

Viewers' Reactions to Excessive Ritual Themes in Nigerian Home Videos: A Portharcourt City Survey

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Abstract : The need to streamline viewers' disposition towards the predominant portrayal of rituals, in most Nigerian home videos, as a way of life in the southern part of Nigeria necessitated this study. The focus however was on ascertaining if such portrayals dovetail within the framework of construction of social reality or misconstruction of social reality. In other words, do the people of the southern part of Nigeria engage in rituals as a means of acquiring wealth or do they merely have proclivity for diabolism, as frequently portrayed in home videos subsumed in their socio-cultural settings? The method of study was survey with the questionnaire as the predominant instrument. The questionnaire was used to elicit responses from Portharcourt city residents on their views and reactions in the light of ritual themes in Nigerian home videos. The choice of Portharcourt was informed by the fact that it is a foremost cosmopolitan city in the south. A Sample size of 400 was drawn from a population of 1,382,392 using Taro Yamane's formula. Actual respondents were reached using a multi-stage cluster sampling technique. The reliability of the instrument as ascertained through Pearson's Product Moment Correlation stood at 0.89. Findings however revealed that ritual themes, as used in Nigerian home videos, did not significantly reflect the cultural heritage of the people of southern Nigeria. Findings further showed that their excessive use in Nigerian home videos served only to create frills and thrills in plots. A synthesis of the foregoing, however, revealed that viewers are not favourably disposed towards the excessive use of ritual themes since they inadvertently portray the cultural heritage of the people of the south in the negative. To this end, it was recommended that producers of Nigerian home videos should focus more on themes that serve to construct social reality while projecting favorably the rich cultural heritage of the people. In terms of contribution to knowledge, the findings of this study tend to reinforce the notion of film as a conveyor belt in cognitive constructs.

Keywords : disposition, home videos, ritual, social reality, themes

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