Indigenization Paradigm:
A Must Shift for Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC) Television Programme Content

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Abstract:
Television is a conduit for cultural learning, through which the mass society are constantly reminded of their cultural heritage. This paper examined the programming content of Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC) television based on the indigenization paradigm with particular interest on the use of indigenous language. It was aimed at determining the percentage of local to foreign content as well as ascertaining the level to which the cultural objectives of the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Code are projected through the programme content of AKBC Television. The study adopted a triangulation of qualitative and quantitative research methods and revealed that the AKBC television aligns its programmes to achieve these objectives, as the station has 76.4% local content against 23.6% foreign content. Programmes with indigenous language make up 5.2% of the local content. Results obtained supported the station's priority on local content while its use of indigenous language produced both positive and negative reactions. The paper recommends that greater efforts should be geared towards improved production of local content so as to promote the development and sustenance of the diverse cultures, moral and community life of the Akwa Ibom people in particular and Nigeria at large.
Keywords: .Television .Programme .Local content .Indigenous language

Introduction

Television is a mass communication medium that aid in the transmission and sustenance of culture. Fiske (1987) describes television as "a popular cultural medium with programmes that are disseminated to a mass audience from numerous subcultures and wide variety of social relations, socio-cultural experience, and discourse" (p. 37). In tandem with Fiske's view, McQuail (2005) assert that television has some potentials of strengthening or weakening the hold of our indigenous traditional and cultural values, especially through over exposure to their contents.

According to Chioma (2013), television is "The principal medium for obtaining visual entertainment and information which are presented through various programme genres such as: News, Sports, Documentary, Interviews, Drama, Music and lots more" (p.32).

Television contents represent real life and fictional worlds to its viewers. Its visual and aural nature affords its viewers the opportunity to participate as they watch and afterwards, as they are able to perceive, interpret and accept or reject images as real or imaginary. However, beyond this, television contents as explained by O'Donnell (2007) are "strategies through which a society's cultural values, norms, practices, fads, interest, and trends are developed" (p. 145). Lasode (1994) adds that Television broadcasting in Africa began in Nigeria, as a major step toward the modernization of the traditional system of communication and the development of the continent. He adds that the earliest forms of content on Nigerian television were "Drama, Variety Shows, Public Affairs Programmes and News Bulletins, most of which were broadcast in the local language of the people" (p. 52).

Local content broadcast in Nigeria is meant to be a conduit through which the mass society experience culture; enhancing cultural learning by promoting and sustaining the moral and community life of the Nigerian people. Preserving the cultural ethics and ethos of a country contributes a great deal to its growth and national development. The need for the media to contribute its quota to harness culture development through local content motivated the National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO) to initiate Quarterly Media Workshops for Arts Writers and Editors in Nigeria. The idea resulted from the need of the country to address its political, social, and cultural issues through television contents (Ayakoroma, 2011).

This study is aimed at determining the percentage of local to foreign contents on Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC) Television. It also seeks to ascertain the level to which the cultural objectives imbedded in the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Code are projected through the programme content of AKBC. Finally, to identity what areas of indigenous learning are promoted through local content on AKBC Television. The study is anchored on the cultural theory. The basic assumption of the cultural theory is that the mass media as an institution is empowered to define cultural norms through the facilitation of opinion change and reinforcement, creation of new values and modifications of present attitudes which stimulate and affect change on the audience. Therefore, the mass media establish a new shared connection and values; this theory emphasizes the mass media's place as the custodians of culture.

Ebo-Stella (1996) regards media consumption as a cultural activity and the mass media as an integral part of the attempt to build national culture. The media, therefore, cannot be overlooked in the propagation of cultural values. The cultural theory serves as a guide in relation to the kind of programmes offered by television stations. She adds that indigenous programmes are needed to salvage the present situation of cultural decay. Cultural programmes springing from indigenous cultures should be developed and often aired on television stations for cultural integration.

Television: Conceptual Clarification

Television can combine live performance values of the theatre, the mechanical abilities of film, the sound and audience orientation of radio and its own electronic capacities thus making television an assemblage of the features of all previous communication media. It is an important medium of communication in the world today.

Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli and Morgan (1980) describe television as a centralised system of storytelling and a part and parcel of our daily lives. They add that its drama, commercials, news and other programmes bring a relatively coherent world of common images and messages into every home. Gerd (2013) adds that "television cultivates from infancy the very common images and messages into every home; the very predispositions and preferences that used to be acquired from other primary sources". Transcending historic barriers of literacy and mobility, television has become the primary common source of socialization and everyday information (mostly in the form of entertainment) of an otherwise heterogeneous population. The repetitive pattern of television's mass-produced messages and images fans the mainstream of a common symbolic environment.

The source of any television station's competitive strength lies with its ability to produce outstanding, pace-setting programmes and original contents. Throughout the early years, when television was struggling, there were underlying scarcities: the number of stations was limited, commercial inventory was perforce in demand and programme suppliers were few. "The result of these scarcities drove programming and advertising costs upward. Today, there is a free-for-all in the markets; the result is a commoditization of programmes and the value of commercial time" (Eastman and Ferguson, 2002, p. 182).

Eastman and Ferguson further state that "there are basic programme sources that exist for television stations and they are Networks, Syndicators and Local Station

Productions" (p. 177): an analysis of AKBC television programme composition shows that the station utilises the three sources optimally.

Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC)

Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC) was established by edict No. 4 of April 1988. The television service, popularly identified as "the ultimate in television broadcasting" transmits on channel 45 UHF and was commissioned on Tuesday, 23rd April, 1991 by then Military President, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (www.akbconline.org).

The television station has the vision to be a one-stop station for the best in entertainment, news and programmes that creatively galvanise Akwa Ibom people and positively project the rich cultural heritage, cherished values and potentials of the state for enhanced image and respectability within and outside Nigeria. The mission of the television station is to provide information, entertainment and educational services to the public, through professional radio and television broadcasting that gives adequate expression to the culture, characteristics and thinking of the government and people of Akwa Ibom state (www.akbconline.org).

According to Otu (2006), AKBC television is a channel through which the voice of its owners – the government and the people – can be heard. She adds that "the station was mandated by law to ensure at all times that programmes of the station give adequate expression to the culture, characteristic, affairs and the thinking of the people of the state" (p. 91). Otu points out that "on November 28, 2003, the National Broadcasting Commission, in its third quarter audit report addressed to the general manager of AKBC, said inter alia –"your station's local programme percentage is impressive at 92%" (p. 144).

The AKBC television has an operational period of eighteen (18) hours, thirty (30) minutes, particularly from 5:30am to 12:00am every single day of the week.

The Concept of Indigenous Contents

Following the deregulation of broadcasting in Nigeria in 1992 allowing for private ownership of both radio and television stations, the National Broadcasting Decree 38 was signed into law. This decree established and empowered a National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) to regulate the broadcast industry through issuance of broadcast licenses to qualified private broadcast media, regulating broadcast operations and ensuring compliance with the stipulation of the Nigeria Broadcasting Code. One of the most important areas of the code for which broadcast organizations must comply is the area of what programming (broadcast contents) should be (Atume, 2014).

As stated by the Nigeria Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Code, broadcasting in Nigeria should be a conscious effort towards the realization of the cultural objectives for which the industry was established to fulfil. The NBC Code states that broadcasting shall, among others:

a. Provide, through programming, a service essential to the maintenance and enhancement of national identity and cultural sovereignty;
b. Serve to safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabrics of Nigeria;
c. Seek, identify, preserve and promote Nigeria's diverse cultures;
d. Select critically, the positive aspects of foreign cultures for the purpose of enriching the Nigerian culture;
e. Develop and promote the application of indigenous aesthetic values;
f. Promote the development of a high level of intellectual and artistic creativity; and
g. Foster generally acceptable moral, ennobling and spiritual values (pp. 8-9).

The NBC Code has it that to qualify as local content, a production shall satisfy any of the following:

a. Made by authors, producers and workers who are Nigerians and residing in Nigeria; or
b. Produced under the creative control of Nigerians; or
c. The production is supervised and actually controlled by one or more producers established in Nigeria; or
d. The contribution in a co-production is not controlled by one or more producers based outside Nigeria; or
e. The production originating from any other country made exclusively by Nigerians or in co-production with non-Nigerians established in that country (pp. 35-36).

According to the NBC, local content regulation is essentially to;
a. Promote and sustain Nigeria's diverse cultures, mores, folklores and community life;
b. Provide diversity in types of programming content for the widest audience through the limitless variety in the cultural landscape of Nigeria;
c. Promote Nigerian content and encourage the production and projection of Nigerian life within and outside its borders; in essence, strive to attain 100% local content; and
d. Establish a dynamic, creative and economically vibrant Nigerian broadcast production industry (p. 35).

Indigenous Language: Relevance versus Complexity

AKBC is one of the few television stations to include indigenous language in its broadcast. An analysis of a week programme of the station during the last quarter of 2016 found huge influx of local languages mostly in the aspect of politics, economy, religion, music, news and drama. The central dilemma for inclusion of indigenous language is that the specificity needed to explain, as opposed to simply describing events, is in permanent contention with their relevance for the entire audience which comprises of those that understand the indigenous language and those that do not. An obvious solution to the dilemma would seem to be more coverage of universal concerns, for instance health and education, frequently cited as of particular salience for the 'family audience', as viewers of the early evening news are often characterized.

The NBC serves a huge purpose in ensuring the required degree of local content is achieved in broadcasting. Though, according to Aldridge (2007), "local media may lack glamour, but their importance is beyond doubt" (p. 161). The community of residence is, as Friedland (2001) so vividly expressed it in Habermasian terms, the "seam between the system and the lifeworld" (p. 374). Here, institutional structures and processes become daily reality. For most people, most of the time, everyday needs are met and regular routines played out within familiar territory. And there also is the advantage of having the sources within reach thus enabling verification.

The relevance indigenous language serves could be seen to outdo the complexity that might arise; reason being that some of these programmes serve to correct the ills of the society, instil morals and guide the thoughts and values of the mind in tune with societal expectations. It draws the line between what the society accepts and what serves as unacceptable. Some of the programmes venture into solving family crisis by highlighting basic issues and offering solutions all in a common and simple way that even the uneducated can conveniently digest the content. According to Ekwerre (2016), the use of indigenous language draws the people closer to the station and gives them something to identify with. However, most of such programmes (on AKBC television) make use of indigenous language without the use of interpretation symbols and signs. This could hinder the understanding of viewers who cannot decode the local dialect, thereby interrupting communication flow. Some of the programmes go as far as producing

signature tunes with the local dialect and even make use of locally made furniture that are culture related.

According to akbconline.org, the vernacular programmes of the station seek to promote the dying language of the people's culture. It aims to encourage the teeming populace not to be ashamed of their indigenous language.

Some of the local dialect programmes and the purposes they serve are:

i. *Esa Iban:* A thirty-minute panel discussion programme that airs on Mondays by 5:30pm. The programme is in the local dialect, it is aimed at correcting poor manners and bad relationships in the society generally and matrimonial homes in particular.
ii. *Ntiantia Asakka:* A live interactive programme that is purely vernacular in nature. , it runs from Mondays to Fridays by 8am to 9am each day. The programme brings out policy makers in government, industries, religion, business and other corporate bodies, to interact on policies that cover various sectors in the local dialect. On Mondays the programme has as its major highlight the market days in Akwa Ibom State as well as a panel discussion called "Nneme Nnyin". On Tuesdays, the major highlight is "Tang Wud Idung" a personality-like programme aimed at showcasing the exchange of ideas from individuals or institutions with viewers. On Wednesdays, "Akwa Ibom Emesiere" is the major highlight; a programme that brings out the beautiful transformation in Akwa Ibom state to the public using local dialects (Ibibio, Annang, Oron, Eket and other Akwa Ibom dialects). Highlights of visits to rural areas are showcased comparing their present status with what was obtained initially. While Thursdays treat women, home and health matters, Fridays highlight the entertainment industry and is tagged "Mbre Inemesit". Additionally, each day has a news segment tagged "Sitippe Mfin", newspaper review and sport analysis, all in vernacular.
iii. *Legends:* This programme runs from 7:00pm - 7:30pm on Fridays. The language used is partly English and partly the local dialect; it is aimed at giving recognition to legends in rural areas who probably never thought their contribution to the society would be recognised. This act of recognition is done through media coverage of their activities and panel discussion about their achievements.
iv. *Youth Corner:* A talk show with infusion of skits for dramatization and emphasis that runs on Saturdays from 1:00pm to 2:00pm. Though the language used is a fusion of the English and indigenous, local dialects are used especially for moral lessons portrayal.
v. *My Root, My Pride:* The programme runs on Tuesdays from 12:30pm to 1:00pm, it showcases rural areas highlighting their peculiarities. The language is mixed (local dialect and English); activities include interviews of community members ranging from village heads to ordinary community members. The interviews are mostly carried out using the local dialect, this allows for wider participation by rural dwellers who find it difficult to express themselves in English. *My Root, My Pride* promotes communities' specialties and their major occupation, highlights the community's norms, penalties for crime, cuisine, projects and attractive sites.
vi. *Our Tradition:* A thirty-minute documentary that gives insight into the various traditional embodiments that characterise different parts of Akwa Ibom state, it airs on Wednesdays by 1:30pm. The indigenous language is mainly used even in the course of dramatization without any form of interpretation.

During the week of observation, it was noted that an average of eleven (11) different music are played daily out of which nine (at the least) are locally produced and not less than five of the locally produced are rendered in indigenous language.

Methodology

The study adopted an analytical approach of the programme contents of AKBS to achieve its objectives. A triangulation of qualitative and quantitative research methods was carried out. The combination of content analysis, unobtrusive observation and personal interview provided in-depth information concerning the programme content of AKBC Television. The study was limited to a week broadcast content of the television station. A total number of 186 programmes were counted (excluding commercials and promotions).

Presentation of Data and Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Distribution of Programme Types of AKBC

	Local content		Foreign content		Total
	No	Percent (%)	No	Percent (%)	
Breakfast show	6	3.2			6 (3.2%)
Magazine programme	14	7.5			14 (7.5%)
Talk show	10	5.4			10 (5.4%)
News bulletin	35	18.8			35 (18.8%)
Documentary	6	3.2	8	4.3	14 (7.5%)
Drama / Movie	7	3.8	6	3.2	13 (7.0%)
Soap opera	2	1.1			2 (1.1%)
Educational programme	6	3.2	1	0.5	7 (3.7%)
Religious programme	26	14	8	4.3	34 (18.3%)
Sports	3	1.6			3 (1.6%)
Children's programme	2	1.1	9	4.8	11 (5.9%)
Entertainment/Musical	15	8.1			15 (8.1%)
Business related programme	4	2.2	2	1.1	6 (3.3%)
Politics	5	2.7			5 (2.7%)
Motivational programme			4	2.2	4 (2.2%)
Health programme	1	0.5	6	3.2	7 (3.7%)
Total	***142***	***76.4***	***44***	***23.6***	***186 (100%)***

The analysis reveals the extent to which the content of AKBC television programmes are either foreign or local. The result shows that 76.4 percent of the station's programmes are locally produced. The result points to an indigenizing content in Nigerian television, indicating that media operators are not passive but active in creating, choosing and determining the type of programmes transmitted to their audiences. The presence of indigenously sourced programmes could be attributed to many factors including the 70 percent minimum local content programming clause of the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC). The NBC clearly states that a television station should not have more than 30% foreign programme content in its schedule and AKBC strongly adheres to this policy.

According to Okafor (2016), it is a good thing that AKBC Television concentrates more on local content because there is a claim that foreign content is a local content transported to a foreign land thus more relevant/favourable to the local audience who can absorb the transmitted message. Thus, it is of great relevance that television stations should concentrate and heighten their interest in promoting local content.

According to Inyang (2016), concentration on local programme contents by AKBC television is an agreeable feat because local happenings are easily brought to bear in the station's broadcast. However, use of indigenous language should be minimised because the station ought to accommodate and attract other members of the public as the world is a global village. With the increase in educational pursuit, it is believed that average rural dwellers understand English. However, in the view of Mbuk (2016), local content brings

the activities of the station closer to the people and use of indigenous language enlightens/helps the uneducated stay abreast of happenings around them. It brings to the people's understanding international happenings in a language that is easily understood thereby sustaining interest in the television station.

Table 2: Programmes with Infusion of Local Language

Programme	No of times	Programme duration	Percent
Ntiantia Asakka (breakfast show)	5	1 hour	2.7
Legends (Documentary)	1	30 mins	0.5
Esa Iban (Talk show)	1	30 mins	0.5
My Roots, My Pride (Documentary)	1	30 mins	0.5
Our Tradition (Documentary)	1	30 mins	0.5
Youth Corner (Talk Show)	1	1 hour	0.5
	10		5.2%

Johnson (2016) believes that the use of indigenous language in the station's programmes ensures that the intended messages are passed along with ease because it carries with it the thoughts and cultural values thereby conveying and eliciting the desired response and change (positive or negative) in the community. Also, being a state owned broadcast station, AKBC's use of indigenous language in most of the locally produced programmes is ideal, particularly for the target audience which somewhat is the Akwa Ibomites. However, Johnson implores that there should be a balance to make room for other potential audience who may have challenges decoding the message passed in indigenous language; this way the station could avoid losing viewership. In contrast to Johnson, Essien (2016) believes that the use of indigenous language does not give the entire audience a sense of belonging since there is a huge possibility that not everyone would understand the indigenous language of the Akwa Ibom people even if they reside in the state. He adds that Nigeria is often described as one people though diverse in culture. Thus, a common ground should be established in communication to carry a greater percentage of the people along.

However, in the opinion of Okafor (2016), infusion of indigenous language is an act that could hinder the development of good communication skills because there is the possibility of it affecting the people's communication habit with other people and it will most likely result in code switching and code mixing as well as affect one's intonation. Moreover, it is important to communicate to viewers in a language assumed to be widely understood.

Adebayo (2016) opines that he does not understand the language but supports it usage. He defines it as a sense of pride, adding that foreign language among other foreign things is gradually trying to dominate the inherent culture and identity of the Nigerian people. He urges that AKBC television station should stick to the promotion of indigenous language in its programme content to sustain cultural identity and transmitting. And by watching such programmes people could learn a lot about the diverse cultures in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 3: Programme Distribution Based on Time Duration

Duration	No of Programmes	Percentage Representation
Less than 30 mins	7	3.8
30 minutes	123	66.1
1 hour	45	24.2
More than an hour	11	5.9
	186	100%

From the distribution above, it is obvious that the AKBC television station gives priority to programmes with long duration. It gives the opinion that most of the programmes are allocated enough timeframe to do justice to their contents. However, from observation of the station's broadcast it was noted that most programmes commence behind schedule without any form of apology being offered. Programmes were also interrupted without apology, for instance, during the period of observation three (3) movies were cut short and replaced with advertisements and meditation without apology nor complete airing of the movie. It was also noted that some of the programmes lacked smooth transition and there was absence of well-defined introductions for programmes as well. Furthermore, some programmes had different time schedule from what was advertised thus misleading the audience on the actual time such programmes are to be aired.

Conclusion

The programmes of AKBC Television provide information and entertainment for the gratification of a larger public particularly the segment of people that understand the local dialect of the State. Taking advantage of the visual element of television, AKBC television delves into programmes that result in audience-centred programming. An analysis of AKBC Television programmes based on type showed that a total of 186 programmes were aired during the week of observation which was the last quarter of 2016. The analysis identified that News bulletin recorded a high level in the programme outline. This is reflected in the total number of programmes associated with it. The news items cut across network programme, syndicated and local station production. Of a total percentage of 18.8% accorded to news, 7.5% is network affiliated while the other 11.3% is syndicated and local station production combined. Religious programmes take second place with a total of 18.3% out of which 13.98% has local content while 4.3% has foreign content. Entertainment/Musical has 8.1%. Breakfast and Magazines programmes account for 3.2% and 7.5% respectively; this is fair enough to showcase the station's inclination to uplift the state and its cultural heritage which is mostly the focus of these programmes.

The AKBC television station, through its programme type, reflects and engages with the life experiences of the Akwa Ibom people and environment making great use of the culture, language, aspirations and artistic expressions that are distinctly Akwa Ibom. Through the programme content of AKBC television, vital contribution is made to the sustenance and transmitting of the people's culture and language. The content quotas seek to protect and develop the state's cultures and identities through its continuous usage in the stations broadcast; this also extends to the public a choice of learning the local dialects. Finally, it is pertinent to note that efforts are geared towards improved production of local content so as to promote the development and sustenance of the diverse cultures, morals and community life of the Akwa Ibom people in particular and Nigeria at large.

Recommendations

Television local content could become better conduit for cultural learning when television stations increase the number of indigenous programmes that dwell on history, culture and the importance of respecting our origin. Through the use of indigenous language,

television programmes would go a long way to promote our culture. Thus, this study recommends that local programmes that demonstrate the beauty of various cultural heritages, indigenous couture, ceremonies, cuisine and lots more, be incorporated into television programmes as such could also promote the standard of Nigeria's image both within and outside the country. The paper recommends that greater efforts should be geared towards improved production of local contents so as to promote the development and sustenance of the diverse cultures, moral and community life of the Akwa Ibom people in particular and Nigeria at large.

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