# Transmission of Cultural Heritage Function of the Press and the Social Media: an Analytical Introspection

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**Abstract:** The importance of promotion and preservation of cultural heritage in every society by media cannot be overstressed, especially in developing African countries such as Nigeria. Culture is learned, socially acquired traditions and lifestyles of a society. The promotion and transmission of cultural heritages has been a herculean task to accomplish as western culture and media have created undeniable changes in the Nigerian cultural space, subjecting it to continuous changes positively or negatively. Hence, there is a dire need for the Nigerian media to counter or check the influx of western media contents and increase efforts toward the promotion and preservation of indigenous cultures. Culture cannot be transmitted without communication; it must be through a channel of communication if it must reach a heterogeneous audience or populace such as Nigeria's. Deploying Albert Bandura's social learning theory (SLT), this study assesses the functioning of Nigerian media as promoters and preservers of Nigerian cultures. It uses the qualitative approach through the modalities of historical-analytic and direct observation methods. In doing this, it highlights the relevance and influence of local media contents as packaged and disseminated by conventional or mainstream media to promote and preserve Nigerian cultural heritages. It concludes that the Nigerian media, going by their growing indigenous contents, are powerful cultural agents that should be increasingly used to project the Nigerian culture and people to the outside world.

**Keywords:** Transmission, Cultural Heritage, Function, Press, Social Media, Analytical, Introspection.

## INTRODUCTION

Media professionals in Nigeria have a mandate as elaborated by government to promote and preserve Nigeria's cultural heritage according to the National Cultural Policy – Federal Ministry of Youths, Sports and Culture, (1988) and the National Broadcasting Commission, (2002). A nation's cultural policy can be said to be the government actions, laws and programmes that regulate, protect, encourage and financially (or otherwise) support activities related to the arts and creative sectors such as painting, sculpture, music, dance, literature, filmmaking, among others; and culture which may involve activities related to language, heritage and diversity (Ben-Iheanacho, 2019). It is the expression of the government's willingness to adopt and implement a set of coherent principles, objectives and means to protect and foster its country's cultural expression. The centrality of a country's cultural policy to its development is akin to its national ideology and "provides the closest set of ideas and objectives that can shape the country's political and social procedure and set the character of national culture.

Nigeria is one of the few African countries with a written cultural policy that has fully established government institutions, parameters and linkages to ensure systemic approach to cultural administration and implementation of the cultural policy for Nigeria. However, Asiwaju, (2009) argues that there is a missing link between the promulgation of Nigeria's cultural policy and its implementation. He clarifies this disconnect as a carryover of the tendency on the part of development planners to separate economic growth from cultural dimensions with the erroneous assumption that economic growth is a prerequisite for other forms of development (Asiwaju, 2009). This limiting understanding of the term 'development' as a quantitative index marginalizes full appreciation of the qualitative imperatives and social values which is primarily the realm of culture in society; being human-centred as its initial concern and ultimate goal (Ben-Iheanacho, 2019). Hence, there is the need to closely look at the national cultural policy in the context of Nigeria's media programming, with a view to promoting and preserving Nigerian cultural heritage.

Under military regimes, the media in Nigeria remained resolute in their responsibilities of keeping the populace abreast of events while transmitting cultural heritage information and maintaining peace in spite of the cruelly unfriendly policies put in place by the military to hem them in. It was expected that such measures of developing healthy local media content would have been improved upon under democratic or civilian rule but the issues of conflict, nepotism and brazen regional consciousness in the country gives the impression that the media are not standing up to their responsibilities as the Nigerian society appears to be overwhelmed by the in-flow of western cultural contents. The media owe society the duty of promoting the diverse cultures

from various ethnic regions represented in Nigeria. The transmission of people's cultural heritage from a generation to another is part and parcel of the educational function of the media (Ndimele & Innocent, 2006). Nonetheless, they contend that one major challenge faced by the Nigerian media is that of frequent exposure to foreign programmes that can engender total erosion of people's traditional values, debase standards and lead to cultural domination. Corroboratively, Omoera and Ibagere, (2010) analyse television broadcasting and noted the pervasiveness of cultural imperialism in the Nigerian media ecosystem.

However, the media through its educational programmes could help individuals to internalize the cultural and moral norms of society. Media performs the duties of development, promotion and sustenance of culture by awakening and stimulating the imagination and creativity of individuals, thus leading to production of cultural artefacts (Okunna & Omenugha, 2012). The cultural heritages of Nigerian society are disseminated via media outlets in various ways for the learning and understanding of the Nigerian people and those in diaspora, fostering peace and unity. The Nigerian media (radio, television, film and print) are and should be the agents of socialization. Sambe, (2005) affirms that the Nigerian media has as one of its core functions to promote, preserve and transmit Nigerian's cultural heritages, thereby teaching Nigerians both at home and in diaspora the various ethnic norms and values of living. The broadcast media has been touted as the most prominent source of news to the public among other forms of mass media channels and possibly most influential in public debates and opinion generation. Perhaps, this is because of its ability to convey messages in colourful, creative and audio/visual aesthetics.

One of the most visible and ubiquitous aspects of globalisation in the 21st century is the presence of cross-cultural communication made possible by the emergence of a borderless convergence media known as the internet. The internet, via the instrumentality of social media, has rapidly and efficiently aided the rise of globalisation through its audio-texto-visual advantage that has so transcend the barriers of time and space associated with traditional/mainstream media. Social media have developed into popular components of our everyday life in today's globalising society as it provides a context where people across the world can communicate, exchange messages, share knowledge and interact with each other regardless

of the distance that separates them (Sawyer & Chen, 2012).

Social media are platforms where people from their countries upload the material relevant to their culture which includes music, dance, poetry, local food recipes, national games and sports, local events, religious and national events and their celebrations and many other different activities that only exist in specific countries (Sawyer & Chen, 2012). People have easy access to use social media and social networking sites, thereby democratising access to cultural information without any hurdle from anywhere in the world. Chen & Zhang, (2010) posited that "The compression of time and space, due to the convergence of new media and globalisation, has shrunk the world into a much smaller interactive field." This is evident in the ease of interactive and interpersonal communication made possible by social media and where trans-border interaction with each other within seconds of sending and receiving messages is at a fingertip of end-users (Sawyer & Chen, 2012). Social media have brought people from different cultures together in the global village.

However, the realisation of Marshall McLuhan's "global village" concept of the world also ushered in cross-cultural communication (Baran, 2012), especially between the developed and less-developed/under-developed countries around the world, at an unprecedented level –a new form of cultural imperialism know as cultural commodification. In 2020, over 3.6 billion people were using social media worldwide, a number projected to increase to almost 4.41 billion in 2025 (Tankovska, 2021). This is also true in Nigeria where social media usage today are increasing at a rapid rate; an average Nigerian owns at least one smartphone and one social media account, especially, amongst Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. This trend is particularly common and evident amongst the younger population who are more tech and media savvy than the older generations. This has aided and encouraged cultural commodification on an unprecedented scale, even if the users have to pay for the commodified elements of synthetic pop culture. Indigenous cultural values such as food, clothing, festivals, etc. are fast losing their significance due to the promotion of foreign culture. A typical example of this trend is English, Italian, Chinese and Turkish cuisines that are becoming the staple delicacies of affluence, while local delicacies are now a mere object of cultural celebration. Hence,

this study is timely as it an assessment of the impact of social media in the promotion of synthetic or artificial values that have been commodified on the indigenous culture.

**Statement of the Problem**

In today's world, there has been a conscious effort from cultures around the world to promote their individual traditions, norms, values and beliefs that are innate and unique to them to the outside world in a subtler and covert way, precipitated by the emergence and rise in the use of social media, which placed little or no restriction on the three critical elements of communication - Source, Sender and Receiver. The Western countries have been at the fore front of this movement right from the cultural imperialism era to the present era of globalisation. However, in the present screen age, one can argue that the theme is no longer that of cultural imperialism via the mainstream media (radio, television newspapers, magazines, etc.), but cultural commodification via social media and social networking sites. Specifically, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, have been successfully employed in transmitting values and culture to people around the world regardless of differences and geographical boundaries and promote synthetic values through cultural commodification.

Social media have been at the forefront of commodifying culture and transmitting them to registered users who in turn adopts the synthetic cultural values at the detriment of their own indigenous cultural values. In Nigeria, cultural elements such as foods, clothes, language, that are once held in high esteem amongst the heterogeneous indigenous cultural entities that abound have been relegated to the background while synthetic cultural values have become the accepted norms, by paying for these foreign/artificial culture. The present screen age has aided the diffusion and diffusion commodified culture made possible via social media and social networking sites. Thus, it is important to examine the potential impact of social media in the promotion of synthetic (artificial)values in order to better understand the role that new media plays in the process of cultural commodification in this globalizing society.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Social Media: Media for the Screen Age**

The birth of social media ushered in by the emergence of internet was a revolutionary one. The internet in all its splendour has been a revolutionary convergence media since its inception. It has bridged and remove all hitherto know physical geographical boundaries of traditional mainstream media and remains one of the most impactful technological innovations that has continued to drive and influence the conduct of the modern world (Jennings & Zeitner, 2003). While the internet has been revolutionary in the way and manner it has influenced interactive communication and discourse, one significant tool that has been at the forefront of revolutionising the communication landscape is the social media.

However, with the internet becoming a more interactive and convergence medium and the emergence of web 2.0 technologies which birthed the idea of social media, the access and freedom for users to generate their own contents and popularised such contents beyond their immediate environment have been more possible with the social media than any other medium. Kaplan & Heinlein, (2010) define social media as "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated contents." Social media comprises of mobile and web-based applications and websites that allow users to interact in a virtual environment without the presence of a mediated gatekeeper as seen in the traditional mass media (Kaplan & Heinlein, 2010). Examples include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Whatsapp, Youtube, etc.

In the present Screen Age where digitisation and globalisation is going hand-in-hand, the rise of social media has increased its relevance as a tool for public communication, cultural promotion and interaction. This has boosted and enhances the potentials of social media as platform that allows individual opinions, needs and values to be incorporated into a broader communication spectrum. Social media like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, as Mayer, (2009) puts it, offer a platform where "lone individuals and colossal powers interact." This has provided users with the opportunity to interact and engage with other users around the world in a social dialogue by generating and sharing contents based on their beliefs, orientations, values and cultural inclinations.

**Media and Nigerian Cultural History**

The chief objectives of media in Nigeria is that they are used as tools for education, entertainment, information and socialization; teaching the people to read and write, think critically and have

advanced opinion on issues. Education comprises intellectual development, acquisition of skills and formation of character. Character formation is embedded in culture. The media are involved in the transmission of the knowledge necessary to achieve all aspects of education (Okunna & Omenugha, 2012). Historically speaking, the Presbyterian Mission established the first printing school in Calabar, Nigeria in 1846 to increase the literacy level of the people. A little over a decade later, specifically in 1859, Revd. Townsend established the first newspaper called *Iwe-Irohinfun Awonara Egbaati,* which means the "good news for the people of Egbaland and the Yoruba (Ukonu, 2006).

The establishment of the newspaper was to inculcate the habit of reading among the people of Egba and Yoruba who at the period were not literate in the western sense but very much educated in their own indigenous ways and values. The media, especially the newspapers became platforms for education, news and information gathering, dissemination, interpretation and correlation. They served as templates for mobilisation, entertainment, documentation of Nigerian indigenous ethnic milieus, peoples and their various cultures. As well, they formed part of the strategic political tools which Nigeria used to achieve its independence. The media, particularly the newspapers became weapons to fight against the injustice by the colonial masters and government of the day. Nigeria is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and, therefore, multi-cultural country (Otite, 2000). It is a conglomeration of many ethnic groups such as Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, Edo, Ijaw, among others, with diverse cultures.

Ben-Iheanacho, (2019) posits that "cultural diversity can be quantified through the number of languages spoken within the specific cultural space as well as by the distinctive nature of cultural goods, services and activities undertaken as vehicles of identity, value and meaning within this region as artistic expressions of cultural diversity." Nigeria is the world's most populous black nation with an estimated landmass of 923,768 sq kilometers, a population of over 200 million, 257 to 400 ethnic groups and about 520 linguistic communities. Evidently, Nigeria can be said to be a haven of cultural diversity. Therefore, it is imperative to use available media tools to promote and preserve the richness of its diversity which must be seen and harnessed as cultural capital and heritage resource in the age of globalization in which information and communication

technologies (ICTs) are chief purveyors of culture. Interestingly today, there is countless number of media outfits operating in different parts of Nigeria, communicating socio-cultural development via the use of ICTs.

**Concept of Culture**
It is a common belief in many African countries (Nigeria inclusive) that the elders are endowed with great wisdom and are custodians of morals, norms and ethical ways of living. They are, therefore, responsible for transmitting Nigerian cultures in form of folklores, folktales, ghost-lore, stories, songs, among others, from one generation to another. In Nigeria, cultural values are largely transmitted from the elderly to the younger generations orally. They present and represent in-depth meaning to what bind people together or what they believe in. Mirja, (1999) opines that culture has a special role in building up modern society and in mobilizing the capacity of its members. Nigerian mass media have contributed to further transmit cultural values in the present age. With the advent of video recording, terrestrial and satellite televisions, among other ICT-enabled media, most people are identifying with aspects of Nigerian culture such as dressing, greeting, marriage, etc., everywhere in the world.

Different scholars have variously defined culture. Ezeh, (2017) claims that culture entails all that humans do, how they do them; all that they say, how they say them; how humans feel, think, learn, teach and what they consider beautiful and ugly; good and bad. He argues further that culture cannot just be defined as a way of life, as animal also have ways of life but that what distinguishes humankind of life is the culture and that is the reason certain actions done publicly by animals such as having sexual intercourse openly, killing of their kinds for food cannot be done by humans. This implies that culture eliminates that animalistic nature in human beings and makes them social animals that are able to relate, respect others' opinion and also be respected. Bello, (1991) conceptualized culture as "the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenge of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours" (p.189). In other words, "culture encompasses those conventional understandings and practices which give a people its uniqueness and thus render such people distinct from all others" (Biobaku, 1982). It subsumes the entirety

of the material, spiritual, artistic, intellectual and other accomplishments of a people, which give some indication of their way of life, their mode of existence, and the by-products of their type or level of civilization (Unoh, 1986). It is a holistic way of life of a people that can be used as a pointer to the indices of development or civilization that is subject to the process of change and transformation. The end product could be cultural refinement, advancement or development.

Culture is that complex whole which includes laws, customs, knowledge, arts, morals, beliefs and any capabilities and habits acquired by human beings as members of a society. Nigerians are rich in material and non-material cultural heritages such as arts, artifacts, proverbs, beliefs, morals, language, dressing, music, work, religion, dancing, festivals, etc., as captured in the National Cultural Policy document. These heritages also include people's social norms, taboos and values that are understood as beliefs that are held about what is right and wrong and what is important in life. How much of these elements of Nigerian indigenous cultures are being transmitted by the mainstream media (television, radio, film, print, etc.) in Nigeria? The mass media reflect the society as organized group of individuals living and sharing ideas, feelings, thoughts, etc. Therefore, the media can be considered as important tools and channels for promotion and preservation of the Nigerian culture through the diverse programmes disseminated, as they are capable of facilitating unity and fostering peaceful co-existence among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria.

**Media and Cultural Promotion**
Social media are a platform where people from their countries upload the material relevant to their culture which includes music, dance, poetry, local food recipes, national games and sports, local events, religious and national events and their celebrations and many other different activities that only exist in specific countries. People have easy access to use social media sites, so they get this cultural information without any hurdle from anywhere in the world.

Jones, Cunliffe & Honeycutt, (2013) found that the social media have helped the youth in local communities in Wales to promote and share video about their language and culture as well as to connect with friends worldwide. Elements such as fashion, food, music, artefacts, songs, etc. are flowing everyday on the social media, especially Facebook, YouTube and Instagram which all have

the advantages of *audio-texto-visual* capabilities. The social media is seen as well suited to the promotion of cultural values due to the ease and cheaper cost of joining the platform, ease of content upload and the speed of information exchange (Castell, 2001). In recent times, many indigenous languages, which had little chance of getting attention in the mainstream media, are turning to the social media option to popularise and promote their cultures (Kperogi, 2011; Lawson-Borders, 2011; Putra, 2015, McLachlan, 2016). Some users particularly are examining options for promoting many indigenous languages and cultures, which some researchers have predicted might soon be extinct (Uwechia, 2016). Castells, (2001) points out that, "the kind of communication that thrives on the internet is related to free expression in all its form…it is open source, free-posting, decentralised broadcasting, serendipitous interaction…" While this basic nature of the social media has made it open to abuses, it has also created opportunity for positive uses.

However, despite the positive roles of social media in cultural promotion, research and empirical studies have found that the social media is a potent tool employed by the West to culturally dominate other developing countries (Agba, 2002; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Succinctly, Okunna, (2002) notes that "developed countries have been accused of subtly trying to impose their culture on developing countries, through international mass communication, to enthrone a homogenous global culture." The homogenisation attempt is said to have the adverse effects of distortion of the cultures of the developing countries and or their subsequent displacement by the cultures of developing countries (Okunna, 2002).

Kraidy, (2013), however, pointed out that globalisation is the driving force altering cultures and not deliberate invasion of other countries' cultures by the more powerful ones as enunciated in the cultural imperialism philosophy. He argues that the concept of globalisation has in some ways replaced cultural imperialism as the main conceptual umbrella under which much research and theorising in international communication have been conducted. This has now given birth to a new trend –cultural commodification.

**Culture as Tangible and Non-Tangible Heritages**
Tangible cultural heritages include physical resourceful products which can be touched, seen or

used by human beings such as architectural works or buildings, defensive walls and ditches, crafts, tools, ivories, cowries, paintings, textiles, pestles, mortars, iron furnaces, knives, foods, wooden objects, tombs and graves, temples, dresses, pottery and potsherd, pavements, monuments, books, among other works of art. The non-tangible aspects of culture are morals, traditional maxims, proverbs, tales by moonlights (known as *akukoifo/egwuonwa* among the *Igbo* of eastern Nigeria)*,* adages, lullabies, poems, riddles, incantations, values, unity and oneness, praise songs such as *oriki,* recitals of African traditional religious ways such as the *Ifa* verses among the Yoruba of western Nigeria and other facets of community's cultural heritages. In fact, culture itself is "both physical and non-physical in character" (Ogundele, 2014).

Some members of society learn to kneel, prostrate, genuflect when greeting their elders as a result of their exposure to media contents in movies, dramas, theatrical performances, etc. The importance of culture either in a developed or developing country is evident in the lives of the people. Culture is a binding force as people are united through cultural identity. Thomas Hoffman identifies cultural identity as essential for peaceful cooperation, that if people have a strong sense of self-identity through culture, they are more likely to interact peacefully with other cultures (2020). Cultural objects (artefacts) are used by human in an attempt to cope with challenges and natural conditions. It is, therefore, important to state that humans cannot survive without constructive use of artefacts (Ogundele, 2014).

Dominick, (1996) identified cultural heritage transmission from one generation to another as one of the functions of the media. The mass media: radio, television, newspapers and magazines make learning, sharing and integration of culture among diverse backgrounds possible, irrespective of the distance, race, language, sex and other variables. It is worthy to note that the media has from its establishment anchored contents, which promoted the culture of the Nigerian people, though constantly interrupted by the mass influx of foreign or western mores. The cultural heritages of Nigeria are disseminated via the media outfits such as television stations in various ways for the learning and understanding of people in local communities as well as in diaspora. They mediate between individuals, communities or nations, fostering peace and unity.

To deprive a society of information is tantamount to chaos, hopelessness and could create gaps for conflicts and lawlessness. Arguably, a society can be without government but not without the media. This, in a way, explains why it is commonly said that the pen is mightier than the sword. The media, for instance, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) is designed to project Nigerian cultures; to change the narratives, from war to dialogue and from westernization to true African consciousness. Programmes such as *Grassroots*, *Footprints*, *People and Events*, *African Pot*, *Goge Africa*, etc., are loaded with contents that promote the various cultures and traditions of Nigerian people. Cultural practices such as Iwaji (yam) festival, ancestral worship, respect for elders, Igue festival in Benin City, boat regattas in the Niger Delta, Arugungun fishing festival, Eyo festival in Lagos, Calabar carnival, etc., are regularly showcased on Nigerian television channels to provide learning templates for growing populations in Nigeria.

Indigenous attires and dressing modes; Aso-oke, Akwa-ocha, Dansiki, modes of greetings, the different types of dishes from the different ethnic groups, the different ceremonies attached to marriages, burial rites, communal living, among others, are incorporated in many of the programmes regularly projected via Nollywood which is one of the major ambassadorial vehicles that carries Nigeria's rich cultural heritage to the world. Hence, collaborative efforts between NTA, Nollywood content creators and private media consortia such as African Independent Television (AIT), Channels TV, Arise TV, etc., to package professionally and disseminate aspects of Nigerian cultures could further edu-tain Nigerians through movies and other dedicated programmes that would help to preserve and promote Nigerian cultural heritages as well as foster unity.

**Theoretical Perspectives**
This study is theoretically undergirded by Albert Bandura's social learning theory (SLT). It is a theory of learning process and social behaviour, which proposes that new behaviours can be acquired by observing and imitating others (Bandura, 1963). In other words, learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context and can occur through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction or direct reinforcement (Bandura, 1963). In addition to the observation of behaviour, learning also occurs through the observation of rewards and punishments, a process known as vicarious reinforcement that platforms such as

media could provide through TV drama, films and related programmes. Bandura opens up the scope of learning mechanisms by introducing observation as a possibility. He adds to this the ability of modeling – a means by which humans represent actual outcomes symbolically.

Grusec, (1992) affirms that models, cognitively mediated, allow future consequences to have as much of an impact as actual consequences. She further claims that an important factor in SLT is the concept of reciprocal determinism. This notion states that just as an individual's behaviour is influenced by the environment, the environment is also influenced by the individual's behaviour (Grusec, 1992). In other words, a person's behaviour, environment, and personal qualities all reciprocally influence each other. For example, a child who plays violent video games will likely influence their peers to play as well, which then encourages the child to play more often. Singhal and Obregon, (1999), in conversation with Miguel Sabido, argue that entertainment-education (EE) in the form of telenovelas or TV dramas or soap operas can help viewers learn desired behaviours in a positive way from models portrayed in the programmes. Kumpulainen and Wray, (2002) agree to the extent that the telenovela format allows the content creators to incorporate elements that can bring a desired response. These elements may include music, actors, melodrama, props or costumes, festivals, local cuisines, greeting scripts, belief systems and cultural values, among others, that could be factored into media programmes that are targeted at the audience.

Using the SLT symbolic modeling offered by EE in the context of promoting and preserving Nigerian cultural heritage via the media could be very profitable. Positive social behaviours could be reinforced with rewards and negative social behaviours reinforced with punishment in TV programmes, films, among other local media contents that are packaged and beamed or targeted at the populace in Nigeria. The point for this study, therefore, is that we can observe and learn from the media in the context of Albert Bandura's SLT that explains that behaviours and attitudes can be modeled by observing the behaviours and attitudes of others by listening to television programmes, films and other wholesome cultural media contents, thereby acquiring what Ukaegbu, (2017) calls emotional responses and new life of conduct. This implies that the media have the power to influence society and such influence emanates as results of the various contents embedded in the

various programmes carried by the various media channels, especially television and film. The media using the various channels would be able to promote, preserve and project Nigerian cultural heritages to the world.

**Challenges of Media in the Transmission of Cultural Roles**
A major challenge confronted by the media is the constant domination of foreign programmes in the Nigerian media ecosystem. This is not just as a result of the emergence of modern tools such as ICTs (smart phones, tablets, etc.) that have virtually made the conventional forms of communication such as books, newspapers, radio, television, film, etc., appear almost old-fashioned but because the Nigerian media are still under the ownership of some persons who believe that selling foreign or western contents generate more funds. Okunna and Omenugha, (2012) point out "that because mass media is such a powerful vehicle for the dissemination of culture, but for the fear that massive flows of foreign mass media contents produced, will negatively influence local cultures" (p.21). In fact, there is the palpable fear that through the use of modern technology, some cultures risks losing their identity and become submerged by cultures belonging to those who control the modern technology and communication software (Ansah cited in Okunna and Omenugha, 2012). With the advent of the internet, many of the traditional functions of the mass media are constantly being challenged and there is the fear that some of the Nigerian cultural heritages if not promoted and preserved using available media tools, risk being atrophied.

The ICT-enabled devices and applications such as smart phones, I-phones, Telegram, WhatsApp, Facebook, etc., are handy and convenient to use but lack censorship in relation to Nigerian cultural interest. So, the inflow of all sorts of cultures into the Nigerian culture space is likely to continue if a deliberate effort to amend and use existing policy documents such as the National Cultural Policy and the National Broadcasting Commission to reflect current tendencies that would uphold Nigerian cultural values, is not emplaced. For instance, nakedness or nudity was and is still a taboo in many cultural jurisdictions in Nigeria. However, western media, a ravaging cultural behemoth, introduced nakedness as fashion, beauty and a way of life to many a Nigerian youth who unfortunately now buy into the idea as a result of frequent exposure to the foreign media contents.

A look at the popular *Big-Brother Nigeria* (BBN) show reveals how immorality disguised as competitive game show has grossly exposed both the youths and adults to an unwholesome non-Nigerian culture. Nigerians are vicariously compelled to view or watch adults having sex openly all in the name of televised entertainment. Furthermore, the over promotion of foreign culture in Nigeria has not only relegated, raped and underdeveloped Nigerian indigenous cultures, many Nigerians, especially the youths' interest in their God-given heritage – culture– has been forcefully and abruptly killed. Western culture mimicry has become the order of the day, where parents and schools compel their children and wards to learn how to speak like foreigners. Another issue is the lack of documentation. Many discoveries and cultural feats by Nigerians or Africans were neither documented nor recorded in any form of information source (Okoro, 2010). This, therefore, poses a great threat to Africa's cultural heritage as lack of documentation and preservation could lead to total destruction.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article posited that media is still in the business of performing one of its core duties; information dissemination in society. Information they say 'is power;' it has great impact on human behaviour and public discourse in developing societies such as Nigeria. Members of the Nigerian society can be influenced positively or negatively and can be transformed or changed as a result of the amount of local or indigenous media contents that they are exposed to. Hence, the functioning of the media in cultural education and entertainment cannot be overstated as it indexes the cultural wellbeing of a society. Drawing on this, it is suggested that relevant policy documents such as the National Cultural Policy, National Broadcasting Commission, etc., should be strengthened and implemented to provide a congenial environment for the media to effectively be used as tools to promote and preserve Nigerian cultural heritages. Such a deliberate effort is capable of promoting the collective consciousness, in terms of unity, oneness and nonviolent co-existence among the diverse cultural ethnicities in Nigeria. Hence, the mainstream media of radio, television, film and print in Nigeria should focus more on aspects of Nigerian indigenous cultures that enthrone peaceful co-existence and showcase less of the aspects that portray Nigerian cultures as backward to the outside world.

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