcast media relies solely on advertising as radio and television stations provide free-to air services.

According to the Media Ownership Monitor 2017, the commercial market is just as untransparent as public advertising. This realisation spurs from a research conducted by the same Media Ownership Monitor Team. Their realisation was that the Graphic Group (the state owned print media corporation) shares only a fraction of the state advertising with other print outlets like the Daily Guide Newspaper only when the political party NPP is power. Tables turn when the NDC is in power. The Enquirer gets the larger chunk when the NDC is in power. For television, it is known for a fact that GBC has shares of about 7.5% in the Multimedia Group which is the biggest media group after GBC. As to the politics behind it, more research would have to be done about it.

### **Where does the advertising come from?**

According to a Pan-African Study from 2015, the total advertising budget was about GHC 403.3 million (USD 92.1 million). A third of this budget comes from “corporate organisations and multibrands.” This also entails churches. Ghanaians are big on religion and christian programs. Advertising also comes from the food and beverages sector. This sector produced about GHC 96 million and is followed by the pharmaceuticals sector which produces about GHC 73 million from this budget. The communications sector also follows the pharmaceuticals sector with GHC 71 million especially the mobile service providers. Lastly, financial services served as the last fat chunk of the bulk with GHC 56 million.

Advertising alone does not pay the bills, thus you would find an increasing growth in non-media companies setting up media outlets. This is what is termed as cross-subsidizing. In

the cross-subsidizing, media outlets may not be profitable (yet) and may require cross-subsidizing; so the media outlets are used for advertisement platforms for the company's other products and services. The effect of this would be that media outlets who do not own other businesses apart from the media company would be run down or priced out of competition. Most of the private corporations follow this route. For instance, The Despute Group of Companies Limited is the mother company for one of Ghana's most watched television station that broadcasts only in the Twi dialect, the food and beverages companies, real estate companies, as well as a music production company.

### **Why Is Advertising Important ? - Things that affect the Industry.**

As previous advertising has shown (Gal-Or, Yildirim 2012), advertising in the Ghanaian media literally determines what goes on air or what programs would run for an extra season. Thus the shows that rake in the big advertisers, are the shows that have stayed longer. A few examples include The Delay Show, (a TV show, broadcasted in *Twi* where celebrities are pushed to discuss various scandals arising concerning their careers), Kejetia versus Makola, (a law comedy, where the lawyers come up with the most ridiculous cases and argue it out in front of a judge.), Khumkum Bagya (an Indian telenovela translated in Twi) and the News. These shows are sponsored by the telecommunication companies, pharmaceuticals, banks and Christian programs.

The producers implied that children programs do not bring in a lot of advertisers except the ones produced by the TV stations itself. If the show was produced by an independent producer, the TV station makes no effort in seeking sponsors. Thus it is the duty of the independent producer to bring in his own sponsors or advertisers. Another factor which

determines the longevity of a show are the number of viewers on any and all platforms possible, including social media, radio, newspapers etc. Once advertisers see the numbers, they are willing to go the long haul with either the producer from the television station or the independent producer. A good example is the show *Kejetia Versus Makola*. This show started primarily as a web series by an independent producer. They used facebook as their marketing platform where they placed snippets of the show as a teaser and then a youtube link after the teaser played. This was enjoyed by the majority of Ghanaians who watched the snippets and the show on Facebook and Youtube. Due to the numbers, the show eventually aired on 3 stations in Accra with about 4 different advertisers advertising on the show every month.

### **3.7 History Of Successful Children's Shows In Ghana.**

Despite the fact that children shows do not rake in as many advertisers as one would like, there have been instances where shows have been excessively successful such that replicas of the show were done. Also a few shows have come up along the years that have been so successful that new seasons had to be made to accommodate all the young and hungry talented children within the country. Some of these shows are described below. These shows depict how representation has had more of a positive effect on the Ghanaian child in the past and still does till today. I weigh in on the content of these selected shows and how far they went.

#### **Things We Do For Love.**

*Things We Do for Love* was a very popular show in the 90s about the youth and how they lived their lives and go about things in school and at home, with their parents also coming in their way, trying to put them on track so they don't go astray. In this story, Pusher (Adjetey Anang) is in a relationship with Dede, but has other girlfriends he plays around with. He is also

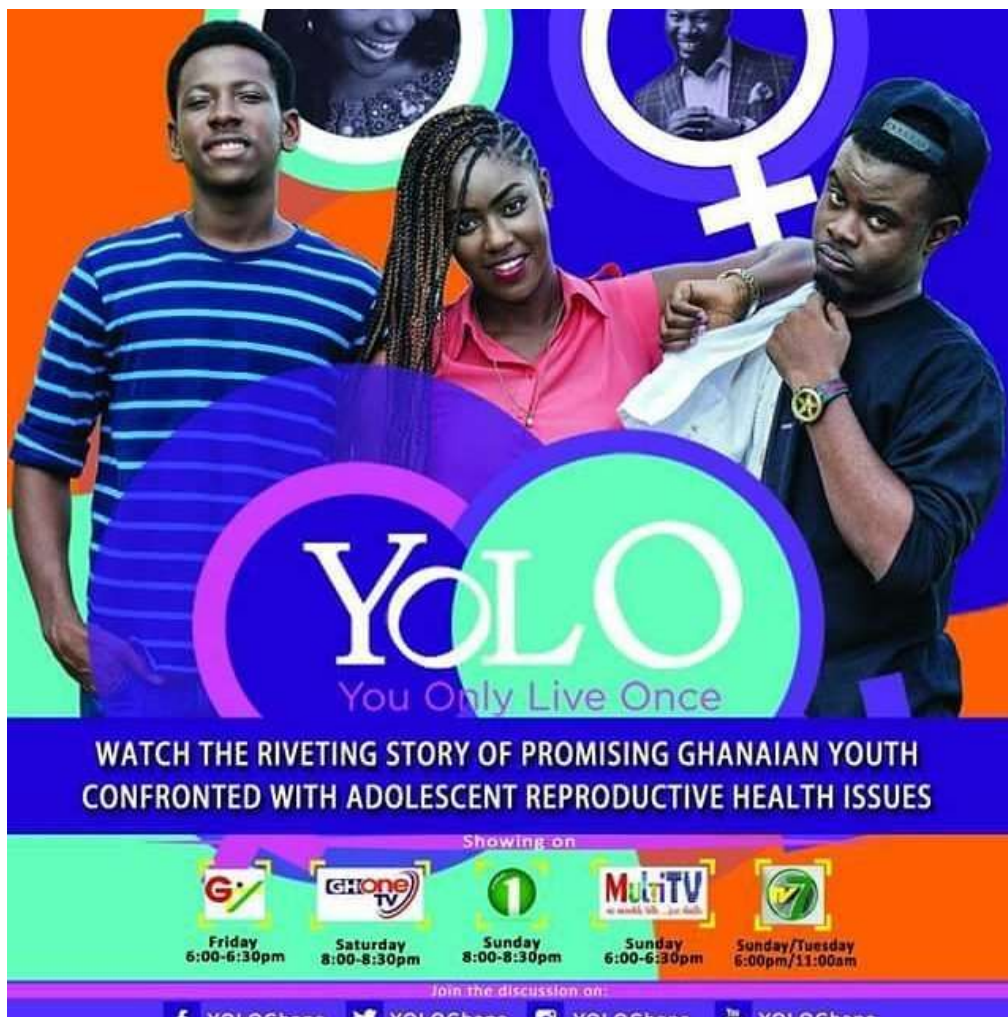
practically the cause of all troubles that emerge in the neighborhood. Meanwhile, his friend BB is also seeking ideas from Pusher in order to get Marcia as his girlfriend. However, this family has a problem of their own with Marcia's brother having romantic feelings for Dede, Pusher's girlfriend. Shaker (Majid Michel) plays a Lebanese working in a hotel and a practical womanizer whom with his sweet words could make a lady "meltdown". His personality of course leads him into certain embarrassing incidents. Moreover, his attempts to take those charms on Enyonam (Jackie Appiah) won't work either as she is love with a calm guy in the neighborhood although they are both unable to live in this dreamland called Love, as she lives in fear of her Father.

The show was mixed with morals and teachings on adolescent reproductive health. It also looked into educating both the young and old on HIV/AIDS. This show run continuously for about two years. The show even had its own theme song and caught the attention of parents and children across the entire country as parents tried to use this show to advice their children.



*Picture 1 (from left): Aluta (Enyonam's brother) and Pusher conniving on how to catch a girl. Picture 2: Shaker trying to catch Enyonam into his web.*

This show was so successful that a sequel was made and this sequel has also run for 4 good seasons with a 5th one in the pipeline. This show is ***YOLO; You Only Live Once!*** In the sequel, Pusher and Enyonam had a baby out of wedlock and their son Aaron was the main character. The story follows the same plot as the original but with rather more current related issues. Both shows are supported by UK-Aid and the National Population Council and produced by FarmHouse Productions.



*Aaron and some of his other actors with Enyonam and Pusher in the background. It even aired on 5 different stations.*

These shows remained successful because they had strong financial backing which granted them longevity in comparison to other shows. Their financial backing also allowed these shows to be aired on several TV stations, guaranteeing them a presence across the nation. Consistency and presence definitely gave the show way more success than the producers realized. Also the lingua used in the shows included everyday terms used by the Ghanaian. They did a great job of including the actual day to day life of the hustling Ghanaian coupled with the sense of humour took the show a long way.

According to the 2011 UN World AIDS Day report of the 250,000 children under age 15 who died of AIDS-related causes, 90% of them were from Sub-Saharan Africa. The awareness this series created The series did a great job of educating children and adults alike on this epidemic, but it was most effective because it was emphasized by Ghanaians. There have been a number of international organizations that have entered Ghana with the hope of creating awareness on HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases and even adolescent reproductive health. All of them certainly yielded some result but this show was different because it spoke to us about AIDS using everyday Ghanaian lives and interactions not through some westernized lenses. The effects of the HIV/AIDS campaign were felt more.

Also it was through shows like this that kids would pick their role models. It was through shows like these that we would pick our Miley Cyrus(es), Ariana Grande, Zendaya etc. Not to speak bad of Miley Cyrus or any of the other Disney Kids but the issues they went through in their high schools were in no way similar to what any African or Ghanaian child would go through in a secondary school. For starters the education systems were different, followed by the culture in these institutions, the interaction amongst themselves within the show and most

importantly the issues they tackle in particular. Whereas in a show like “Things we do for love,” kids would want to talk like Marcia, sit like Marcia, just be like Marcia. (In short, Marcia was my first role model just because she was Marcia.) We would be hypocrites if we say we want to exclusively see African content on African TV. An exposure to Disney shows also gives a well rounded exposure to life outside our borders. What life looks like in general; but it becomes a problem when there is an influx of foreign shows on our TV.

Let’s not forget that for every group of people, there are certain attributes that remain important, of which people outside the group may not understand. For Ghanaians, being able to speak your local language or your tribe’s language is highly important. But over-exposure to foreign content highly diminishes the importance and the beauty of speaking your language. Kids are beginning to speak english at home and then in school and are speaking less or incapable at all of speaking their local language. They tend to copy everything they see, hook, line and sinker and 50 years from now, what kind of a country would we be if our core attributes have been diminished due to overexposure of another culture.

### **By The Fireside**

Another successful show was *By the fireside*. This was a children series, that chronicled the numerous misadventures of Kwaku Ananse and other characters in the animal kingdom. The lead character in this children series was Kwaku Ananse (legendary spider character in Ghanaian folktales named Kwaku). The popular Ghanaian Television show ‘By The Fireside’ consisted of popular actors like Maame Dokono (Grace Omaboe), Wofa Yaw, Dr. Rokoto and others telling Ananse and folktale stories which were acted out by enthusiastic children with singing and dancing. The show was telecast on Saturday afternoons at 4pm. The popular Kids show also

featured great talents who also played the Kweku Ananse role. This was a powerful show simply because it had children acting out the scenes. Children could watch at home and would see, kids like themselves act or just being on TV.



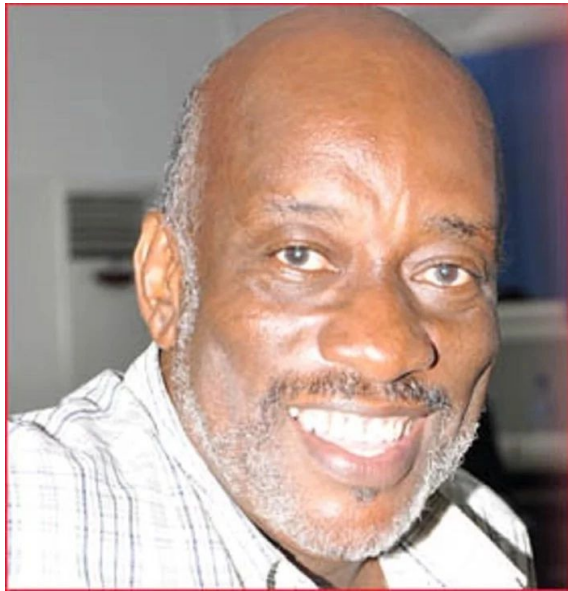
***Kids acting one out one of the stories of Ananse the trickster.***

Children love stories and giving them the opportunity to listen to stories and act it out at the same time is definitely a winner, and that is what By The Fireside did. The stories were fun but the acting by young kids made it more fun and the funny songs took it to a whole different level. A personal experience for me and my friends: After watching By The Fireside, we would run outside and play the parts that were acted out by the other kids on the show. This was where we would recreate our storylines and have simple innocent fun. Children should at least be given the option of watching themselves or their counterparts act on TV. They should be allowed to use their imagination to play around driven by the media, otherwise they would find something by themselves.



## **Kyekyekule**

*Kye kye kule* was a popular kids program in the 90's, where Uncle George (the host of the show) would go to different schools and perform many fun and brainy activities with the kid. The popular kids' program was a joy to watch because it educated as well as informed and entertained children. And it also had a pretty catchy song; come on you know it! "*Kye Kye Kule Kyeee Kule! Kye Kye Kofisa, Kofisa Langa! Lalatilanga! Kum Alele Kum Alele!*"



### **Uncle George, the host of Kye Kye Kule.**

The show took turns in involving schools from across the country. So every week it was fun to see which school would be featured on the show and what fun activity they got to do. The suspense was in anticipating when Uncle George and his team would appear in your school. The Even though the show ceased being aired, kids who were born in the 90s still talk about it being one of the best shows that ever existed simply because kids felt they were a part of something big outside of the school and home.

## **National Science and Maths Quiz**

The National Science and Maths Quiz which airs at 11:00 am is an annual show which brings all High Schools across the country to compete on which school is the best on the basis of Science and Maths. The main objective of the National Science and Maths Quiz has been to promote the study of science and mathematic. Also, the show helps students develop quick and analytic thinking whiles fostering healthy academic rivalry among students in senior high schools. The show even developed a nickname, "Brilla" by high schoolers across the country.

This is a big deal for the entire country as it brings the young and old, alumni and present students of schools together in a bid to support their past schools as well as money and bragging rights for the year. Children who are entering high schools also make decisions based on how the schools perform during the show. The National Science and Maths Quiz remains the longest-running independent production on television in Ghana and since its pilot in 1994, it has maintained that exact time slot.

To elaborate on the magnitude and importance of the show: Ghanaians believe in strong societal bonds; "Be your brother's keeper," "take care of whoever is next to you or around you." And people who attend the same school technically become brothers or sisters or better still a strong fraternity of which an individual would gain preferential treatment in a job interview, in gaining a contract and even societal status. Therefore during the show, alumni tune in at work to watch their alma mater perform, whiles the kids rush home from school to watch the show. It is undoubtedly one of the most successful shows of all time in Ghana. Basically, people could relate and connect with the show as it involved the their schools and healthy competition amongst them makes life rather exciting.

Though the National Science and Maths Quiz has been an important part of the Ghanaian child's story, we must consider that it only focuses on Maths and Science which is a problem. Over the years, we have seen how professions are considered more noble than others. Professions such as being an accountant, engineer, computer scientist, mathematician or statistician are respected more than being a musician, an actor, a poet, a dancer. This idea could have stemmed from a certain group of people's thinking that the former professions are better and the pay is more. This I think may be as a result of someone giving us his idea of what a noble profession is. But with globalisation and the availability of resources, we can see that each of the above professions have a good chance of making one successful. A fair balance is genuinely what this paper seeks to discuss; after all the science and maths does, a good movies, or some relaxing music to end the day makes it all better.



## **CURRENT GHANAIAIAN SHOWS BEING ENJOYED BY CHILDREN.**

In spite of the seemingly deteriorating aspect of the culture, there is the desire for Ghanaian content amongst the young and old within the country. There have been a good number of successful Ghanaian shows that literally took the entire country by storm and which

### **Shows:**

#### **Talented Kidz**



### **Synopsis**

Talented Kidz is a one hour 30 minutes programme Ghanaian reality television series on TV3 Network. It is a talent show that features children between the ages of 7 and 12 to display skills, tricks, talents and abilities competing for the advertised top prize for GHC 10,000 cash, GHC 6,000 educational fund and products from sponsors of the competition. Among its significant features, it has given and still gives an opportunity to talented kids in different fields which are not necessarily taught in schools whiles providing splendid entertainment by kids for

kids and the entire family. The results are decided by audience vote. This format is one that has been used by different reality shows across the world.

This show was created by TV3 for TV3 and the weekly shows are recorded live from the TV3 studios and the show has been renewed for 8 seasons and is currently airing on the TV3 Network. The kids go through several audition stages. The original judging panel consisted of Ms. Amy Frimpong, Mr. Benedict Nii Tetteh Yartey and Efo Kodjo Mawugbe who passed on after a few appearances.



*First time Talented Kidz aired in 2011.*



*Kids showing in their numbers to audition.*





*Kids during auditions*

## **VISUAL ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS ON GTV.**

In Ghana, as at 2018, there have been recorded a total of 15 analog tv stations and about 30 free to air and digital channels across the entire country. According to the Government of Ghana official website, (2018), the most watched TV stations across the country were TV3, Adom TV, GTV (The state owned TV station that airs across the entire country) UTV, Viasat 1 and TV XYZ. And the most watched content across these stations are Telenovelas, Action movies, News and Sports respectively.

GTV still remains one of the most watched stations across Ghana because it reaches the most rural areas in Ghana, where all the other stations do not get access to. A detailed time schedule for GTV, Wednesday 21st February, 2018 was as follows :

### **TV SCHEDULE FOR WEDNESDAY 21ST FEBRUARY,2018**

Time	Title	Description
------	-------	-------------

4:55 am	Station Opening	<i>Welcome to our transmission for Wednesday 21st February, 2018</i>
5:00am	Gospel Music (Paid)	Let's begin the day with some Gospel musical videos at 5:00am
5:30 am	Kingdom Hour	Prophet Steven Akwasi Appiah comes our way with a sermon titled " <i>How to overcome the Spirit of Stagnation</i> "
6:00am	Breakfast Show (Live)	The mid-week edition of our <i>Breakfast Show</i>
9:00 am	African Movie	Our African Movie titled " <i>The Don (pt.3&amp;4)</i> " is at 9 am.
10:10	African Movie	We continue with our second African Movie titled <i>Black Val (Full Story)</i>
12:00 pm	Paid Music	Relax and Enjoy our collection of <i>Local music videos</i>
12:30 pm	Japan Video Topics (2014/2015)	Stories featuring on Japan Video Topics are <i>By Shinkansen to Hokuriku, Kendama's Global Appeal, Reviving town's old Machiya, Eco ships for cleaner seas and Japan- A nation of light.</i>
1:00 pm	Sportlite (Live)	Veronica Commey comes our way with happenings in the world of sports on <i>Sportite</i>
2:00 pm	News	We cross over to News 24 for the first <i>News Bulletin</i> at 2:00pm
3:00pm	Documentary	<i>Comorades of the Kalahari</i> is featured on our documentary <i>Lost Civilisation</i>
4:00pm	National Science and Maths Quiz.(Re-run)	Our quiz mistress, Dr. Elsie Kaufman comes our way with the quarter stage of our quiz competition programme featuring <i>Mawuli SHS, Holy Child SHS and West African SHS.</i>
5:00pm	Cartoon	Join us at 5pm for our cartoon titled <i>Totally Spies</i>
5:30 pm	Adult Education in GA	Join us for a local discussion programme <i>Adult Education in GA</i>
6:00pm	Local News	Join us for <i>Local News</i> at 6pm

6:15pm	Social/Funeral Announcements	Stay tuned in for the <i>Social and Funeral Announcements</i> at 6:15pm
6:30pm	Health Solutions	Dr. Marina takes a look at <i>back and spinal pain</i> on our health programme Health Solutions at 6:30pm
7:00pm	Major News	A recap of the day's important events is featured on our <i>Major News</i> at 7pm
8:00pm	Feature	We need to be extra careful on our roads and high ways. At 8pm, we come your way with a documentary titled <i>Danger on the highway</i>
8:30 pm	Eye on Port (Repeat)	A repeat telecast of events at the ports is featured on <i>Eye on Port</i> at 8:30pm
9:00 pm	Documentary	
10:00 pm	Late News	Tune in for the <i>Late News</i> at 10:00pm
11:00 pm	Speak The Word	Justice Kojo Benti comes our way with the encouraging word of God on <i>Speak The Word</i> at 11:00pm
11:30 pm	Late Movie	Our late movie slated for 11:30pm is titled <i>The Sentinel</i>
12:55 pm	Reflections	The theme for our reflection is <i>when God hears our prayers</i> . It's written and presented by Gladys Ampaabeng
01:00 pm	Close Down	

This is a sample of the weekday schedule that GTV works with. A sample of The weekend schedule would be found in the appendix. According to the schedule manager, nothing significant changes from schedules provided.

Observing the schedule above, we see that the station opens at 4:55 am for the beginning of its production. Ghanaians are noted for being highly religious, whether Christian, Muslim or Traditional, they take it very seriously and they believe the first thing you do when you wake up



is to thank your main object of worship; that explains their religious choice in the first hour of opening. The next program that airs is the morning Breakfast show set up to discuss social, moral, psychological and entertainment-related issues around the country, world and even the home. After the Breakfast Show are a series of African movies, music videos and documentaries from Ghana and around the world. Following this is the Afternoon News, another documentary and then the children's programs which starts from 4:00pm to 5:30pm.

Though GTV remains the nation's TV, it is still one of the least preferred stations in the country, probably due to their less exciting content. As viewed above, they tend to show a lot of programs that the basic Ghanaians cannot relate to because the content is just unrelatable.









### **TV3 SCHEDULE**

The earlier section looked at content on the public stations to show many of the shows are not of Ghana and how much time is given to children. One would hope that the private sector would be somewhat different. Below is an image of the TV3's Saturday schedule. They seem to have a mix of local shows and some foreign shows on their lineup. I would like to believe that Kung Fu Masters is the children's show that airs at 6:00am; otherwise, the closest to a children's show would be the NBA Playoffs. At 5:00 am, they begin their broadcast with a word from Bishop T.D. Jakes, followed by a BBC Broadcast, then Kung Fu Masters. New Day is the broadcasts "breakfast show", followed by Street Gospel; (a collection of gospel music videos), then "Abrabo Pa" ; (a local talk show where panelists discuss social issues in Ghana.) Between 10:30 am to 12 midnight, TV3 shows Kaptured by Women, NBA Playoffs, and a Blockbuster movie are the foreign shows they air on Saturdays. This in my opinion is a safe and strong

arrangement except for the the fact that we cannot pinpoint which of these shows are meant strictly for kids.

SUNDAYMONDAYTUESDAYWEDNESDAYTHURSDAYFRIDAYSATURDAY

Program for Today

	05:00 am	TD Jakes
	05:30 am	BBC
	06:00 am	Kung Fu Masters
	07:00 am	New Day
	10:00 am	Street Gospel
	10:30 am	Abrabo Pa
	11:00 am	Kaptured By Women
	12:00 am	Midday Live - <i>Live Stream</i>
	01:00 pm	NBA PlayOffs
	04:00 pm	Hot Issues - <i>Live Stream</i>
	05: 00 pm	Guys Avenue
	06:00 pm	Agenda

1. Ghana Water Company introduces new billing, payment system


2. 'We won't compromise on admission malpractices' - UCC & its affiliates


3. Yellow Fever confirmed in Brong Ahafo, Volta regions

4. Cape Coast: Beauty queen calls for improvement in education







5. Five perish in Nkawkaw accident

WATCH LIVE TV











\$29.80

	05: 00 pm	Guys Avenue
	06:00 pm	Agenda
	07:00 pm	News 360 - <i>Live Stream</i>
	08:00 pm	BlockBuster
	10:00 pm	News @ 10
	10:30 pm	Pure Local
	12:00 am	End of Transmission


## TV & Programmes

Written by Con-imedia | Published: 12 May 2014 | Category: Uncategorized

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\$29.80

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### Social Connect

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CATCH UP TV



Wake up, feel the sunshine

MONDAY - TO - FRIDAY

6AM



Self disclosure on s....pot ...

Show All

*A picture of TV3's schedule February 2018.*

## CHAPTER 4

### WHAT IS THE PROBLEM- Interviews.

#### 4.1 Independent Producer's Point of View on the GTV

As part of my research, I interviewed an independent producer in Ghana who specialises in rich Ghanaian historical full-time cartoon illustration for books, comics, posters, animated commercials, music videos, short films etc. This company is Parables Animation Studios. The main target group for the company are kids and families. They have produced a wide range of animations aimed at educating and equipping children with morals. Ready to be aired on TV, but not much has aired on TV. Parables Animation has been in existence since 2005, but since their existence, they have successfully aired an entire season of 13 episodes on only GTV.



Around October, 2016, Parables Animation had an arrangement with GTV to air their *Ananse* themed animated cartoon show. The agreement between the broadcaster and the company stated that the broadcaster would first of all run promos on the channel to attract and seek sponsors for the shows and proceeds from the sponsorships would be split amongst the two institutions. After the promos had aired for a month, the actual airing of the show would begin and would last for a total of 13 weeks with re-runs within the week. Thus, in this agreement, the

broadcaster would not buy the entire season but would rather seek sponsorship for the show while it airs. Once it gets sponsorship, then they would pay the content producer.

After the promos had aired, the broadcaster began airing *Ananse* without a sight of any sponsors on the show. The entire season ended without a single sponsor coming on board; thus Parables Animation was not paid. Since they were not paid, they had to view that transaction as “*free publicity*” from the broadcaster as they still got to advertise their other shows on and in exchange for non-payment, they decided not to release the second season to the broadcaster.

Apart from these challenges from the nation’s broadcaster, GTV, the independent producer shared some challenges they face with broadcasters in Ghana. The main problem they stated was funding. Broadcasters did not want to pay for contents from them and the few who wanted to pay, would want to pay way less than the value of their efforts. They also stated that corporate organizations who can assist in funding the production and the airing of these shows by sponsorships on channels have proven difficult to convince unless the producer has some ties or “connections” with the organization. Reactions they receive range from “Not interested” to “Kids stuff are not going to sell.” Furthermore, access to governmental and non-governmental funds in their words have been plagued with bottlenecks. This was the main reason why they did not air on the nation’s broadcasting channel. Amidst all the depressing comments, they did say that perceptions are changing.

#### **4.2 Independent Producer’s Point of View on the Private Broadcasting Channels**

According to the Government of Ghana’s information centre, the country has been migrating from analogue broadcasting to digital broadcasting. The analogue system allowed broadcasters to offer very few and limited programmes with relatively poor quality, lower

broadcasting spectrums and high energy inefficiencies. Therefore the introduction of the digital broadcasting will take care of most of these issues. Some countries like Rwanda and Tanzania completed migration in 2012 and some western countries like America completed migration in 2009.

In simple terms, broadcasters are going to need a lot of content to keep their viewers from flipping to other channels. Upon realizing this, some of these independent producers like Parables Animation started having discussions with some private broadcasters like GHone, UTV, Viasat 1, TV3, eTV, Joy Prime TV. The way they hoped to get their attention was by submitting a pilot reel to the station. If they liked it, the private broadcaster would buy the entire season from the animation company, since they usually have more modern resources than the public broadcaster.

From the experience of the producer, they have been rejected several times with words like, “We will get back to you. Leave your reel with us so we can review it with the boss.” and they would never hear from them again. The one broadcaster who got back to them, UTV, told them they wanted “Disney like animation.” When they asked for further explanation, they were told they preferred Disney’s fluidity kind of animation with all the smooth movements and transitions because that is what would appeal to people.

Parables later found out that after their visits to these TV stations, some would try to set up departments or teams to put together contents, similar to what Parables was creating. A few of these private broadcasters went as far as trying to poach team members from Parables to help them create their own in-house children animations and shows. This is what led them to work with the public broadcaster, GTV.

### **4.3 The Independent Producer's Personal Preference**

Parables Animation mentioned that they prefer selling their content to broadcasters outside Ghana since the people outside Ghana are willing to pay and pay even in dollars. In their own words:

**The little dollars we receive from the international broadcasters is better than the “thank you handshake” you will receive from GTV and the other stations. When the local broadcasters see you on BBC, they will respect you. Sad, but true. (Interview on March 3-5, 2018).**

They also did mention that some form of endorsements from the government would push them way further especially since the animations they create are meant to promote a strong sense of nationalism amongst the people of Ghana, while retelling history and local stories. This could also serve as a supplementary educational tool from the Ministry of Education to schools.

### **TV Station's Point of View**

### **4.4 Public Station's Point of View**

In conversation with Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, they mentioned that they give a small amount of time to children's content; a maximum of about 2 hours which are mostly on Saturdays between 9:30 am to 11:30 am. At the moment, they produce 2 children's programs on their platform. And they produce these two shows simply because they do not have enough funds to produce more. According to them, advertisers prefer to advertise on programs other than children's programs because they believe the actual decision makers are the adults; and the parents make decisions on behalf of the children. So even producers of children's foods and products would rather advertise on adult and “family” programs than on actual children's programs.

This also affects independent children's programs who want to air their content on the channel. The Corporation does not have enough funds to buy the content from independent producers. And since both the channel and the producers are waiting for advertisers to advertise on the program(which the advertisers would rather not do), both parties go home without anything. No one wins.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5.1 ANALYSIS**

One thing that we do not realise is that children have a right to entertainment and African children, primarily Ghanaian children have inadequate doses of good entertainment from within Ghana. Most programs on TV are skewed against children programs, causing the needs of children to be overlooked. A lot of the trending shows for kids tend to be foreign, and the occasional events made for kids are children's parties organized by schools and some media houses. (Omotosho et al., 2014).

It does seem to a large extent that broadcast organizations within Ghana have inadequate resources to produce quality children's content. Thus, one could observe that the airwaves are bombarded with content from all over the world especially America and Britain. The likes of Nickelodeon and Disney seem to be the set standard for what a good children's show should look like; this is because Ghana and Africa as a whole has not been able to provide strong local alternatives for children. The quality of production, the storyline and all other elements put to work in a Disney or Nickelodeon show makes their production seem more desirable and preferred by the kids and children rather than the locally produced ones. The few local programs are not met with the high levels of excitement as their international counterparts.

The storylines and scenes portrayed in foreign shows carry a certain culture, lifestyle and reality which differs from what the African child faces on a daily basis. This breeds an inherent conflict as children try to express themselves with the concepts and ideas picked from foreign media but face very different cultural demands. This is spurring a different culture amongst

children which is driven by the various characters, stories and values from the imported children's programs.

Let's analyze Nickelodeon television in Africa. Nickelodeon channel is available in at least 171 markets and has this includes with large populations in Africa such as Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa because of its availability on the DSTV bouquet . Their very popular characters include SpongeBob, Dora the Explorer, Ben10 and Barney which are of course commonly known amongst kids all over the world. Thus they still maintain the content available for the Western market rather than fashioning it for the African market. As stated earlier, the foreign shows do not take into consideration the everyday life and culture of the Ghanaian child. They have a platform big enough to accommodate some locally produced programs from all parts of Africa such that their target markets across regions could have enough content from all facets of life. Not forgetting the financial resources that could be used to revamp older shows such as *By The Fireside* that took into consideration real Ghanaian culture. There is therefore the need for more investments to be made in the children's media industry in order to sustain African culture amongst children. If this was not important, we would not have Hollywood and Disney investing heavily in children's content.

Preservation of culture is one of the main arguments of this paper or the need to. As more kids are being exposed to this idea of life in the foreign media, they tend to not only lose their culture but their identity as well. This is why the African child exposed to the media should have a strong feel of past and present stories, histories and modern day transformations and lessons. A good example of such a show was "By The Fireside" The program features children gathering around an elderly person to listen to well-dramatized African stories. The program is an

adaptation of part of cultural life of the traditional Ghanaian society where children were made to sit with the elders at moon-times to listen to stories. The program educated children about their traditional cultural life; it imparted wisdom and educates children about good values and morals in the society. Pattern of such a program and other similar ones need to be sustained by being incorporated into the media and taught as part of indigenous communication system in media institutes.

This is not to paint the western culture as terrible; after all culture is diverse and exposure to different cultures allows one to learn and improve, but the core of the culture of a people must be maintained. This is not to say that the media should get rid of the foreign media but a fair balance would be most ideal.



**Images: Pictures from By The Fireside.**



This research also advocates for a conversation to be started concerning promoting children's content in Ghana and across Africa. There are a number of capable producers who can equally produce mind- boggling children's content and there are hungry consumers desiring to feed off content from their own as shown in previous sections. It is without a doubt that financial constraints may be one of the major reasons local producers would rather produce adult content than children's content but there is a large enough market to make massive returns because this is an unexplored area with huge potential. But, the awareness must be created and there is no way that the global media would meet the cultural needs of our children at least, the way we want it to be told. The Convention on the Rights of the Child even suggests that the media disseminate social and cultural material to benefit the child. (United Nation, 1989, Art 17).

As much as this research paper advocates producers to invest in and produce children's content, one must understand the local culture and setting in which the children reside. This means some good amount of research must be conducted to understand the pattern of media reception, choices, consumption patterns and preferences. And as is known as a major issue with African institutions, there is also a lack of research that has been done concerning children in the

African media. (Pecora, Murray and Wartella, 2007) observe that for a period of “20 years of analysed research done on children, there was no discussion on African children published in US academic journals.” Scholars have not looked into this area either. How the media can effectively accomplish the tasks assigned to it by the world body in respect of child rights in Africa in particular requires rigorous research. This can only be done by academics in African institutions whose interests lie in children and media related issues.

## **CONCLUSION**

Throughout the paper, we identified shows within Ghana that have been successful on the Ghanaian front, children shows that have been successful on the Ghanaian front and how much little time is given to children content on popular TV stations such as TV3 and GTV. The point we tried to make is that, there has been a history of successful shows in Ghana but why is little attention given to children’s content on TV? And as little attention is given to local children’s content, more attention is given to foreign content which is a problem. It is time we create a discussion concerning children’s representation on TV. Ghana and Africa as a whole has so much potential and everyone says this about the country and continent. Potential we wait for other institutions and individuals to help us develop.

In the first chapter, I discussed the motivation behind the paper which stems from the negative perception that the world has on Africa and how Africans try to cross unfriendly waters to reach the Western world because of the perceived beauty and financial strength of the Western world. In the second chapter, I run through various literature that has been covered by other scholars in the fields of representation of children, cultural and media imperialism and the political economy of the media in Africa at large and Ghana. These scholars attest to the

importance of the media in framing and moulding the minds of children. I uncovered that media ownership does determine how much of what goes on air and how clearly African media has not given children the right doses of entertainment but rather attention is given to politics and adult programs.

In Chapter 3, I discuss my methodology and various contents used in analysing the data. I begin by looking through the history of media and TV shows in Ghana. From the primary discovery in this chapter and from the data, I run through tv schedules of two different TV stations and compare the different contents on both stations and I discover that their contents are very similar in relation to the foreign content available on the channel and how little time they both give to children's content. I uncover that there were some great shows that were being enjoyed by the Ghanaian and because there were not many options of TV stations, there may have been a better balance of TV shows. I uncover that it seems children TV contents may have had a better spread than current Ghana. I run through the various demographics in Ghana and give a description of the average Ghanaian child. I go further to discuss how TV stations are run in Ghana and how administration of advertising affects and decides what goes on on TV. In this chapter I weigh in on individual successful shows like *"Things we do for love," "By the Fireside" and "Talented Kidz"*. I discuss that these shows were successful primarily because of the amount of support they received from different organizations. This leads to the analysis in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 4, I analyse the content and discuss that this research also advocates for a conversation to be started concerning promoting children's content in Ghana and across Africa. There are a number of capable producers who can equally produce mind- boggling children's

content and there are hungry consumers desiring to feed off content from their own as shown in previous sections. It is without a doubt that financial constraints may be one of the major reasons local producers would rather produce adult content than children's content but there is a large enough market to make massive returns because this is an unexplored area with huge potential. But, the awareness must be created and there is no way that the global media would meet the cultural needs of our children at least, the way we want it to be told. The Convention on the Rights of the Child even suggests that the media disseminate social and cultural material to benefit the child. (United Nation, 1989, Art 17). There is hope and a lot of room to make significant changes in the media in favour of children and children's TV. If this was not important, Black Panther would never have been a big deal!

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## APPENDIX

Name	Description
Ananse	An Akan spider like character who doubles as a human and tricks people. He is popular in West African stories and is used to teach morals to kids. Etc.
