



INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA ON YORUBÁ CULTURE AMONG THE PEOPLE OF EKITI STATE

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Abstract

The Yoruba culture is a well-respected and very rich way of life. It is learned, shared and passed from generation to another generation. There are different ways by which culture can be promoted and preserved especially among the Yorubas. Hence, this study examined the media as a variable for preservation and promotion of Yorùbá culture especially among people of Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study was anchored on the culturalist and gratifications theories. A survey design was adopted for the study with a population of 923,721 residents. A sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Taro Yamane sample size determination technique. The findings demonstrated the intricacies of media portrayals of Yorùbá culture, underlining the necessity for genuine, respectful, and equitable representations. The study revealed that mainstream media can both enhance and destroy Yorùbá cultural heritage. The recommendation offers a holistic media strategy that incorporates traditional and digital media, promoting community-based media and audience-driven cultural content. Media depictions should prioritise accuracy, respect, and equity, while media personnel should undergo cultural sensitivity training to ensure appropriate representations.

Keywords: Cultural preservation, cultural promotion, mass media, media representation, Yorùbá culture

Introduction

In communication, the channel of expression is the medium—plural—media. Particularly in underdeveloped countries like Nigeria (Udomisor & Sonuga, 2012), the mass media are clearly important in forming culture and have been acknowledged as such in modern society. Mass media generally comprise (a) broadcast (electronic) media comprising radio, television and film; (b) printed media comprising newspaper and magazine and; (c) Internet comprising social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Blogs). Media and culture have a complicated relationship whereby media greatly shapes modern culture (Quaye & Sharndama, 2011). In Ekiti State, traditional media including the use of traditional town criers, radio and television have long been vital in spreading cultural knowledge and overcoming generational gaps in understanding. But the advent of digital media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp presents fresh chances for cultural preservation and advancement. Studies have underlined the significance of assessing the influence of these platforms since they offer chances as well as difficulties for promoting cultural sustainability (Udomisor & Sonuga, 2012; Smith, 2013). The mostly agricultural economy of Ekiti and strong traditional institutions offer rich grounds for analysing how media, both conventional and digital, affect the maintenance and advancement of its distinct cultural legacy.



Culture is fundamentally the way of life of a people. It connotes all unique features by which a population is known and classified. Culture, according to Onwuka (2010, p.81) ‘includes all the artefacts, artefacts, values, ideas and ways of doing things that are shared by a people and transmitted between generations.’ The relationship between media and culture is better understood as mediated culture in which mass media exert huge influences on modern society. Quaye & Sharndama (2011) see culture as embracing things concrete-objects we can see, touch and feel such as clothes and artifacts. Sociologists refer to this effect as mediated culture, where media reflect, generate, and shape culture (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008). Research has proven that media have crucial roles in preserving and promoting culture, with many studies undertaken globally (Newman, 2011; Smith, 2013). In Nigeria, studies have focused on the major ethnic groups, notably the Yorùbá (Oso, 2013; Olaleye, 2015). However, these studies have been general in scope, covering the entire Yorùbá-speaking region without digging into specific states in Southwestern region of Nigeria.

The Yorùbá people, largely located in southern Nigeria, have a rich cultural legacy that spans language, traditional behaviours, music, art, and festivals (Olufayo & Jegede, 2014). The role of cultural preservation is crucial to the identity and continuity of Yorùbá history (Adebowale, 2012; Oyelade, 2020). However, increased globalisation and technology improvements have introduced foreign influences that pose challenges to established cultural norms. Ekiti State is one of the Yorùbá-speaking states in Southwest, Nigeria. It was created out of Ondo State in 1996. It is located south of Kwara State and Kogi State; East of Osun State and surrounded by Ondo State in the East and in the South. With sixteen (16) Local Government Councils and the Capital in Ado-Ekiti, the State boasts of rich cultural and traditional legacy conveyed verbally and written from generation to generation. People of Ekiti State are culturally homogeneous with unique dialect of Yorùbá language. Its dialect is slightly different from other surrounding Yorùbá-speaking States. Culturally, Ekiti is extremely rich in culture and arts with around 145 cultural festivals that attract tourists to the State. Significant among the events include *Poroye* Masquerade Festival of Ijan Ekiti, Gbonyin Local Government Area and Udiroko in Ado-Ekiti (Ogunje, 2023). Ekiti State has a rich cultural legacy unique from other Yorùbá states (Ogunje, 2023). Despite its cultural relevance, there is a scarcity of research on the role of media on the preservation and promotion of Yorùbá culture in Ekiti State. This gap in information underlines the necessity for a research that explores the function of media in promoting Yorùbá culture in Ekiti State. Past studies have mostly concentrated on significant Yorùbá cultural hubs, such as Lagos, Oyo, and Osun States (Adebisi & Olagoke, 2018). These studies generally examined the connection between media and cultural tourism, showing how media exposure might boost the visibility of Yorùbá traditions (Ajayi, 2015). However, this attention has inadvertently eclipsed smaller Yorùbá states like Ekiti. Current studies on media and cultural preservation tend to generalise the Yorùbá experience without sufficiently analysing variances in how media affect individual states (Ogunyemi, 2019; Alabi, 2020). The study examined the interaction of media and culture in Ekiti State, evaluating how media might overcome generational gaps in cultural knowledge. It also studied how traditional and digital media cross to either assist or harm cultural preservation in Ekiti State. By filling this gap, this study attempts to provide a complete knowledge of media’s role in conserving Yorùbá culture in Ekiti, contributing to the greater conversation on cultural heritage in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The influence of the media on cultural preservation and promotion is an important issue, particularly in emerging nations like Nigeria (Udomisor & Sonuga, 2012). In Ekiti State, the influence of specific media outlets in conserving and promoting Yorùbá culture has not been fully explored. Existing studies have concentrated on mass media as a whole, but lacks clarity on which medium is more effective in reaching various audiences and fostering cultural preservation (Quaye & Sharndama, 2011). Media representations of Yorùbá culture also provide a crucial problem, as they often reflect broader trends of homogenisation or stereotypes that may not fully capture local cultural identities (Ajayi, 2015; Ogunyemi, 2019). The difficulty of cultural preservation and promotion is further compounded by the fact that existing studies on the topic have been generic in scope, spanning the entire Yorùbá-speaking region without diving into specific states (Oso, 2013; Olaleye, 2015).



The extent to which media contribute to cultural preservation and promotion in Ekiti State remains underexplored. While studies have universally acknowledged media's role in disseminating Yorùbá cultural values (Oso, 2013; Olaleye, 2015), they often focus on urban areas with major media infrastructure and consumers, leaving rural and agrarian communities of Ekiti State mostly overlooked. The limited urbanisation and economic constraints of Ekiti State present particular limitations to media access, which in turn effect how cultural practices are kept and promoted. Audience perceptions of media representations of Yorùbá culture are other essential facets that elicit studies. Studies by Smith (2013) and Alabi (2020) reveal that audience response has a crucial influence in influencing the effectiveness of media in creating cultural identity. However, these studies typically do not capture specific perceptions in underrepresented locations like Ekiti State. The media's role in promoting and preserving Yorùbá culture in Nigeria's Ekiti State is the primary focus of this study. The primary scope of this study revolves around mediated culture through traditional and digital media platforms, such as radio, television, newspapers, magazines, social media, and online forum. This study intends to address the study challenges by exploring the influence of media on the promotion and preservation of Yorùbá culture in Ekiti State. Specifically, the study seeks to find out the dominant media that preserve and promote Yorùbá culture, the nature of media representations of Yorùbá culture in media, the extent of cultural preservation and promotion through mass media, and the audience perceptions of media representations of Yorùbá culture vis-à-vis the media. By examining these gaps, this study attempts to contribute to the existing body of information on the functions of media in promoting culture, while also providing insights into the specific contexts of Ekiti State.

Study Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to examine the influence of media on promotion of Yorùbá culture. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Find out the dominant media for the preservation and promotion of Yorùbá culture.
- ii. Examine the nature of representations of Yorùbá culture in media.
- iii. Ascertain the extent of cultural preservation and promotion through mass media.
- iv. Find out audience perceptions of media representations of Yorùbá culture vis-à-vis the media.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What are the dominant media for the preservation and promotion of Yorùbá culture?
- ii. What is the nature of representations of Yorùbá culture in media?
- iii. To what extent is Yorùbá cultural preservation and promotion is achieved through mass media.
- iv. What are audience perceptions of media representations of Yorùbá culture vis-à-vis the media?

Review of Related Literature

Understanding the Correlations with Media and Culture

The media both reflect societal values and propel cultural change, resulting in a complex interaction between the two. Nigerian media consumption trends highlight this complexity, particularly in both urban and rural areas. According to McQuail (2010), the distinctions between media consumption in rural and urban areas demonstrate how important the media are in forming cultural norms and values. Due to restricted access to technology and communal living, rural communities mostly rely on traditional media such as town criers and oral storytelling (Ojo, 2003). Urban communities, on the other hand, are more exposed to contemporary mass media, which provide a wide range of cultural narratives and international trends. Examples of these media include radio, television, and the Internet. The method that cultural values are assimilated and passed down among Yorùbá-speaking communities varies along with these trends. It is very difficult to preserve cultural continuity in the face of such geographic and demographic variety.

Yorùbá culture is especially preserved and promoted by traditional media. For instance, town criers are well-respected individuals in rural regions who convey important information through culturally relevant messaging mechanism. They frequently use metaphors, proverbs, and non-verbal clues like drumming (Olusola, 2013). In rural areas, these communication channels guarantee that cultural customs continue to be alive and significant. Furthermore, Yorùbá culture places a high value on symbols and nonverbal communication indicators like gestures and tone of voice. According to



Akinfeleye (2011), traditional media, such as town criers and symbolic communication, serve to uphold cultural values and collective identity. Yorùbá customs are embodied, for example, via àrokò (symbolic messages) and visual components in ceremonies or attire. These symbols are incorporated into contemporary media to improve cultural representation; traditional dress and dance are frequently featured in TV series and commercials. Since Hall (1997) notes that encoding and decoding cultural symbols in media reinforces community identification, this process both assures cultural continuity and adapts to modern situations. However, the viability of these conventional approaches may be threatened as younger generations choose digital communication channels (Akinfeleye, 2011).

The Internet and contemporary mass media have further changed Yorùbá culture, providing chances for adaptation and preservation. Particularly among younger generations, social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have emerged as crucial instruments for promoting and exchanging cultures (Akinfolarin, 2017). Urban communities actively use digital platforms to promote Yorùbá music, language, and traditional festivals to a worldwide audience since they have easier access to them. Globalisation has, nevertheless, presented both advantages and difficulties. By combining Yorùbá customs with outside influences, it promotes cultural dynamism through hybridisation, but if not handled appropriately, it can also undermine fundamental cultural values (Adebanwi, 2004). Barber (1997) cautions that media globalisation runs the risk of homogenising civilisations and diminishing the diversity and depth of regional customs. The need for conscious attempts to strike a balance between cultural preservation and adaptation is highlighted by the dual-edged nature of contemporary media.

The importance of both traditional and modern media in transmitting culture, the many ways that people consume media, and the portrayal of cultural symbols all influence the complex relationships that exist between media and culture. In rural areas, traditional media such as town criers, oral storytelling, and symbolic communication are still essential for maintaining cultural continuity and identity. At the same time, Yorùbá culture can reach a worldwide audience due to high signal penetrability of the Internet and contemporary mass media, which offer channels for cultural adaptation. These changes encourage cultural vibrancy, but they also carry hazards, such the loss of traditional values and cultural homogenisation. According to McQuail (2010) and Olusola (2013), maintaining cultural preservation across demographic divisions requires a harmonic fusion of traditional and new media. To overcome these obstacles and provide inclusive, well-balanced platforms for Yorùbá cultural sustainability in a world that is increasingly becoming more globalised, policymakers, cultural stakeholders, and media practitioners must work together.

Media Representations of Yorùbá Culture in Ekiti State

Cultural identity is greatly influenced by the media, especially in Ekiti State when it comes to how Yorùbá culture is portrayed. According to Hall (1997), media portrayals shape how people view cultural customs and practices, frequently serving as both a transformer and a preserver of cultural identity. By highlighting customs like reverence for elders, community living, and celebrations like *Odun Egungun* (Masquerade Festival) and *Odun Ifa* (Ifa Divination Festival), television, radio, and Nollywood films have played significant roles in promoting Yorùbá heritage in Ekiti State (Akpobaro, 2018). Yorùbá melodies, folktales, and proverbs are broadcast on local radio and television stations which further enhances cultural awareness. But as Olatunji (2018) contends, media portrayals frequently oversimplify Yorùbá customs to suit entertainment demands rather than cultural authenticity, igniting discussions about how to strike a balance between mainstream appeal and cultural knowledge.

Although the media have been credited with advancing Yorùbá culture, they have come under fire for fostering false beliefs and stereotypes. Festivals and rituals like Ifa divination and masquerade shows are frequently sensationalised, highlighting superstition and mysticism over their more profound cultural meaning (Akinfeleye, 2011). This emphasis perpetuates unfavourable preconceptions about Yorùbá culture and skews popular perception. According to Barber (1997), this kind of sensationalism distorts the actual significance and depth of these customs, frequently producing a flat and unreliable portrayal. Such depictions can alienate non-Yorùbá audiences and create misconceptions about Yorùbá life, which is why traditional behaviours in Ekiti State are sometimes undervalued in terms of their sociocultural significance.

The homogenisation of Yorùbá culture in the media is another significant problem. Like other parts of Yorùbáland, Ekiti State has its own cultural quirks, such as distinctive languages, holidays, and



customs. A homogenous, "one-size-fits-all" portrayal of Yorùbá culture is produced by media representations, which frequently ignore cultural differences in favour of generic symbols like the Talking Drum and *Agbada* clothing (Adebanwi, 2004). In addition to diluting Yorùbá culture's distinctiveness, this homogenisation distances people from their distinctive ancestry. Because they are given a generalised, simplistic depiction of their past, younger audiences who are exposed to such representations run the risk of losing a connection to their unique cultural identities (Hall, 1997). Media portrayals make it more difficult to appreciate the cultural diversity of places like Ekiti State by ignoring regional variances.

For Yorùbá culture to be preserved and cultural pride to be fostered, media representations must be accurate and authentic. The media have obligations to portray Yorùbá culture in a positive and objective manner, steering clear of sensationalism and stereotypes (Akporobaro, 2018). Cultural knowledge and pride are enhanced by authentic depictions, like as movies on Yorùbá kings or in-depth stories of regional celebrations like *Odun Ogun* (Ogun Festival) (Olusola, 2013). On the other hand, inaccurate information, like inflated descriptions of ceremonies or misrepresentations of history, runs the risk of compromising the general public's comprehension of Yorùbá customs. In order to guarantee that content is accurate and respectful, Akinfolarin (2017) promotes the participation of cultural specialists and regional stakeholders in media production. Additionally, adding Ekiti-specific components, such as regional languages in radio shows, can strengthen cultural identification and help close generational divides.

In Ekiti State, media portrayals have a significant influence on cultural identity, influencing how people view and interact with their Yorùbá ancestry. Cultural pride and unity are strengthened by positive depictions, such as highlighting Yorùbá proverbs and commemorating traditional holidays. However, inaccurate or unfavourable representations can cause cultural alienation, particularly in younger generations whose cultural knowledge is largely derived from the media (McQuail, 2010). Social media sites like Facebook and Instagram have grown to be important venues for both truthful and false depictions of Yorùbá culture. These platforms allow Yorùbá customs to be shared globally, but they also expose viewers to diluted or commercialised versions of their culture (Adebanwi, 2004). To guarantee that content accurately depicts Yorùbá customs while advancing cultural inclusivity and diversity, policymakers and media professionals must cooperate. The media have the obligation to promote cultural understanding by truthfully and respectfully portraying Yorùbá culture (Akporobaro, 2018). In Ekiti State, the media play significant roles in how Yorùbá culture is portrayed and understood. In order to promote a greater understanding of Yorùbá customs, it must tackle the issues of stereotyping, homogenisation, and sensationalism, even though it is an essential platform for promoting cultural heritage. The media may help Ekiti State preserve its cultural identity and pride by emphasising authenticity, working with cultural experts, and portraying the richness of Yorùbá culture.

Mass Media and Cultural Preservation: Examining Roles of Mediated Culture

The act of preserving and advancing cultural heritage, including traditions, rituals, and values, is known as cultural preservation (McQuail, 2010). For Yorùbá customs to be maintained and cultural legacy to be promoted, cultural preservation is essential. As a means of promoting and upholding Yorùbá customs, the media are crucial to cultural preservation (Akporobaro, 2018).

The media offer a variety of tactics for promoting and maintaining Yorùbá customs, making it a potent instrument for cultural preservation. Akinfolarin (2017) asserts that the media may support cultural preservation in a number of ways, such as by publicising cultural events, exhibiting cultural artefacts, and disseminating cultural knowledge. The promotion of Yorùbá cultural legacy in Nigeria has been greatly aided by a variety of media platforms, including print, television, and social media. Because it offers a venue for promoting and conserving cultural heritage, the media play critical roles in cultural sustainability. The media have the ability to influence cultural identity and advance cultural heritage (Hall, 1997). By highlighting Yorùbá customs and practices, promoting Yorùbá literature and language, and giving Yorùbá musicians and artists a stage on which to perform, the media can support cultural sustainability in the context of Yorùbá culture (Akporobaro, 2018).

It is impossible to overestimate the significance of preserving cultural heritage since it gives people in the community a feeling of identity and belonging (McQuail, 2010). Olatunji (2018) asserts that maintaining cultural traditions and fostering cultural diversity depend heavily on the preservation of



cultural heritage. Various media platforms, such as sponsoring cultural events, presenting cultural artefacts, and disseminating cultural information, have played significant roles in Nigeria's efforts to preserve its cultural legacy (Akinfolarin, 2017).

The media have a complicated role in preserving cultural history, presenting both opportunities and difficulties. By highlighting cultural customs and practices, publicising cultural events, and giving musicians and cultural artists a stage on which to perform, the media can support the preservation of cultural heritage (Akpobaro, 2018). The media must be aware of the possible dangers of cultural homogenisation and the extinction of customs, though. Print, television, social media, and the internet are just a few of the media platforms that have played a significant role in Nigeria's efforts to preserve its cultural history (Akinfolarin, 2017). The media contributions to the preservation of Yorùbá culture, however, differ in their strengths and weaknesses; certain media outlets are better at encouraging the preservation of cultural legacy than others (Olatunji, 2018).

The promotion of cultural sustainability by the media is essential to maintaining the relevance of cultural heritage in a world that is changing quickly. By representing and creating cultural meanings, the media can influence cultural identities (Hall, 1997). By fostering cultural pride and offering venues for continuous cultural expression, the media play significant roles in maintaining cultural sustainability. Maintaining and advancing Yorùbá culture, especially among the younger generation, presents a number of opportunities as well as obstacles. One issue is the decline of cultural values brought about by Western culture, which is frequently reaffirmed by international media and the internet (Akinfolarin, 2017). Younger generations can interact with their past in fresh and creative ways through the internet and social media.

Effective Media Platforms for Cultural Preservation

In media studies, the preservation of cultural heritage—especially in relation to the Yorùbá community—has taken centre stage. Yorùbá culture has been preserved and disseminated in large part because to traditional media including print, radio, and television (Akpobaro, 2018). Digital media platforms, which enable more interactive, globalised, and real-time participation, have challenged traditional media, though (Akinfolarin, 2017). Both traditional and modern media channels offer advantages and disadvantages when it comes to conserving Yorùbá culture. Reaching a larger audience is a benefit of traditional media outlets, especially in rural areas where access to digital media is limited (Adebanwi, 2004). However, the capacity of traditional media platforms to interact with audiences and enable bidirectional conversation is constrained. Conversely, digital media platforms have the benefit of enabling bidirectional communication and audience engagement; nevertheless, their capacity to reach a larger audience, especially in rural areas, is constrained (Hall, 1997).

Traditional media continue to play a crucial role in cultural preservation, especially when it comes to reaching older, more established audiences who might not have as much access to digital platforms (Akinfeleye, 2011). However, in order to guarantee the generational transfer of cultural traditions, the changing media landscape need a more dynamic approach that integrates both traditional and digital venues. The use of Yorùbá-language programming on conventional radio stations and Internet streaming services is one example of this, as it promotes inclusivity and guarantees that cultural information is transmitted to both younger and older generations (Olatunji, 2018). In order to evaluate how well media platforms preserve Yorùbá culture, metrics for measuring cultural impact through media are crucial. According to McQuail (2010), the cultural influence of media platforms may be evaluated using indicators including audience reach, engagement, and feedback. Furthermore, the cultural influence of media platforms can be evaluated using criteria like sensitivity, authenticity, and cultural relevance (Akpobaro, 2018). Media professionals and politicians can use these indicators to assess how well media platforms preserve Yorùbá culture and make well-informed decisions about how to increase their cultural impact.

Digital media channels are becoming more and more crucial for conserving Yorùbá culture, especially among youth. Olatunji (2018) asserts that Yorùbá cultural heritage has been successfully promoted among youth using digital media platforms including social media and online forums. Digital media platforms can help maintain Yorùbá culture, but there are drawbacks as well, like the possibility of cultural homogenisation and the extinction of customs (Barber, 1997). Yorùbá culture may be preserved through both traditional and digital media outlets, each of which has special advantages and



disadvantages. Digital media offers a more dynamic, captivating, and worldwide platform for cultural interaction, whereas traditional media offers a reliable, authoritative source of cultural transmission (Olatunji, 2018). In an increasingly digital environment, the sustainable preservation of Yorùbá culture requires a well-rounded and integrated strategy that capitalises on the advantages of both media platforms.

Theoretical Framework

Culturalist Theory

According to the Culturalist Theory, which was developed by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, cultural variations and values influence how people perceive and interact with their surroundings (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1995). According to this theory, which blends aspects of limited-effects and class-dominant theories, people interpret media encounters in their own ways and make their own conclusions (Dean, 2010). The significance of culture in shaping behaviour is emphasised by the culturalist theory, which contends that both individual and group behaviour are influenced by ingrained and persistent cultural differences. In media and communication studies, culturalist theory emphasises how culture shapes people's attitudes, actions, and social relationships (Hall, 1980; Fiske, 1987). It highlights the dynamic interplay between media, culture, and personal agency, challenging the notion of a passive audience. Examining how identity, ideology, and power dynamics affect media consumption and interpretation, the theory also touches on ideas from cultural studies. Individualism against collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and power distance are only a few of the cultural characteristics that Hofstede (2001) claims can be used to understand cultural differences. According to Triandis (1995), these factors explain why individuals from various cultural origins behave and interact differently.

The theory is relevant for the study because the Culturalist Theory provides a useful framework for analysing the impact of media on the promotion and preservation of Yorùbá culture in Ekiti State. According to this idea, cultural variations and beliefs influence how people perceive and interact with their surroundings (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1995). The media exert significant influences on cultural norms and values in Yorùbá society, especially on younger generations (Hall, 1980; Adelowo, 2020). According to the theory, audiences actively participate in evaluating media messages in light of their cultural background (Fiske, 1987). Media outlets play a vital role in Ekiti State's cultural preservation efforts by facilitating the spread of Yorùbá history, music, folklore, and language. The theory also emphasises the possibility of selective interpretation, in which viewers may reinterpret and negotiate content to conform to contemporary influences and international media trends (Fiske, 1987). Gaining knowledge about how Yorùbá audiences in Ekiti interact with media can help one better understand how traditional customs are either upheld or changed in modern society.

Uses Gratification Theory

According to the theory, media are widely accessible platforms. Audiences are the platform's users, and audiences select media to meet certain requirements as well as for social and psychological purposes like education, relaxation, forming relationships with others, and distraction. In Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) approach, audiences actively seek out media content to fulfill their needs and desires (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). Instead of only passively absorbing media messages, this idea highlights the audience's responsibility in choosing and analysing them. According to UGT, people utilise media to satisfy a variety of needs, including knowledge, entertainment, social engagement, and self-identification (McQuail, 2010). The media in Ekiti State's Yorùbá culture provides a forum for teaching traditional values, conserving folklore, and encouraging community involvement. According to the theory, media consumption is a goal-directed activity since people choose media content according to their psychological and social requirements (Rubin, 1983). To strengthen their feeling of identification and belonging, Yorùbá viewers in Ekiti State, for example, could use indigenous media outlets to stay in touch with their cultural history. Numerous studies have used the Uses and Gratification Theory to analyse media consumption trends and their effects, emphasising the role that audience agency plays in the media impact process (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Rubin, 2009).

The theory of Uses and gratification is relevant to the study because it provides useful framework for comprehending how the media affects the promotion and preservation of Yorùbá culture in Ekiti State. Audiences actively choose media to satisfy particular requirements, including knowledge,



entertainment, social connection, and personal identity (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973; McQuail, 2010). By enabling people to connect with their cultural history and strengthen their feeling of identification and belonging, media outlets such as radio, television, and social media play a crucial role in Yorùbá culture's preservation and promotion (Elegbe & Fadipe, 2017; Olatunji, 2018). The influence of media on Yorùbá cultural preservation, however, varies according to the reasons of the audience; some people consume it mostly for amusement, while others do it in search of knowledge and identity reinforcement (Akinlade, Adedayo & Dada, 2021).

Material and Methods

The study adopted a survey design of three senatorial zones in Ekiti State: (a) Ekiti South Senatorial Zone: Ikele-Ekiti and Emure-Ekiti, (b) Ekiti North Senatorial Zone: Ikole-Ekiti and Oye-Ekiti and (c) Ekiti Central Senatorial Zone: Ado-Ekiti and Ijero-Ekiti. These communities were selected to ensure adequate representation of the State's diverse population. The combined population of these areas is estimated at 923,721 residents. A sample of 400 respondents was determined using Taro Yamane sample determination technique. The multi-stage sampling method was employed to select towns in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The process began with identifying three senatorial zones: Ekiti South, Ekiti North, and Ekiti Central. From each zone, specific Local Government Areas were selected, followed by the choice of particular towns. The selected towns include Ikere-Ekiti and Emure-Ekiti from Ekiti South Senatorial Zone, Ikole-Ekiti and Oye-Ekiti from Ekiti North Senatorial Zone, and Ado-Ekiti and Ijero-Ekiti from Ekiti Central Senatorial Zone. This method was adopted to reduce costs, increase accuracy, and allow for a targeted approach. After the application of multi-stage sampling to determine the towns for the selection, simple random sampling technique was used to select the willing respondents for study. The questionnaire structured in 5-Step Likert scale was used for data collection.

Findings:

Survey analysis was based on the retrieved three hundred and ninety-six (396) copies of questionnaire.

Table 1: Demographic Data (N = 396)

Sex of Respondents		
Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Distribution of Respondents		
18 – 22 years	145	37%
23 – 27 years	63	16%
28 – 32 years	102	26%
33 – 40 years	56	13%
41 years and above	30	8%
Male	210	53%
Female	186	47%
Marital Status		
Single	174	44%
Married	222	56%
Occupation of Respondents		
Students	102	26%
Civil Servants	204	51%
Artisans/Traders	90	23%
Senatorial Zones of Respondents		
Ekiti Central Senatorial Zone	145	37%
Ekiti South Senatorial Zone	148	37%
Ekiti North Senatorial Zone	103	26%

Table 1 shows that with 37% of the population between the ages of 18 and 22, younger people predominate, suggesting a range of media consumption patterns, 53% of the respondents being men and 47% being women, the study sample is fairly balanced and guarantees a range of viewpoints on the role of media in cultural preservation. The majority (56%) are married, indicating that opinions on cultural transmission may be influenced by family experiences. Due to disparities in media accessibility, the largest occupational category is civil servants (51%), followed by students (26%), and artisans/traders (23%). Regional representation is ensured by the respondents' equal distribution among Ekiti Central



(37%), Ekiti South (37%), and Ekiti North (26%). The study's validity in evaluating the media's contribution to Yorùbá cultural preservation is reinforced by the sample's diversity.

Table 2: To find out the dominant media that preserve and promote Yorùbá culture (N = 396)

Statement	SA	A	U	SD	D	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
For the preservation of Yorùbá culture, community-based media—such as town hall broadcasts and local radio—are the most reliable sources.	221 (55.8 %)	162 (40.9 %)	03 (0.8 %)	05 (1.3 %)	05 (1.3 %)	4.49	0.7	Accepted
In Ekiti State, articles that support the preservation of Yorùbá cultural heritage are often published in newspapers and publications.	180 (45.5 %)	144 (36.4 %)	10 (2.6 %)	32 (8.1 %)	30 (7.8 %)	4.04	1.22	Accepted
Indigenous Yorùbá music and films on media platforms have contributed more to the preservation of Yorùbá customs among young people.	222 (56.1 %)	155 (39.1 %)	02 (0.5 %)	12 (3.0 %)	05 (1.3 %)	4.46	0.77	Accepted
The advancement of Yorùbá culture in Ekiti State is threatened by the predominance of foreign media content.	140 (35.4 %)	155 (39.1 %)	20 (5.2 %)	31 (7.8 %)	50 (12.6 %)	3.77	1.34	Accepted
The most effective media for promoting and conserving Yorùbá culture in Ekiti State are radio and television stations.	162 (40.9 %)	124 (31.3 %)	20 (5.1 %)	54 (13.6 %)	36 (9.1 %)	3.81	1.34	Accepted
The promotion of Yorùbá culture has benefited more from social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube than from traditional media.	99 (25.0 %)	149 (37.6 %)	25 (6.3 %)	90 (22.7 %)	33 (8.3 %)	3.48	1.31	Accepted
Yorùbá cultural content has become more widely available due to online streaming platforms.	112 (28.3 %)	180 (45.5 %)	15 (3.9 %)	55 (13.9 %)	34 (8.6 %)	3.71	1.25	Accepted

The study findings in Table 2 support the Uses and Gratifications Theory and Culturalist Theory in elucidating the function of media in maintaining Yorùbá culture. The preference of respondents for community-based media (Mean = 4.49, SD = 0.7) in cultural preservation supports the Culturalist Theory's emphasis on active audience interaction. The popularity of native Yorùbá music and films (Mean = 4.46, SD = 0.77) also reflects the Uses and Gratifications Theory, demonstrating that young people actively seek out cultural contents. Publications and newspapers (Mean = 4.04, SD = 1.22) also support learning. Concerns over cultural erosion are raised by the fact that foreign media represent a cultural threat (Mean = 3.77, SD = 1.34). Cultural promotion is further aided by social media (Mean = 3.48, SD = 1.31) and streaming services (Mean = 3.71, SD = 1.25). All things considered, media consumption is still a dynamic process, and in order to successfully conserve Yorùbá culture, a balance between traditional and digital media is needed.

Table 3: To examine the nature of media representations of Yorùbá culture in media (N=396)

Statement	SA	A	U	SD	D	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
In general, Yorùbá culture in Ekiti State is authentically and accurately portrayed in the media.	123 (31.1 %)	185 (46.7 %)	13 (3.3 %)	35 (8.8 %)	40 (10.1 %)	3.89	1.08	Accepted



The mainstream media do not adequately present Yorùbá cultural contents and often misrepresent Yorùbá cultural festivals and ritualism.	128 (32.3 %)	176 (44.4 %)	34 (8.9 %)	33 (8.3 %)	25 (6.3 %)	3.94	1.01	Accepted
The way Yorùbá traditions and rituals are portrayed in Nigerian media helps to create a favourable perception of the culture.	80 (20.2 %)	107 (42.9 %)	34 (8.6 %)	79 (19.9 %)	96 (24.2 %)	3.08	1.41	Accepted
Western culture is given more prominence in Ekiti State's media than Yorùbá cultural heritage.	116 (29.3 %)	132 (33.3 %)	10 (2.5 %)	77 (19.4 %)	61 (15.4 %)	3.52	1.36	Accepted
Yorùbá language and customs are becoming more prevalent in online and digital media output.	123 (31.1 %)	129 (32.6 %)	12 (3.0 %)	75 (18.9 %)	57 (14.4 %)	3.63	1.34	Accepted
Yorùbá cultural values and customs are frequently misrepresented on social media platforms.	108 (27.3 %)	166 (41.9 %)	6 (1.5 %)	56 (14.1 %)	60 (15.2 %)	3.67	1.29	Accepted
Yorùbá culture is usually portrayed in Nollywood films and television series in a stereotypical or exaggerated way.	125 (31.6 %)	100 (25.3 %)	12 (3.0 %)	99 (25.0 %)	60 (15.2 %)	3.49	1.4	Accepted

The study findings in Table 3 corroborate the Uses and Gratifications Theory and Culturalist Theory by highlighting Yorùbá cultural representation in the media. Respondents agree that Yorùbá culture is both accurately and inaccurately depicted in mainstream media (Mean = 3.89, SD = 1.08), which reflects the Culturalist Theory and the audience's active involvement with media material. Additionally, viewers are looking for Yorùbá material on digital platforms which supports the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Mean = 3.63, SD = 1.34). But there are issues with stereotypes in Nollywood films (Mean = 3.49, SD = 1.4) and social media misrepresentation (Mean = 3.67, SD = 1.29). Cultural preservation is further threatened by the dominance of Western culture (Mean = 3.52, SD = 1.36). Although the media are vehicles for promoting culture, issues like false representation and outside influence mean that in order to preserve Yorùbá history, a balance between truthful portrayal and cultural reinforcement is required.

Table 4: To find out the extent of cultural preservation and promotion through mass media. (N = 396)

Statement	SA	A	U	SD	D	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
By promoting Yorùbá traditional behaviours and customs, the media have contributed to lessening cultural incompatibility.	130 (25.3 %)	187 (47.2 %)	03 (0.8 %)	52 (13.1 %)	24 (6.1 %)	3.91	1.12	Accepted
Promoting cultural identity is aided by media programming that uses the Yorùbá language.	100 (25.0 %)	145 (36.6 %)	20 (5.1 %)	96 (24.2 %)	35 (8.8 %)	3.5	1.28	Accepted
Several aspects of Yorùbá culture are vulnerable to extinction despite the existence of mainstream media.	117 (29.5 %)	198 (50.0 %)	06 (1.5 %)	35 (8.8 %)	40 (10.1 %)	3.78	1.2	Accepted
The preservation of Yorùbá cultural heritage has been greatly aided by the mass media.	178 (44.9 %)	150 (37 %)	04 (1.0 %)	25 (6.3 %)	39 (9.8 %)	4.03	1.05	Accepted
The promotion and preservation of Yorùbá culture through mass media is hampered by the impact of foreign media.	111 (28.0 %)	164 (41.4 %)	23 (5.8 %)	64 (16.2 %)	34 (8.6 %)	3.67	1.19	Accepted
The way Yorùbá culture is portrayed in films has a detrimental impact on how people view Yorùbá people.	162 (40.1 %)	143 (36.1 %)	28 (7.1 %)	33 (8.3 %)	30 (7.6 %)	3.82	1.14	Accepted



Youth understanding and enjoyment of Yorùbá traditional traditions have grown due to the influences of social media platforms.	112 (28.3 %)	143 (36.1 %)	10 (2.5 %)	99 (25.0 %)	32 (8.1 %)	3.58	1.26	Accepted
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Table 4 highlights the significance of mass media in safeguarding and advancing Yorùbá culture, in accordance with Culturalist Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory. The Culturalist Theory is demonstrated by the media's impact on cultural attitudes and social connections, with respondents agreeing that media fosters Yorùbá traditions (Mean = 3.91, SD = 1.12) and facilitates the preservation of cultural legacy (Mean = 4.03, SD = 1.05). Nonetheless, apprehensions regarding cultural extinction endure notwithstanding media visibility (Mean = 3.78, SD = 1.2), indicating that media alone are inadequate for comprehensive preservation. The Uses and Gratifications Theory is evident in audience engagement with Yorùbá content, which enhances cultural identity, especially via Yorùbá-language television programming (Mean = 3.5, SD = 1.28) and social media (Mean = 3.58, SD = 1.26). Nonetheless, the influence of foreign media (Mean = 3.67, SD = 1.19) and adverse depictions in films (Mean = 3.82, SD = 1.14) create obstacles, highlighting the necessity for equitable representation to facilitate effective cultural preservation.

Table 5: Find out audience perceptions of media representations of Yorùbá culture vis-à-vis the media (N = 396)

Statement	SA	A	U	SD	D	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
Ekiti State residents' perceptions of Yorùbá culture are adversely impacted by foreign media output.	130 (32.8%)	122 (30.8 %)	19 (4.8%)	102 (25.8%)	23 (5.8%)	3.65	1.28	Accepted
In Ekiti State, Yorùbá culture is fairly and impartially represented by the media.	110 (27.8%)	137 (34.6 %)	11 (2.8%)	102 (25.8%)	36 (9.1%)	3.41	1.29	Accepted
In Nigerian television series and films, Yorùbá customs are frequently portrayed in an erroneous or exaggerated manner.	167 (42.2%)	115 (29.0 %)	10 (2.5%)	77 (19.4%)	27 (6.8%)	3.79	1.2	Accepted
More media initiatives devoted to truthfully portraying and promoting Yorùbá cultural heritage are required.	133 (33.6%)	198 (50.0 %)	02 (0.5%)	34 (8.6%)	29 (7.3%)	4.05	0.98	Accepted
My understanding and appreciation of Yorùbá customs have improved as a result of the media's portrayal of the culture.	183 (46.2%)	153 (38.6 %)	08 (2.0%)	30 (7.6%)	22 (5.6%)	4.1	0.94	Accepted
Stereotypes, not reality, frequently shape how Yorùbá culture is portrayed in the media.	109 (27.5%)	98 (24.7 %)	10 (2.5%)	120 (30.3%)	59 (14.9%)	3.29	1.41	Accepted
The younger generation now has a more favourable opinion of Yorùbá culture thanks in part to social media.	186 (47.0%)	145 (36.6 %)	03 (0.8%)	24 (6.1%)	38 (9.6%)	4.03	1.08	Accepted

Table 5 findings show that while Nigerian media often misrepresent customs (Mean = 3.79, SD = 1.2), international media have a detrimental impact on how Yorùbá culture is represented (Mean = 3.65, SD = 1.28). Many respondents agree that media enhance comprehension of Yorùbá practices, according to the Uses and Gratification Theory, which emphasises how people use media for cultural enrichment (Mean = 4.1, SD = 0.94). Youth perceptions are likewise believed to be positively influenced by social media (Mean = 4.03, SD = 1.08). However, the way that media consumption affects cultural identity is better explained by the Culturalist Theory. Even though the media are crucial to the preservation of



Yorùbá culture, false representations continue to exist, which emphasises the necessity of truthful depictions to uphold cultural heritage and dispel prejudices.

Discussion of Finding

The study examines how media preserve and promote Yorùbá culture, emphasising the use of both digital and traditional outlets. It is acknowledged that mainstream media—such as newspapers, magazines, Yorùbá music, films, and community-based media—are crucial for promoting cultural identity. Furthermore, social media and streaming services have significant impact on promoting culture, especially among young people. The results highlight the audience's proactive search for cultural contents and the value of community-based media in culture preservation, which is consistent with the Uses and Gratifications Theory and Culturalist Theory. But there are issues with preconceptions, cultural decay, and the impact of Western media, which can distort or minimise Yorùbá customs. Yorùbá culture can be positively promoted by the media, yet it can also reinforce prejudices and false information. In particular, social media can be a double-edged sword that promotes cultural pride while also fuelling misinformation. In order to preserve culture, participants emphasised the importance of truthful, courteous, and equitable representations in the media. The study emphasises how important it is to conserve Yorùbá culture through inclusive policies, ethical media depiction, and community participation. Maintaining cultural pride and identity requires a well-rounded strategy that incorporates both conventional and digital media. The study advances our knowledge of how the media shapes cultural heritage and advocates for ethical media practices to preserve Yorùbá customs. The media can improve cultural pride, identity, and emotional health by encouraging respectful and authentic representations.

Conclusion

This study illustrates the multifaceted influence of media on Yorùbá culture conservation and promotion. The findings underline the need for realistic, respectful, and fair media portrayals of Yorùbá culture. Community engagement, media influence, and inclusive approaches are vital for conserving and promoting Yorùbá culture. A balanced media strategy, encompassing conventional and new media, is crucial for cultural preservation and pride. The study underlines the necessity of ethical media representation, community participation, and inclusive approaches to media-driven cultural preservation. By encouraging realistic and respectful portrayals of Yorùbá culture, media helps develop cultural pride, identity, and emotional well-being. Ultimately, this study contributes to the knowledge of the media's functions in forming cultural identity and supporting cultural heritage, underlining the need for responsible media practices in maintaining Yorùbá culture.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proffered:

- a. A comprehensive media strategy is recommended to efficiently preserve and promote Yorùbá culture, integrating conventional media (newspapers, journals, indigenous music, and films) with digital media (social media and streaming platforms).
- b. To foster the preservation of Yorùbá culture, media representations must emphasise accuracy, respect, and equity. Mainstream media must eschew preconceptions and misrepresentation, while social media channels should be utilised judiciously to advance genuine Yorùbá cultural content. Media professionals ought to undergo cultural sensitivity training to guarantee appropriate representation.
- c. To safeguard and advance Yorùbá culture, mass media must prioritise genuine and equal representations. Community involvement and participatory methodologies are essential. Media professionals must engage with Yorùbá communities to guarantee precise representations, mitigate foreign media impact, and avert cultural extinction. Inclusive media techniques can promote cultural identification.
- d. Media representations should place a high value on justice, integrity, and tact in order to support Yorùbá cultural pride and identity. Nigerian and foreign media should avoid misrepresentation and prejudices, instead developing awareness and respect for Yorùbá customs.



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