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Viewers' Perception of the Influence of Afrobeat Music Broadcasts on HIP TV on Youth in Benue State, Nigeria

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Abstract
This study examines the perceptions of youth in Benue State, Nigeria, regarding the influence of Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV, with particular focus on language use. The research revealed a high level of exposure to Afrobeat music among Benue State youth, with music platforms such as Hip TV playing a significant role in their consumption. The study employed a quantitative survey research design, with data collected from a sample of 292 respondents using a questionnaire. The data were analysed using descriptive statistical tools. The study also found that youth perceive Afrobeat music as having a positive influence on their language use, particularly in terms of vocabulary, slang, pidgin, pronunciation, and the adoption of catchphrases and wordplay. The findings align with existing theories such as Social Learning Theory and Cultivation Theory, suggesting that prolonged exposure to music media can shape language use and cultural behaviours. The study highlights a disconnect between the language used in Afrobeat music and the cultural norms of Benue State, indicating a shift in the youth's perception of acceptable language use. The recommends among others that the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and all other broadcast regulatory bodies should ensure proactive censorship of music lyrics to prevent unwholesome Afrobeat music from getting to young people. Broadcast media establishments as watchdogs of the society should thoroughly scrutinizing the lyrics of Afrobeat music before broadcasting it.

Keywords: Afro Beats, Music, Viewers' Perception, Language use, Youth, Television,

Introduction

The rise of Afrobeat music as a dominant cultural force in Nigeria is undeniable, particularly among the youth. Afrobeat, a contemporary form of Nigerian hip-hop, has transcended its traditional boundaries to achieve significant global recognition and influence. Recently, several Afrobeat stars, such as Burna Boy, Davido, Wizkid, Yemi Alade, Ayra Starr, Asake, and Seun Kuti, have received nominations for the Grammy Awards, with a few even winning the prestigious accolade. Afrobeat music is arguably Nigeria's most exported content, providing job opportunities for many and contributing to the general economic growth of the nation. Liadi and Omobowale (2011, p. 469) highlight the immense economic impact of Nigeria's music industry,

which generates tens of billions of naira annually from the sales of music CDs, VCDs, streaming, and concert tickets.

Broadcast media, particularly music-focused platforms like Hip TV, have played a crucial role in amplifying the reach of Afrobeat. By providing extensive airtime to Afrobeat music videos and programmes, Hip TV has positioned itself as a significant player in promoting the genre to a broad audience. Adeyemi (2009) observes that the high consumption of local music, such as Afrobeat, has influenced Nigerian media to prioritise indigenous music over international counterparts, further entrenching the genre's appeal among youths. Despite the longstanding presence of Afrobeat in Nigeria's musical landscape, its recent surge in popularity among youth invites inquiry into the factors driving this phenomenon. Writers such as Bennett (1999) and Mitchell (1996) highlight the globalisation of hip-hop and Afrobeat, while Omojola (2006) and Onyeji (2002) point to demographics as critical factors. Abati (2009, p. 35) adds a postmodern perspective, suggesting that Afrobeat resonates with the youth due to their tendency to reject traditional material culture and embrace contemporary expressions.

In Nigeria, Afrobeat music is more than entertainment; it has become a significant cultural marker with far-reaching implications for youth behaviour, language, and identity. Liadi and Omobowale (2011, p. 470) argue that the genre's widespread consumption influences the normative values of Nigerian youths. Given its prominence in media broadcasts, the influence of Afrobeat music, particularly as disseminated by Hip TV, raises questions about its impact on youth culture and perceptions. This study seeks to examine viewers' perceptions of the influence of Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV on youths in Benue State, Nigeria. By investigating how these broadcasts shape youth attitudes and behaviours, this research aims to provide insights into the cultural and social impact of Afrobeat music as mediated through television programming.

Statement of the Problem

Afrobeat music has emerged as a defining element of Nigerian youth culture, providing a platform for self-expression and group identity. Prior research (e.g., Okpokwasili, 2020; Ozoaghuta, 2020) has established that youth often use Afrobeat to articulate their social identity, with popular music shaping their choices in dress, speech, and social behaviours. While this cultural influence offers avenues for creativity and self-expression, it also raises concerns about its potential impact on behaviour and values. Hip TV, a prominent music broadcast channel in Nigeria, plays a key role in disseminating Afrobeat music to a wide audience, including youths in Benue State. However, the extent to which these broadcasts influence youth language use—through repeated exposure to music lyrics, slang, and cultural expressions—remains unclear. This study focuses on Benue youth, a demographic significantly influenced by popular culture, to examine how Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV shape their language use.

Objectives of the Study

i. To determine the level of exposure of youths in Benue State to Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV.
ii. To examine the perceptions of youths in Benue State regarding the influence of Afrobeat music broadcasts on their language use.

iii. To identify how Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV influence language use among youths in Benue State.

Literature Review

Afrobeat Music

Afrobeat, also known as Afro-pop or Afro-fusion, is an umbrella term used to describe popular music from West Africa and the diaspora that initially developed in Nigeria, Ghana, and the UK in the 2000s and 2010s. Afrobeat is less of a distinct style and more a descriptor for the fusion of sounds emerging from Ghana and Nigeria. According to Leila (2015), genres such as hiplife, juju music, highlife, and Naija beats, among others, were amalgamated under the 'Afrobeat' umbrella. The styles of music that make up Afrobeat largely began in the late 1990s and early 2000s. With the launch of MTV Base Africa in 2005, West Africa was provided a large platform through which artists could grow. According to Edu (2014), artists such as MI Abaga, Naeto C, and Sarkodie were among the first to take advantage of this, although most of the artists were merely interpreting hip-hop and R&B.

Before this, groups such as Tribesmen, Plantashun Boiz, and Remedies were early pioneers who fused modern Western influences from hip-hop and R&B with local melodies. While this allowed them to build local audiences, it limited their reach due to language barriers. P-Square released their album *Game Over* in 2007, which was unique for its use of Nigerian rhythms and melodies. Meanwhile, artists like Flavour N'abania found success by embracing older genres, such as highlife, and remixing them into a more modern style, as seen in his song "Nwa Baby (Ashawo Remix)". By 2009, artists within the growing scene were beginning to achieve star status across the continent and beyond.

In most cases, Afrobeat is primarily produced in Nigeria, Accra, and London. Furthermore, Adegoke (2019) states that Afrobeat is a genre that developed in the 1960s and 1970s, drawing influences from Fuji music and Highlife, mixed with American Jazz and Funk. The term was notably coined by Nigerian Afrobeat pioneer Fela Kuti. Afrobeat has risen globally, with Adegoke (2019) adding that its growing popularity in the US has even reached music radio stations, which began airing Afrobeat tracks—something they would not have done previously.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Several studies have explored the influence of Nigerian music, particularly the Afrobeat genre, on youth behaviour, attitudes, and perceptions. Many of these studies indicate that Afrobeat music significantly impacts areas such as fashion, language, crime, and violence among Nigerian youth in various parts of the country. For example, Ekoh (2017) investigated the influence of music videos and popular culture on youth social behaviour in Nigeria. The study found that 232 respondents agreed that Nigerian music videos lacked moral impact, while 250 respondents believed such videos influenced violent behaviour. Additionally, 174 respondents associated music video consumption with an increase in smoking habits, and many noted that music videos promote deviant behaviours. The study recommended government censorship and industry self-regulation to reduce the proliferation of explicit and culturally inappropriate content.

Similarly, Nwankwo (2013) examined the connection between popular music and youth violence, drawing from social learning and cultivation theories. The study revealed that youth are

influenced by violent lyrics and crime scenes in music videos. Nwankwo argued for proactive censorship measures to prevent harmful content from reaching young audiences. Ogakason (2017) focused on secondary school students' television viewing habits, finding that exposure to unsupervised and restricted programmes with unsuitable content negatively influenced habit formation and cognitive development. The study recommended parental and guardian control of television access and viewing frequency to mitigate these effects. Ngobili and Agbo (2021) analysed the intersection of criminality, violence, and Nigerian popular music, identifying the glamorisation of internet fraud, cybercrimes, money rituals, and violence in the lyrics of popular songs. The study highlighted the detrimental societal impact of such music, including its role in shaping youth behaviour and language use.

Similarly, Ozoaghuta (2020) investigated the effects of popular music videos on undergraduate students' academic performance. The findings showed that pop music promotes behaviours such as sexual promiscuity, clubbing, and partying, which negatively affect academic performance and contribute to drug addiction and teenage pregnancy. Okpokwasili (2020) used a mixed-methods approach to examine the influence of popular music lyrics and videos on youth social lives in Nigeria. The study concluded that Nigerian pop music significantly contributes to negative outcomes, such as violence, drug abuse, and sexual immorality. Ogunnaike and Akoja (2020) explored the relationship between hip-hop music and undergraduates' perceptions of social vices, identifying themes such as premarital sex, drug use, female debasement, and indecent dressing in sampled lyrical content. Onyegiri (2018) analysed Nigerian music videos' representations of Nigerian culture using an experimental design. The findings revealed that both control and experimental groups perceived Nigerian music videos as misrepresenting Nigerian culture, portraying it in a negative light. Chukwuma and Onwuekwe studied the influence of hip-hop music on undergraduate students in Delta State. Their findings revealed that hip-hop music's prevalent themes—nudity, seductive dancing, and immodest dressing—are particularly influential on female youths, who aspire to emulate the immoral behaviours depicted in these videos.

These studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the broad influence of Nigerian music on youth. However, there is a research gap in examining how Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV, in particular, influence youth language use and communication patterns in specific localities such as Benue State. This study seeks to fill this gap by focusing on youth perceptions in this region and analysing the role of Afrobeat music in shaping their linguistic and cultural expressions.

Theoretical Framework

Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory, also known as the "Observational Learning" theory, was proposed by Albert Bandura in 1977. The theory posits that people learn from one another through observation, imitation, and modelling. It is often regarded as a bridge between behaviourist and cognitive learning theories because it encompasses attention, memory, and motivation. According to Bandura (1977), social learning theory explains human behaviour in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural, and environmental influences.

Moreover, social learning theory asserts that both children and adults are often influenced by observing others, both directly and through the media (Malamuth and Impett, 2001). In line with social learning theory, the internet plays a role in children's learning processes, serving as a source of information and a vehicle for behaviour learning. Social learning theory has sometimes been referred to as a bridge between behaviourist and cognitive learning theories because it incorporates attention, memory, and motivation. The observational learning theory is crucial for this study as it explains how television programmes and content can significantly shape the social lives of viewers, especially younger viewers. This implies that youths who regularly tune into Hip TV to watch trending Afrobeat music and hear its lyrics may become attracted to these lyrics or slang, retaining and reproducing them in their everyday interactions and dealings.

Cultivation Theory

The cultivation theory was developed by George Gerbner and Larry Gross of the University of Pennsylvania in 1976. It is a social theory that examines the long-term effects of television. According to Cohen and Weimann (2002), the theory states that the more time people spend "living" in the television world, the more likely they are to believe the social reality portrayed on television. In its basic form, cultivation theory suggests that exposure to television over time subtly "cultivates" viewers' perceptions of reality. This cultivation can impact even light viewers of television, as the influence on heavy viewers extends to the entire culture. Gerbner and Gross (1976, p.175) opine that "television is a medium of socialisation for most people into standardized roles and behaviour. Its function is, in a word, 'enculturation.'" Cultivation theory is significant for a better understanding of the findings of this study, as it aims to unveil the long-term effects of constant or heavy television exposure. According to the theory, consistent exposure to programme content on television can create an illusion of such content in the daily lives of viewers. In other words, viewers could gradually become acculturated and exhibit traits from the content they are constantly exposed to, whether positive or negative. Therefore, it implies that constant exposure to Afrobeat lyrics on Hip TV may influence the language use of youths in Benue State.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative survey research design. According to Nwodu (2006, p. 7), "the survey research works on the premise that a given population is too large for any researcher to realistically observe all the elements of the population." The target population consisted of youths in Benue State. A purposive sample of 300 respondents was selected, focusing specifically on individuals who watch Hip TV and follow Afrobeat music broadcasts. To ensure adequate representation, the sample size was evenly distributed across the three senatorial zones of Benue State. In each zone, one Local Government Area (LGA) was randomly selected, resulting in three LGAs being chosen as the focal areas for the study. Data collection was conducted through the face-to-face administration of structured questionnaires. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistical tools, including frequencies and simple percentages, with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This approach facilitated a comprehensive interpretation and presentation of the findings.

Data Presentation and Analysis

A total of 300 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, but only 292 were valid and used for analysis. Specifically, six copies were incomplete, while two others were improperly filled out,

resulting in a total of eight unusable copies. Therefore, 292 completed questionnaires were used for data analysis.

Table 1: Respondents' Demographic Information

Variable	Frequency (*n=292)*	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	202	69.2
Female	90	30.8
Ages		
18-25	154	52.7
26-30	112	38.3
31-35	26	9
Occupation		
Civil Servant	70	24
Trader	62	21.2
Student	151	51.7
Farmer	9	3.1

n=292

Table 1: presents a detailed profile of the participants in the study, highlighting key factors such as sex, age, occupation, and educational qualification. In terms of **sex**, the sample had a larger proportion of male respondents, with 202 (69.2%) males compared to 90 (30.8%) females. This significant gender disparity indicates that male youth in Benue State may be more engaged with Afrobeat music and the broadcasts on HIP TV, which could influence the interpretation of the results, particularly in terms of gendered perceptions of music content and its societal effects. The age distribution reveals that the majority of the respondents (154 or 52.7%) are between the ages of 18-25 years, with 112 (38.3%) falling within the 26-30 age bracket, and a smaller group of 26 respondents (9%) aged 31-35. These findings suggest that the primary audience for Afrobeat music and HIP TV broadcasts in Benue State consists of young adults. This is particularly relevant as this age group is often considered highly impressionable, and their perceptions and consumption of Afrobeat music may be strongly shaped by media broadcasts, potentially influencing their social behaviors, fashion trends, and attitudes towards violence, crime, and other themes often present in Afrobeat music. Regarding occupation, the majority of respondents are students (151 or 51.7%), which aligns with the high percentage of respondents in the 18-25 age group. This indicates that the study's participants are primarily from an academic background, which may influence their exposure to Afrobeat music, as students often engage with contemporary music genres both for entertainment and social identity. Civil servants (70 or 24%) and traders (62 or 21.2%) also represent significant groups, suggesting that Afrobeat music has a broad appeal that cuts across different sectors of society. However, the small number of farmers (9 or 3.1%) highlights that the study's focus on youth in urban areas may be more reflective of media consumption habits in such environments, rather than rural populations.

Table 2: Respondents' Level of Exposure to Afrobeat Music on Hip TV

Response Item	Frequency (*n=292)*	Percentage (%)
To what extent do you like Afrobeat music?		
Low extent	18	6.2%
Moderate extent	38	13.0%
High extent	92	31.5%
Very high extent	144	49.3%
To what extent do you follow the Afrobeat music industry?		
Low extent	14	4.8%
Moderate extent	28	9.6%
High extent	97	33.2%
Very high extent	153	52.4%
To what extent do you listen to Afrobeat music?		
Low extent	10	3.4%
Moderate extent	20	6.8%
High extent	95	32.5%
Very high extent	167	57.2%
To what extent do you watch Afrobeat music on Hip TV?		
Low extent	15	5.1%
Moderate extent	30	10.3%
High extent	98	33.6%
Very high extent	149	51.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 4 presents the respondents' level of exposure to Afrobeat music on Hip TV. In terms of liking Afrobeat music**,** a large proportion of respondents expressed a strong preference for it. Specifically, 49.3% of respondents indicated a "very high extent" of liking, while 31.5% reported a "high extent." In total, 80.8% of respondents expressed at least a moderate level of liking for Afrobeat music, demonstrating its strong appeal. When asked about their followership of the Afrobeat music industry**,** 52.4% of respondents reported a "very high extent" of following the industry, while 33.2% indicated a "high extent." This suggests that the Afrobeat music industry commands significant attention, with 85.6% of the respondents following it to some degree. Regarding the listening habits of respondents, the majority (57.2%) stated they listen to Afrobeat music to a "very high extent," and 32.5% reported doing so to a "high extent." Combined, these figures suggest that 89.7% of respondents engage with Afrobeat music regularly, indicating its widespread presence in their daily lives. The respondents' viewership of Afrobeat music on Hip TV shows similar trends. Over half of the respondents (51.0%) watch Afrobeat music on Hip TV to a "very high extent," while 33.6% indicated a "high extent." Overall, 84.6% of the respondents watch Afrobeat music on the platform. The data imply that a high level of interest and exposure to Afrobeat music among the youth in Benue State.

Table 3: Respondents' perception on the extent Afrobeat Music Broadcast on Hip TV influence Language use

Response Item	Frequency *(n=292)*	Percentage (%)
Do you think Afrobeat music lyrics have any influence on your language use?		
Yes	180	61.64
No	80	27.40
Not sure	32	10.96
Do you use slang or phrases from Afrobeat songs in your everyday speech?		
Yes	150	51.37
No	100	34.25
Not sure	42	14.38
How often do you find yourself mimicking lyrics or phrases from Afrobeat songs?		
Rarely	40	13.70
Once in a while	90	30.82
Sometimes	80	27.40
Occasionally	50	17.12
Always	32	10.96
Do you feel Afrobeat music promotes positive or negative language use among youth?		
Positive	160	54.79
Negative	60	20.55
Neutral	72	24.66

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The data presented in Table 2 the impact of Afrobeat music on language use. A significant majority, 61.64%, believe that Afrobeat music lyrics influence their language use, with 27.40% stating that there is no such influence, and 10.96% being unsure. When it comes to using slang or phrases from Afrobeat songs in everyday speech, 51.37% of respondents admit to incorporating these expressions, while 34.25% do not, and 14.38% are uncertain. Regarding the frequency of mimicking Afrobeat lyrics or phrases, 30.82% do so once in a while, while 27.40% engage in this behavior sometimes. A smaller proportion, 17.12%, occasionally mimics lyrics, while 13.70% do so rarely, and 10.96% always imitate Afrobeat lyrics. Lastly, opinions on the influence of Afrobeat music on youth language use are generally positive, with 54.79% believing it promotes positive language, 20.55% seeing it as negative, and 24.66% taking a neutral stance. These findings suggest that Afrobeat music has a notable influence on both the language and communication patterns on the youth in Benue state.

Table 4: How Afrobeat Music Broadcasts on Hip TV influence Language Use Among Youth in Benue State

Nature of Influence	Frequency *(n=292)*	Percentage (%)	Ranking
Slang	180	61.64%	1
Use of Pidgin	160	54.79%	2
Choice of words	140	47.95%	3
Pronunciation	120	41.10%	4
Catchphrases	110	37.67%	5
Wordplay or puns	90	30.82%	6
Sentence construction	80	27.40%	7

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The data presented in Table 4 reveal the influence of Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV on language use among youth in Benue State. The most significant influence is slang, with 61.64% of respondents indicating it plays a key role in their everyday language, ranking it first. Pidgin follows closely at 54.79%, reflecting the widespread incorporation of this form of communication. The choice of words is influenced in 47.95% of cases, ranking third, indicating that Afrobeat music impacts the vocabulary of the youth. Pronunciation ranks fourth at 41.10%, suggesting that the way words are articulated in Afrobeat songs is also being adopted. Catchphrases, at 37.67%, show that certain popular phrases from the music are commonly used, while wordplay or puns (30.82%) and sentence construction (27.40%) have a slightly lesser influence, though still notable. The data imply that Afrobeat music has a substantial effect on the language used by youth, particularly in terms of informal speech and expressions.

Discussion of Findings

The first objective of the study was to determine the level of exposure of Benue State youth to Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV. The findings revealed that Afrobeat music is highly popular among the youth in Benue State. This is consistent with existing studies (Ozoaghuta, 2020; Onyegiri, 2018), which have shown a high consumption of Afrobeat music among young Nigerians. Literature suggests that Nigerian youth access Afrobeat music via streaming platforms, social media, and dedicated music and entertainment television stations, including Hip TV.

The second objective of the study was to examine the perception of youth in Benue State regarding the influence of Afrobeat music broadcasts on their language use. The findings revealed that the youth perceive Afrobeat music as significantly influencing their language use, with the overall impact being viewed as positive. This aligns with several studies (Ogunnaike & Akoja, 2020; Onyegiri, 2018; Ekoh, 2017) that have established the role of music, including Afrobeat, in shaping the way young audiences communicate. Many of these scholars argue that audiences often replicate the language used in music in their daily speech and social interactions. This finding further supports the assumptions of Social Learning Theory and Cultivation Theory. Social Learning Theory posits that media and entertainment platforms provide avenues for audiences to learn certain behaviors, while Cultivation Theory suggests that prolonged exposure to television, particularly among youth, cultivates specific cultural behaviors or attitudes. In this study, it was established that there was high exposure to Afrobeat music on Hip TV, and the results indicate that this exposure is linked to the language use of viewers in Benue State.

Furthermore, the findings challenge previous research (Ekoh, 2017; Nwankwo, 2013), which has argued that the influence of music, especially pop music, on language use is negative. In contrast, this study found that the youth perceive the influence of Afrobeat music as positive.

The third objective was to identify how Afrobeat music broadcasts on Hip TV influenced language use among youth in Benue State. The findings show that Afrobeat music has multiple patterns of influence on the language use of youth in Benue State. Specifically, it was found that the music contributed to the adoption of slang, pidgin, and choice of words or vocabulary among the youth. This was followed by the influence on pronunciation, the adoption of catchphrases, wordplay, and puns. These findings support several prior studies (Inyabri, 2016; Nwankpa, 2021; Liadi & Omobowale, 2016), which have indicated the influence of Afrobeat on language use, especially in relation to the growth of Pidgin English and other language elements. This is in line with several studies that have shown a strong connection between exposure to music videos and language use.

Conclusion

The level of viewership of Nigerian Afrobeat music on Hip TV among youths at Benue State University is very high, and this exposure significantly influences their language use. While some negative influences can be observed, particularly in the replication of musical slang used by Afrobeat artists, the youth do not perceive these influences as harmful. Despite the fact that the language in many Afrobeat songs includes vulgar and obscene expressions, the youth in this study did not view these elements negatively. This suggests that, despite the high consumption of Afrobeat music, which frequently features lyrics that contradict several Nigerian cultural norms, including those of Benue State, many youths who access this content via platforms like Hip TV do not find the language or lyrics problematic. This highlights a disconnect between cultural values and the language promoted by popular music, indicating a possible shift in the youth's perception of acceptable language use.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that:

1. The National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), the government, and all other broadcast regulatory bodies should ensure proactive censorship of vulgar or violent music lyrics to prevent unwholesome Afrobeat music from reaching young people.
2. Broadcast media establishments should take on their role and responsibility as effective watchdogs by thoroughly scrutinizing the lyrics of Afrobeat music before broadcasting them for public consumption.
3. While Hip TV broadcasts Afrobeat music, it must ensure a balance between hip-hop, rap music, and other educational and cultural music genres. This approach would help promote socio-cultural values through Afrobeat music.
4. Afrobeat music artists should be cautious and conscious of the lyrics they popularize through their music. Lyrics that can incite immorality, crime, or violence should be permanently abolished.

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