

INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION ON NIGERIAN WOMEN'S PERCEPTION OF PERSONAL BEAUTY

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Abstract

Television's presentation of beauty has no doubt shaped a lot of women's perception of what it takes to be beautiful. Women many times feel the need to fit into the categories or standards of beauty set through television programs. The study attempted to measure how much of influence television wields on the Nigerian woman's everyday decisions. It sought to see if their world view of beauty is as spelt by television and also ascertain how much striving they engage in to attain the self-image dictated by programs such as musicals, television adverts, movies and other admired television personalities. The Social Learning, Cultural Imperialism and Cultivation theories were employed to serve as the intellectual backbone for the study. Using the purposive sampling technique for both the survey and the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), 350 copies of the questionnaire were administered to Babcock and Covenant university female undergraduate students with 327 returned and 300 considered valid for analysis. 16 undergraduate female Babcock and Covenant University students were also purposively selected for the FGDs. Findings revealed that the Nigerian woman's perception of beauty is, to a large extent influenced by what she sees on television, and that women will go to lengths to attain beauty as conceived in the programs they watch. The researcher therefore recommends that advertisers, producers and other media practitioners should try in their programs to recreate what constitutes beauty in the viewers' minds. Attempts should be made projecting different physical human attributes rather than limiting being beautiful to some narrow criteria.

Key words: beauty, perception, television, influence, Nigerian women.

Introduction

The way and manner people perceive things, often times differ one from another, and can be triggered by their present or past experiences and relations with others which may affect who they are or turn out to be. Perception helps to drive the way things are viewed or interpreted.

Studies have shown that the media plays a vital role in the way the human mind perceives things. Schefft (2015) in her University of Cincinnati (UC) article on 'How TV's Subliminal Influence Can Affect Women's Perception of Pregnancy, Birth,' referring to Dannielle Bessett's study on women and their understanding of television viewing practices, pregnancy and birth for example, argued that women exercised a lot of apprehension as to what happens to them when they get pregnant simply because of what they have seen of other pregnant women on television. The Schefft further emphasized that many women cited overly dramatized medical scenes as they expressed fears about how their own births would take place. Other examples of media's influence included disillusioned feelings about their own birth processes in relation to what they saw on television.

Many studies conducted in behavioural sciences scientifically proved that television

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has an impact on its viewers especially on young adults (Devadas and Ravi 2013). The media then can be said to have capacity to impact on the human perception of themselves, environment and community at large. Some of such impacts vary but largely hovers around the ideologies of life, religious leanings, what is fit to be worn, what is bought and why they should be purchased. In other instances, the media even direct or influence what is consumed and the body image in general. Vonderen and Kinnally (2012), citing Hendriks and Burgoon (2003) assert that women who are exposed to heavy amounts of thin-ideal media are likely to accept this as a norm. They further argue citing Holstrom (2004) that dissatisfaction therefore arises when heavy viewers begin to see this thin-ideal not only as realistic, but also physically attainable.

Media's presentation of what beauty is shapes the audience's mind in a way that they feel the need to fit into the categories or standards placed before them in the various media channels like magazines, movies, advertisements, music videos and television programming in particular. Sometimes this is done by the individuals involved, at costs that might be extortionate, all in the bid to be classified, beautiful.

The media often pick out the extremely thin or the voluptuous women as examples of the ideal beautiful woman which might not necessarily be true. If anything, such ideals may be illusionary. The constant presentation of beauty in the media, taking television as an example, can distort an individual's perception of the term "beauty." For example, a lot of ladies fall for the images or appearances they encounter on the screen, not considering the possibility of these images as having been retouched or enhanced to create an illusion of flawless beauty or character. Images of spotless faces, waxed skins, lush, voluminous velvety hairs are presented as criteria for beauty and this many times have pushed women in their millions to want to look like these screen images. Shrader (2003) citing Kilbourne (1999), posits that "one prevalent form of censorship in the mass media is the almost complete invisibility, the eradication, of real women's faces and bodies."

The annual survey by the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS) for example shows that 13 percent of facial plastic surgeons surveyed saw an increase in request for celebrity procedures in 2014, up from 3 percent in 2013 and 7 percent in 2012. The results of this survey support the idea or notion that women's perception of beauty can be influenced by the standards set or put in place by various television programs.

This study sought to investigate how much television viewing can influence women's perception of beauty and what extent women are willing to go to achieve the standards set by these television programmes.

Statement of the Problem

Television has changed and keeps changing viewers' world view. Borchers (2002:4) posits that we live in a time when television dominates how we experience the world. Television, he contends transcends the erroneous belief that it is only a channel of communication or way of transmitting information. Rather, beyond being a pipeline for information to homes, it changes both the sender, receiver of the information and the culture in which the information is transmitted. Television no doubt, wilfully or

subliminally, has over the years changed viewers. People largely lean on it to decide what they (especially women) need, buy, invest on/in and what can bring satisfaction, for example, what body image ought to be like or beauty all together. Consistent watching and reliance on television can in one way or the other drive many viewers (women in particular) to view things and themselves differently from reality. The question of beauty and self-worth for many women may be largely driven by the ideas they get from viewing television. Nicole (2004) citing Naomi Wolf's book "The Beauty Myth" criticized the media (television in particular) for the flawless and unrealistic illusions created by makeup artists and photographers, arguing that such unobtainable perfection invites young women to compare their unimproved reality to physical ideals that do not really exist.

Saltzberg and Chrisler (1995) citing Kano (1985) also contend that "the inordinate emphasis on women's external selves makes it difficult for us to appreciate our own internal selves. When people(women) negatively look at the differences between their body type and their preferred appearance, they naturally become uncomfortable in their own skin and body, which ultimately is likely to lead to dissatisfaction (low self-esteem). Dissatisfaction may lead to seeking out ways and means of enhancing self-image even when the cost of achieving this is really outrageous. Saltzberg and Chrisler (1995) also queried, "given the high costs of striving to be beautiful, why do women attempt it?" Attractiveness unfortunately they argue greatly affects first impressions and later interpersonal relationships.

This research work therefore among other things attempted to measure how much of influence television wields on the Nigerian woman, especially as it concerns the amount of time spent watching television, their perception on issues that bother on body image and beauty in general. It sought to see if their world view of beauty is as spelt by television, and establish if they are in any way striving to attain the self-image concept dictated (put in place) by various television adverts and programs seen from time to time.

Research Questions

1. How much time does the Nigerian woman commit to television viewing?
2. To what extent has television viewing influenced the Nigerian woman's daily decisions like purchase, fashion, entertainment and behavior in general?
3. To what degree has television influenced the Nigerian woman's perception of beauty?
4. How far is the Nigerian woman likely to go in order to attain her self/body-image in line with standards set by television?

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on the Social learning theory, Cultivation analysis theory and the Cultural Imperialism theory.

Social Learning Theory

A widely referenced model of media effects, especially in relation to children and young people, is Bandura's (1986) social learning (or observational learning) theory. (McQuail,

2005:491). This theory posits that individuals cannot obtain much knowledge from the things experienced or observed directly. It also contends that knowledge can mainly be obtained by observing the behaviours of others. People learn by observing the behaviours, attitudes and outcome of the behaviour of others.

Baran and Davis (2012) argue that observers can acquire symbolic representations of the behaviour, and these “pictures in their heads” provide them with information on which to base their own subsequent behaviour. They further contended that media characters (models) can influence behaviour simply by being depicted on the screen.

Social learning they contended, encompasses both imitation and identification, explaining how people learn through observation of others in their environments. While 'Imitation' is the undeviating reproduction of behaviour an individual observed, 'identification' on the other hand is a special form of imitation that springs from wanting to be and trying to be like an observed model relative to some broader characteristics or qualities.

Signorielli (2005) citing Bandura (2002), submits that Social learning theory has evolved from a purely behavioural theory into a cognitive (thought-related) theory, stressing that the media provide the rules and strategies as well as the traditional why, what, and when of behaviour change. She argued that people learn both by direct experience and by observing others. Signorielli further contended that the media, particularly television, provide almost limitless opportunities for viewers to observe and consequently learn scripts or schema's (rules and strategies) for many different kinds of behaviours. Viewers can incorporate from television and other media not only specific responses, but also ways to copy what they observe. Ajilore (2012:19), corroborated this assertion by stating that so strong is the influence of the media that it has practically, through all its genre of messages, supplanted the socializing role of the traditional agents of socialization like the family, educational and religious institutions.

The thin or voluptuous models' and actresses' images of women depicted in various television programs today, have in one way or another set the standards (skin colour, size/weight, fashion and more) of how women try to meet up with these projections in order to be called beautiful.

Social learning theory therefore helps in the finding out of how much of the information or knowledge women have (In relation to beauty and fashion) is gotten as a result of observing others in the environment. The theory states that learning may occur when a behaviour is rewarded, the images displayed on television of “beautiful” women depict glamour and desirability (reward) and so women may go through great lengths in order to imitate those images. The researcher therefore tried to ascertain whether women try to meet up with the standards set on television because of the anticipated rewards (glamour, desirability).

Cultivation Analysis Theory

This theory predicts a difference in the social reality of heavy television viewer's compared to that of light viewers. It posits that heavy viewers may base their knowledge, behaviour and reality in general on the things they are exposed to on television even though the things portrayed on television are mainly works of fiction.

Potter (1994), postulates that “Television viewers who say they are exposed to greater amounts of television are predicted to be more likely (compared to viewers who say they are exposed to lesser amounts) to exhibit perceptions and beliefs that reflect the television world messages”. Television promotes a reality that is more or less erroneous and the viewers inadvertently assume it reflects real life. It is therefore safe to say that television to a large extent brings about a common way of viewing the world.

According to McQuail (2005), viewing television gradually leads to the adoption of beliefs about the nature of the social world which conforms to the stereotyped, distorted and very selective view of reality as portrayed in a systematic way in television fiction and news.

A variety of television programs have created or developed a reality that places value on specific physical attributes a woman must possess in order to be classified beautiful. Relating this to the theory, the television viewers (women) will most likely accept this ideology not because it was imposed on them but because that is what they now perceive or believe to be reality. This theory therefore helped the assertion that much of the decisions or choices television viewers (women) make is predicated on the reality portrayed on television. The theory also helps with determining the extent to which women depend on television to socialize or fit into the society. Finally, the theory enables the measurement of the degree to which television has changed or shaped the culture of Nigerian women in relation to the term, “beauty.”

Cultural Imperialism Theory

The central argument of the cultural imperialism theory as proposed by Alao, Uwom and Alao (2013) is that the western nations dominates the media around the world which in return has a powerful effect on third world cultures, by imposing on them western views: therefore destroying their native cultures.

The developed nations are more engrossed in television (production, transmission and consumption), when compared to developing nations. Therefore, developing countries mostly depend on the programs being aired by developed countries. These programs portray the culture or cultural values of the developed countries and inadvertently will be imbibed by the developing countries as a result of continuous exposure. It is for this reason that Samuela (1975) posits that “Western ideologies, political beliefs, western science, western laws and social institutions, western moral concepts, sexual symbols and ideals of beauty, western working methods and leisure activities, western foods, western pop idols and the western concept of human existence have become objectives, examples and norms everywhere in the world.”

This theory helped affirm how much of the western television programmes Nigerian women are exposed to and the extent to which it has in one way or the other influenced their cultural values. The theory also helped determine how much the media messages emanating from the Western industrialized countries has impacted the lives of women. Furthermore, the theory also helped ascertain how much of the socio-cultural values of the western nations are being imitated by Nigerian women (undergraduates of universities).

Unfortunately, in spite of the fact that developing countries are crying for a balance in

export and import of culture through programmes production, developing countries are not in any way asserting themselves nor trying in any conscious and deliberate manner to reverse the trend. For as long as there are no options, or the options of television available are for selfish political gains, third world countries may not overcome this problem of cultural imperialism. Most broadcast outfits are either poorly funded, left on their own to survive as government has failed to make the industry functional. Therefore professionalism dies off gradually, as programmes are not produced, and automatically stations have little or no choice than depend on importation of foreign programmes in spite of the National Broadcasting Commission regulations on foreign and local programmes broadcasts. So as long as our local programmes are uninteresting because producers are not motivated to do better, and as long as they are not paid regularly or handsomely, less programmes production will thrive and more foreign programmes will dot the air waves thereby bringing to the Nigerian woman a culture which initially may seem alien to her but over time becomes all that she knows and therefore live by.

Literature Review

This section dwells on the literature reviewed by virtue of the concepts reviewed beginning from the very beginning of television and the various ways it has become a part of human culture and practically the predictor of human interactions and activities.

Brief History of Television

According to Gross, Foust & Burrows (2005): Experiments with television date back to the 1880s when a mechanical, rather than an electrical process dealt with very small still photos. The closest to a “program” was an experimental “science fiction thriller” where an aerial photo of New York moved closer and closer and then disappeared to the sound of an explosion. The early invention of television can be said to have been a lengthy and collaborative process. A variety of experiments were conducted by various people in scientific fields such as electricity and radio and this led to the development of basic technologies and accumulation of ideas that laid the foundation through which television was finally invented. In 1884, Paul Nipkov, a German student showed how to send images over wires using a rotating metal disk. This technology was called “the electric telescope that had 18 lines of resolution”. The technology was further improved on by different scientists as the years progressed. Charles Jenkins in 1923, and John Logie Baird in 1926. Jenkins came up with the first ever practical mechanism television system. He went on to use this technology in 1925 to send a short film to the United States government in Washington D.C., while Baird used the mechanical disk to transmit motion pictures to an audience at the Royal Academy of Science, London in 1926.

The mechanical television system went through a variety of improvements and innovations from 1926 till 1931 and as at 1934 till date all the television systems had transformed into the electronic system.

Brief Outlook of Television in Nigeria

Television is an electronic device, that gives the public informational, educational and entertainment programmes. Television is an audio-visual medium which can also mean

vision and sound at a distance. It is effective because it 'attracts both our eyes and ears', hence, television deals with the vividness of sight, sound and motion that cannot be matched by any other media (Uwom, 2009 citing Ebie, 2008). In addition, it is a medium that brings its enormous audience, into a direct relationship with particular sets, values and attitudes (Onabajo, 1999). Akpan (1988) as cited by Onabajo (1999), asserts that television influences people's perception on political, religious, governmental, fashion and cultural issues. For instance, in America today, television's impact in the society has been profound, given that it has changed the lifestyle of Americans, becoming a major influence on their culture (Wilson, 1992).

However, 'the Nigerian constitution of 1954 permitted the regional as well as the Federal Government to establish broadcasting services if and when they wished, which eventually paved the way for the establishment of the Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) in 1959 at Ibadan by the Government of Western Region' (Akalugo, 2001). In agreement with this, Umeh (1989) avers that this broadcasting service which was initiated by a regional government was not only the first in Nigeria, but remains today the oldest in the whole of the African continent. Furthermore, he stated that the history of television broadcasting in Nigeria revolves around the suitability of the medium for political propaganda and for educational broadcasting. There is no doubt that establishment of television stations today has grown beyond its initial stage and has multiplied by number of states created and stipulated regulations put in place in Nigeria.

Role of Television in the Society

The role of television in any given society are multifaceted, it goes beyond the traditional roles of informing, educating and entertaining. Television continues to play the role of informing in the sense that it disseminates truthful, factual and trustworthy reports in order to meet the needs of the society at large by keeping it up to date. It educates by giving the public a broad knowledge of things happening around them thereby allowing for acquisition of skills through some of its educational programmes (Uwom, 2009). Through its educational programmes, viewers get to learn both the formal and largely the informal way and serves as a source of entertainment, inspiring and bringing not only relief and relaxation but also promoting social interaction and wellbeing among the citizenry.

Whereas television continues the above statutory known roles, it also brings to play the agenda setting role which is the idea that the media do not tell people what to think, but what to think about (Baran & Davis 2003). For this reason, television is said to serve as an effective medium to give prominence to societal matters that might/may have been taken with levity. It also fulfills the social learning role strengthening the belief that human beings learn from observation through its programs that bear moral ethics, with the capacity to modify the behavior of the public. Lastly, television serves as a persuasive tool by amending beliefs or actions of the public through well written scripts and mode of delivery, using its vantage inherent characteristics of visuals and sound in making ideas and suggestions both attractive and convincing.

The aforementioned roles therefore show how powerful television is, not only shaping an individual's perception about the basic things in life, but also contributing to

how people carry out their day to day activities whether through its ability to proffer information, entertain its viewers or even set agenda for various issues, events or situations in the society.

Television Programming

According to La'aro (2009), a program is a planned configuration of messages presented in a discernible shape, arrangement and style, occupying a marked broadcast hour, carrying a distinct title with the opening and closing having well-defined integrity. Onabajo (2001) as cited by La'aro (2009) concurred that “programming means determining the kinds of programs to make, the belt or slot in which to bring them out, the target audience, the ratio of mix of other programs type in relations to the ones being produced, the general objectives envisaged and the specific objectives of each program type.”

La'aro (2009) citing La'aro (2008), further affirmed programming as the 'process of conceiving, planning and scheduling, as well as providing efficient means of monitoring and evaluating radio and television services using the station's policy and objectives as the basis of such activity.'

Television programming helps unify people and its society because of the outstanding dissemination of various programs on television. This leaves the audience emotional and creates long-lasting memories that can never be forgotten. Television program types include talk shows, sports coverage, children's programming, game shows, religious programs, quiz shows, entertainment, features, films, documentaries, local and international news (Uwom, 2009).

Women and Television

Women no doubt spend quite a huge amount of time watching television, to the extent that it can almost be taken for granted that when compared to men, they rank higher. Lunden (2012), citing Nielsen's study corroborates this assertion by stating that when it comes to TV, women watch significantly more than men. Nielsen's research indicates that women spend almost 40minutes more than men everyday watching straight television – 4 hours, 11 minutes for women; 3 hours 34 minutes for men.

In recent decades, there has been a steady increase in the number of homes with multiple TV sets as well as the number of hours spent watching those TVs. Television does not only serve as a source of information for women, it also helps to keep them entertained with various reality shows, soap operas, musicals and more. Tagged as one of the primary agents of socialization in the society, television also helps to create or shape common world views, values or beliefs and most especially perspectives on how things should be done through the images and motion pictures, sounds, stories and so on. Take the everyday housewife as an example, who after doing her regular house chores and catering for the kids, more often than not may have nothing to keep herself busy and so she may seek out a means through which she can be entertained (Television in this case), pass time and also escape real-life boredom. This constant exposure to television daily for the number of hours she is less busy can inadvertently mould or influence her view or perception of things.

Adegoke (2015:16) corroborates the aforementioned by citing McQuail (1998) who developed a typology (classification) of media uses and the satisfaction audiences (women) claim to gain from these uses. McQuail posits that the four main areas are information, personal identity, integration, social interaction and entertainment. He went on to suggest that personal identity needs are often met through television viewing in the sense that television enables the audience members (women) to find “reinforcement for personal values, to find models of behaviour and to gain insight into one's self.”

Women, Television, Body Image and Body Dissatisfaction

Grogan (2007) as cited by Manwaring (2011) defines body image as “a person's perceptions, thoughts and feelings about his or her body.” She also defines body dissatisfaction as “a person's negative thought and feelings about his or her body. The representation of what the ideal body image should look like in the media has created the dual forces of unattainability and unhappiness for the majority of women. Sparhawk (2003), states that several studies have been done that indicate ways in which a woman's body image, self-esteem, and eating patterns are affected negatively by what she sees and hears from the media. She also cites Heinberg and Thompson (1995) who theorise that females who are exposed to appearance-related media are less satisfied with their body shape than females who are exposed to non-appearance related images. Women who are less satisfied with their bodies have a lower self-image and a lower self-esteem than women who are satisfied with their physical body.

The media can be said to be a strong conveyer of socio-cultural ideals and a contributor to the adaptation of common socio-cultural standards related to physical appearance or attractiveness. Dinç and Alisinanoğlu (2010) corroborate the above-mentioned by asserting that the media (Television in particular) is a very effective way to create and communicate social values about appearance. Citing Cash (2002), they posit that the cultural messages are not only about the sample opinions about the attractiveness and repulsiveness, but also expectations based on the gender.

Albarran (2000), as cited by Shrikhande (2003), referenced the Nielsen Media Research and Radio Advertising Bureau survey's submission that - on average, U.S. households watch more than seven hours of television per day, memorize slogans, absorb images without questioning them and more importantly do it without thinking. Shrikhande went on to declare Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorieli's (1980) position on these acts which they termed “the cultivation effect”. The effect of which they termed teaching of a common worldview, common roles and common values.

The images of slim or voluptuous women with spotless faces, waxed skins, lush, voluminous velvety hairs are constant on various television programs and these images are often integrated subconsciously in the minds of the viewers (women) as the standards for beauty. Thus, negative self-evaluation may occur every time the viewer compares herself with these supposedly ideal images. The unrealistic beauty ideals on television is an important source of social comparison and a possible cause of body dissatisfaction.

Dinç and Alisinanoğlu (2010) posit that adolescents (particularly females) are very intolerant against the body images that are different from the average such as very fat, very thin, early or late matured. Television plays an important role in this bias as it often

presents models who do not have any noticeable glitches on their body (such as acnes, dental braces and weight problems) and depict that illusion of perfection. This is yet another reason why the connection between the television, body image and body dissatisfaction is important. This connection is serious because low body image or body dissatisfaction sometimes could lead to disordered eating (anorexia, bulimia, binge eating), depression, low self-esteem and all these could possibly lead to death.

Concept of Ideal Beauty

In the sense that beauty can be described as involving many abstract and dynamic qualities which may either change or evolve from one generation to another or an individual to another, makes defining it a complex task. Basically, it can be said to be an individual's personal judgment or opinion which can be influenced by their values, beliefs, environment and more. Beauty basically has no definite definition as it varies from one individual to another.

According to Brooks (2013), Ideal beauty is often entangled within definitions of beauty. Ideal beauty becomes an aim to other women by providing a model of what beauty is. Brooks goes on to mention Krasner (2009) who explains what constitutes the exemplar of what female beauty is and how it is remoulded over time so that traits deemed most desirable at the time can be used as a standard for attractiveness. She postulates further that the traits often selected for the ideal beauty standard often exceed those which the vast majority of women possess, and may ever possess.

An ideal may therefore only be met by a limited number of people (women) because if too many people are able to achieve this set of ideals, the ideal will inevitably change in order to keep the status of being unique, vague and not easy to meet up with. Brook corroborates this position, asserting:

“By definition, an ideal should only be able to be met by a minority of women because if too many women were able to achieve it, the ideal would have to evolve again to maintain its exceptional but elusive nature. For this reason, ideal beauty is 'always which is most difficult to meet and the most unnatural in a given time' (Saltzberg and Chrisler, 1995, p.307). Promotion of an ideal beauty which is virtually impossible to reach for many women can produce feelings of failure and disappointment (Freedman, 2002) leading to lowered body image and self-esteem.”

With the above-mentioned, it is safe to conclude that when the images presented on television are that of women with perfect face structures, thin or curvaceous body frame, luscious skin, perfectly aligned teeth, spotless faces and so on, it becomes an impractical race a lot of women chase after and it is the inability to meet these ideals that results in low self-esteem and body dissatisfaction.

Fantasy of Beauty

The fantasy of what beauty is and the standards supposedly meant to be attained before being classified as beautiful can be said to have been imprinted into the minds of a lot of women from a very tender age. A lot of female children for example are exposed to a variety of television networks and programs which may have long before they are conscious of it, laid emphasis on beauty, meaning that what they saw and the impression

made on their minds of a beautiful lady or woman, may have been long sited before they try to define it themselves. Some of these television networks are Nickelodeon, Boomerang and Disney in particular. Some of the programs produced are 'Barbie,' 'Cinderella,' 'Snow white,' 'Sleeping beauty,' 'Goldilocks,' 'Little mermaid,' 'Frozen,' 'Rapunzel,' 'Pocahontas' and so on. The programs which are mostly animated in nature appeal to the senses of kids and teenagers. Most of the programmes lay emphasis on the physical features of their female characters. The female characters often have long hair, beautiful eyes, flawless skin, tiny waists and much more. Porter-Phillips (2014) in her write-up opines that:

“The Disney princesses have lots of things in common such as, hair, perfect features, tiny waists, big eyes and a beautiful singing voices. Jasmine, Pocahontas and Rapunzel all have extremely long hair that is very unrealistic and never gets tangled. Even Rapunzel, has hair so long she can use it as a rope. It is supposedly tangled and Rapunzel brushes her hair but it never really looks tangled. As for perfect features, all of the princesses have flawless skin.”

According to the website film and media 12 as cited by Porter-Phillips, Disney movies communicate four main qualities about women that are not true and which all the Disney princesses have. They are “(a) A woman's appearance is valued more than her intellect, (b) Women are helpless and in need of protection, (c) Women are domestic and are likely to marry and (d) Overweight women are ugly, unpleasant, and unmarried.” Using the aforementioned to carefully analyze or examine the fictional character from these programs, it is safe to say that the ugly, unappealing or unattractive women are often the witches, prosecutors, villains, rogues (take Snow White, Cinderella, Rapunzel and the Little Mermaid as an example) in the programs while the beautiful women with perfect features, long hair, amazing voices and so on are often depicted as the heroines, the ones who have it all, who get to have a happy ever after. They all have seemingly perfect lives and their beauty invariably helps them advance in life.

Therefore, it consequently becomes every child's dream to look like these fictional characters as they are all unconsciously brainwashed with the benefits that come with realizing this fantasy of beauty exhibited in these characters. Young girls who are exposed to such programs may feel they have to look like the fictional characters they see on these programs in order to have “perfect features” (that is long hair, small waist, amazing singing voice, beautiful eyes, perfect teeth and so on). Inability to attain the features of these fictional characters, may make them conclude that they are not beautiful. Sawyer (n.d.), corroborates this assertion by stating that “Feminists have regarded Disney movies as an unhealthy outlook for young children especially girls to watch for the physical attributes they suggest along with the values supporting male dominance”. Where young children (girls in particular) can't attain these unrealistic physical attributes, it can make them go through unhealthy extreme measures in order to look like the fictional characters they grew up perceiving as “beautiful.”

It is therefore safe to say that these television programs have in one way or the other set the standards females hope and try to meet as they grow older.

Methodology

This study which is centred on television viewing and its influence on women's perception of beauty was conducted using the Mixed-method (quantitative and qualitative) approach. The purposive sampling technique was adopted as it allowed the researchers pick respondents who possessed the required attributes (gender and age in this case). Respondents for both survey and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were selected using this sampling technique. Questionnaire and FGD were the instruments used to generate data from a total of 350 respondents drawn from both Babcock and Covenant universities. The data collected was subjected to statistical analysis using simple percentage method and simple descriptive method. The data gathered were represented in frequencies, tables and charts.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1: How much time does the Nigerian woman commit to television viewing?

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Yes	295	98.3
No	5	1.7
Total	300	100.0

Source: Field survey

Data in table 1 revealed 295 (98.3%) respondents claimed that they have a television set at home while 5 (1.7%) respondents do not have a television set at home. Although 1.7% of the respondents do not have a television set at home this may not indicate that the respondents do not watch television at all.

Table 2: Availability of a television set in respondent's room

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Yes	140	46.7
No	160	53.3
Total	300	100.0

Source: Field survey

Figures in table 2 revealed that 140 (46.7%) respondents claim that they have a television set in their own room while 160 (53.3%) do not, signifying that more respondents do not have a television set in their own room as depicted by 53.3% responses. This therefore indicates that the respondents most likely don't watch television on their own but rather with people (such as family, friends and so on) around them who can voice their opinions, views or ideas and inadvertently rub their ideas off on the respondent.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to the average number of hours spent watching television daily

	Frequency	Percent
Valid 9-12hrs	25	8.3
5-8hrs	136	45.3
0-4hrs	139	46.3
Total	300	100.0

Source: Field survey

Data in table 3 showed how many hours respondents spend on the average watching television daily; 25 (8.3%) spend 9-12hrs, 136 (45.3%) spend 5-8hrs, and 139 (46.3%) spend 0-4hrs. Judging by these results, it is safe to conclude that on the average, respondents spend 0-4hrs watching television daily as represented by 46.3% answers.

In answering research question one on the amount of time the Nigerian woman commits to television viewing; data shown in tables 1-3 revealed the respondents have television sets at home although not all have one in their own room. And that, on the average, respondents spend 0-4hrs watching television daily and regularly. The Nigerian woman therefore, commits between 0-4hrs daily watching television.

Ordinarily, these number of hours may seem small or insignificant, yet it is enough time to follow or watch specific favourite programmes like soap operas, dramas and so on. There is no doubt that when people watch something regularly, they tend to not just live that which is watched but may pattern their behaviour after their favourite persons or role models.

This aligns with Shrikhande (2003) citing of Albarran (2000), in the reference to the Nielsen Media Research and Radio Advertising Bureau survey's submission that - on average, U.S. households watch television a lot and for a consistent number of hours a day with the tendency to memorize slogans, absorb images without questioning them and more importantly do it without thinking. Although in the USA, it is an average of seven hours a day and in Nigeria, it is four hours.

Research Question 2: To what extent has television viewing influenced the Nigerian woman?

Table 4: Level of influence television wields on the Nigerian woman

S/N	Questions	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
1	Television influences a lot of the decisions women make on a daily basis	65 (21.7)	78 (26.0)	60 (20.0)	60 (20.0)	37 (12.3)	300 (100%)
2	Women make a lot of purchase decisions based on the things they see on television	78 (26.0)	65 (21.7)	100 (33.3)	20 (6.7)	37 (12.3)	300 (100%)
3	Fashion and Entertainment television programmes influence the way women dress	100 (33.3)	50 (16.7)	50 (16.7)	50 (16.7)	50 (16.7)	300 (100%)
4	Television viewing influences the way women behave or react to certain situations	25 (6.7)	50 (16.7)	115 (40.0)	39 (13.0)	71 (23.7)	300 (100%)
5	Women pattern their lifestyle in accordance with that of their television role models	50 (16.7)	100 (33.3)	59 (19.7)	41 (13.7)	50 (16.7)	300 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

(Note: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), U (Undecided), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree))

Data in table 4 revealed 143 (47.7%) respondents agree that television influences a lot of the decisions women make on a daily basis, 60 (20.0%) are undecided while 97 (32.3%) disagree. Also, 143 (47.7%) respondents agree that women make a lot of purchase decisions based on the things they see on television, 100 (33.3%) are undecided and 57 (19.0%) disagree.

Fashion and Entertainment television programs influence the way women dress, 150 (50.0%) agree, 50 (16.7) are undecided while 100 (33.3%) disagree. Also 75 (23.4%) respondents agree that television viewing influences the way women behave or react to certain situations, 115 (40.0%) are undecided and 110 (36.7%) disagree.

Furthermore, 150 (50%) respondents agree that women pattern their lifestyle in accordance with that of their television role models, 59 (19.7%) are undecided while 91 (30.4%) disagree.

In answering research question two on the extent to which television viewing influenced the Nigerian woman; data as shown in table 4 revealed respondents claimed:

- i. that television influences a lot of the decisions women make on a daily basis,
- ii. that women make a lot of purchase decisions based on the things they see on television,
- iii. that fashion and entertainment television programs influence the way women dress,
- iv. that women pattern their lifestyle in accordance with that of their television role models,
- v. Respondents are unsure whether television viewing influences the way women

behave or react to certain situations.

Therefore, to a very considerable extent television viewing influences the Nigerian woman's daily decision as regards purchases, dressing and lifestyle. Indicating that what they see on television can to a large extent influence their perception of issues, behaviour and ultimately decisions taken afterwards.

Research Question 3: To what degree has television influenced the Nigerian woman's perception of beauty?

Table 5: Extent to which television viewing has influenced the Nigerian woman's perception of beauty

S/N	Questions	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
6	Women are immune to the things seen on television	28 (9.3)	50 (16.7)	53 (17.7)	120 (40.0)	59 (19.7)	300 (100%)
7	Television sets the standard for beauty	65 (21.7)	78 (26.0)	60 (20.0)	60 (20.0)	37 (12.3)	300 (100%)
8	Television presents a realistic standard for beauty	78 (26.0)	65 (21.7)	100 (33.3)	20 (6.7)	37 (12.3)	300 (100%)
9	Anyone who doesn't meet the standards set for beauty by television isn't beautiful	20 (6.7)	50 (16.7)	120 (40.0)	50 (16.7)	60 (20.0)	300 (100%)
10	Women feel dissatisfied with their physical outlook after watching programmes on television with images of women with perfect features	27 (9.0)	38 (12.7)	138 (46.0)	49 (16.3)	48 (16.0)	300 (100%)

(Note: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), U (Undecided), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree)

Source: Field Survey

Data in table 5 revealed 78 (26.0%) respondents agree that women are immune to the things seen on television, 53 (17.7%) are undecided and 179 (59.7%) disagree. 143 (47.7%) respondents agree that television sets the standard for beauty, 60 (20.0%) are undecided while 97 (32.3%) disagree.

On television's capacity to set the standard for beauty, 143 (47.7%) respondents agree that, television presents a realistic standard for beauty, 100 (33.3%) are undecided and 57 (19.0%) disagree. 70 (23.4%) agree that anyone who doesn't meet the standards set for beauty by television isn't beautiful, 120 (40.0%) are undecided while 110 (36.7%) disagree.

Also, women feel dissatisfied with their physical outlook after watching programmes on television with images of women with perfect features, 65 (21.7%) agree, 138 (46.0%) are undecided while 97 (32.3%) disagree.

Reviewing research question three on the extent to which television viewing influenced the Nigerian woman's perception of beauty; data as presented in table 5 revealed respondents claimed:

- i. that women are not immune to the things seen on television, indicating that what they see can affect them and agree that television sets the standard for beauty and presents a realistic standard of beauty for women, although -
- ii. respondents are not sure whether anyone who doesn't meet the standards set for beauty by television is not beautiful, nor are they -
- iii. Sure if women feel dissatisfied with their physical outlook after watching programmes on television with images of women with perfect features.

However, the fact that majority agree that women are not immune to what they see on television, and recognize television as a source of standard rule on beauty, indicates how much influence television viewing wields on the Nigerian woman and by extension her perception of beauty.

Research Question 4: How far is the Nigerian woman likely to go in order to attain her self/body-image in line with standards set by television?

Table 6: The extent to which the Nigerian woman is likely to go in order to attain herself/body-image in accordance with standards set by television

S/N	Questions	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
11	Women wish they had a particular body feature similar to that of a famous celebrity	65 (21.7)	78 (26.0)	60 (20.0)	60 (20.0)	37 (12.3)	300 (100%)
12	The only way a woman can feel good about herself is if she looks exactly like the images displayed on television of beautiful women	27 (9.0)	38 (12.7)	138 (46.0)	49 (16.3)	48 (16.0)	300 (100%)
13	Women can go to any length in order to meet the standards of beauty set by television	65 (21.7)	78 (26.0)	60 (20.0)	60 (20.0)	37 (12.3)	300 (100%)
14	The criteria set for beauty are unrealistic and unattainable	10 (3.3)	20 (6.7)	100 (33.3)	100 (33.3)	70 (23.3)	300 (100%)

(Note: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), U (Undecided), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree))

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Information in table 6 revealed 143 (47.7%) respondents agree that women wish they had a particular body feature similar to that of a famous celebrity, 60 (20.0%) are undecided and 97 (32.3%) disagree. 65 (21.7%) agree that the only way a woman can feel good about herself is if she looks exactly like the images displayed on television of beautiful women, 138 (46.0%) are undecided while 97(32.3%) disagree.

Additionally, women can go to any length in order to meet the standards of beauty set by television, 143 (47.7%) respondents agree, 60 (20.0%) are undecided while 97 (32.3%) disagree. And 30 (10.0%) agree that the criteria set for beauty are unrealistic and unattainable, 100 (33.3%) are undecided while 170 (56.6%) disagree.

In answering research question four on how far the Nigerian woman is likely to go in order to attain herself/body-image in line with standards set by television; information in table 6 summarily revealed respondents attested that:

- i. women wish they had a particular body feature similar to that of a famous celebrity, as they can go to any length in order to meet the standards of beauty set by television, because they do not believe that the criteria set for beauty are unrealistic and unattainable,
- ii. though not decided as to whether the only way a woman can feel good about herself is if she looks exactly like the images displayed on television of beautiful women

Qualitative Analysis: Focus Group Discussion Results

In this section, the researcher's focus was to draw out from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) groups (Babcock and Covenant Universities) thoughts that they possibly could not adequately express due to the nature and structure of the questionnaire that either required a yes or no, agree/strongly agree/undecided/disagree/strongly disagree or just ticking suitable answers. Results gathered from the focus group discussions revealed that majority of the respondents claimed they watch television frequently. The results also revealed that quite a large number of respondents are of the opinion that television influences the Nigerian woman's perception of what being beautiful entails as they all expressed how the various television programs they watch featuring their various Hollywood television role models have in one way or another influenced their own perception of beauty. A large proportion of the respondents also revealed that a lot of the decisions they make on a daily basis is largely influenced by what they see on television (citing examples like weather reports, advertisements, fashion and entertainment programs and so on). The FGDs also helped ascertain the opinion of respondents on the commonly held thought that being fat or slim, light or dark skinned defines a beautiful woman. A fraction of the FGD participants found this thought absurd and illogical and opined that a woman's complexion and body size should not discredit her from being classified as beautiful. Another fraction of the respondents on the other hand opined that to a large extent, this ideology is true because according to them whether we like it or not, most of the women we feel are beautiful are either slim or light skinned. They further asserted that even the thick fat women are constantly trying to lose weight. Majority of the respondents also admitted that they wish they could change one or two physical features on their body in order to look like their television role models. When asked if they had ever done anything or attempted to change their physical appearance in anyway, majority of the respondents revealed that they have gone as far as wearing padded underwear, dousing their face with heavy makeup, extreme dieting, and using a variety of cosmetics to alter their look in one way or another.

Discussion of Findings

Reviewing research question one on how much time the Nigerian woman commits to television viewing; respondents' answers as shown in tables 1-3 and the FGDs conducted summarily revealed that majority of the respondents have a television set at home but not in their own rooms and on the average, respondents spend 0-4hrs watching television daily and regularly.

Findings in table 1- 3and the focus group discussion corroborates the submission of Lunden (2012) that, women spend 4 hours, 11 minutes watching television daily. This in this case is true because 139 (46.3%) respondents claimed they spend 0-4 hours watching television regularly and daily. Television doesn't only serve as a source of information for women, it also helps to keep them entertained with various reality shows, soap operas, musicals etc. Adegoke (2015:16) corroborates the aforementioned by citing McQuail (1998) who posits that the four main uses of the television are information, personal identity, integration, social interaction and entertainment. McQuail went on to suggest that personal identity needs are often met through television viewing in the sense that television enables the audience members (women) to find “reinforcement for personal values, to find models of behaviour and to gain insight into one's self”.

It is therefore safe to say that television is one of the primary agents of socialization in the society. It also helps to create or shape common world views, values or beliefs and most especially perspectives on how things should be done through the images and motion pictures, sounds, stories and so on. In this case television can be said to have played a significant role in moulding the perspectives, views, opinions women have of what beauty entails.

In reviewing research question two on the extent television has influenced the Nigerian woman's daily decision's on purchase, fashion and entertainment and behavioral acts; Respondents answers as shown in table 4revealed that television influences a lot of the decisions women make on a daily basis. Also, women make a lot of purchase decisions based on the things they see on television. Data gathered also revealed that fashion and entertainment television programmes influence the way women dress and that they also pattern their lifestyle in accordance with that of their television role models. The respondents however, are unsure whether television viewing influences the way women behave or react to certain situations. This therefore signifies that, to a very considerable extent, television viewing influences the Nigerian woman's daily decision as regards purchases, dressing and lifestyle.

The result of the focus group discussion lends support to the findings from the quantitative analysis. Respondents from both universities believe television wields a lot of influence on the Nigerian woman as they revealed that due to their exposure to various television programs they learn new things ranging from fashion to entertainment and even news. The respondents' discussions also reveal that when they see things that they like on television they often feel a strong urge to get it. Only a few respondents opined that they don't get influenced by the things they see on television as they always try to remind themselves of what is real and what isn't.

The findings corroborates Bandura's (1986) social learning (or observational learning) theory (McQuail, 2005:491), which states that individuals can't obtain much knowledge from the things experienced or observed directly, that knowledge can mainly be obtained by observing the behaviours of others. People learn by observing the behaviours, attitudes and outcome of the behaviour of others. Baran and Davis (2012) argue that observers can acquire symbolic representations of the behaviour, and these "pictures in their heads" provide them with information on which to base their own subsequent behaviour. They further contended that media characters (models) can influence behaviour simply by being depicted on the screen.

Studies have shown that the media play a vital role in the way the human mind perceives things. Schefft (2015), reporting Dannielle Bessett's study on how women understand their television viewing practices regarding pregnancy and birth for example, posited that women exercised a lot of apprehension as to what happens to them when they get pregnant simply because of what they have seen of other pregnant women on television.

Borchers (2002:4) also posits that we live in a time when television dominates how we experience the world. Television, he contends, transcends the erroneous belief that it is only a channel of communication or way of transmitting information. Rather, beyond being a pipeline for information to our homes, it changes both the sender, receiver of the information and the culture in which the information is transmitted.

It is therefore safe to conclude that television influences the way the average Nigerian woman goes about her day to day activities, carries out her daily purchases and even her attitude to certain circumstances.

Research question three on the degree to which television has influenced the Nigerian woman's perception of beauty; data presented in table 5 revealed respondents are of the opinion that women are not immune to the things seen on television, that is, women are not resistant to the power or influence television plays in the society. According to Devadas and Ravi (2013), many studies conducted in behavioural sciences scientifically proved that television has an impact on its viewers especially on young adults. Some of such impacts vary but largely hovers around the ideologies of life, religious leanings, what is fit to be worn, what is bought and why they should be purchased. At other instances, the media even directs or influences what is consumed and the body image in general. The respondents also agree that television sets the standard for beauty and presents a realistic standard of beauty for women. This therefore denotes that women believe the standards put in place via the various television programs they watch are accurate and also that Nigerian women's perception of what beauty entails is in accordance with what is portrayed or dictated by television. The respondents are however not sure whether anyone who doesn't meet the standards set for beauty by television is not beautiful. The data further revealed that respondents are not sure if women feel dissatisfied with their physical outlook after watching programmes on television with images of women with perfect features. The FGD also revealed respondents believe television influences the way every Nigerian woman perceives beauty. Majority of the respondents are of the opinion that women often believe what

they see on television is “beauty”. That is, perfect teeth, perfect hair, hazel eyes and perfectly polished cheek bones. “Women” according to the respondents, are usually of the opinion that the women on TV would not have been picked for a role in a movie or an advert if they weren't the definition of “beauty” or if they did not meet the standards or criteria set by television.

According to Littlejohn and Foss (2008:299), in reference to Gerber's work on the cultivation theory, which asserts that:

“Television is a centralized system of storytelling. It is part and parcel of our daily lives...television cultivates from infancy 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...”

McQuail (2005) also asserts that “...viewing television gradually leads to the adoption of beliefs about the nature of the social world which conforms to the stereotyped, distorted and very selective view of reality as portrayed in a systematic way in television fiction and news.” Some of such impacts vary but largely hovers around the ideologies of life, religious leanings, what is fit to be worn, what is bought and why they should be purchased. At other instances, the media even directs or influences what is consumed and the body image in general.

Olayeye (2015) in her documentary asserts that “when our eyes are constantly focusing on the media, our perception becomes distorted. We begin to develop fanciful ideas of the way we should live, look and behave. We begin to develop thoughts of what the ideal is and by doing that, we silence dimensions, others and ourselves.” She further contended that “when the mind is constantly swamped with the images the media claim to be beautiful, we begin to feel pressure to fit into an unrealistic mould and we begin to cast away our own raw beauty to seek something unattainable. And when our ears are constantly filled with voices telling us what is acceptable and what isn't, we lose pieces of ourselves, we lose the ability to believe that we are good enough.”

Vonderer and Kinnally (2012:43), citing Hendriks and Burgoon (2003) corroborate this assertion by stating;

...that women who are exposed to heavy amounts of thin-ideal media are likely to accept this as a norm. Holstrom (2004) posited that dissatisfaction arises when heavy viewers begin to see this thin-ideal not only as realistic, but also physically attainable. If women who accept these body shapes as the norm and judge themselves in relation to those images, body dissatisfaction can occur (Schooler, et al., 2004).

Media's presentation of what beauty is, shapes the audience' mind in a way that they feel the need to fit into the categories or standards placed before them in the various media channels like magazines, movies, advertisements, music videos and television programming in particular. Sometimes this is done by the individuals involved at costs that might be extortionate, all in the bid to be classified, beautiful.

Saltzberg et. al, (1995) also queried, “given the high costs of striving to be beautiful, why do women attempt it?” Attractiveness unfortunately they argue, greatly affects first impressions and later interpersonal relationships. The annual survey by the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS) for example shows that 13 percent of facial plastic surgeons surveyed saw an increase in request for celebrity procedures in 2014, up from 3 percent in 2013 and 7 percent in 2012. The results of this survey supports the idea or notion that women's perception of beauty can be influenced by the standards set or put in place by various television programs.

With the finding stated above it is safe to conclude that television to a large extent has in one way or the other moulded the Nigerian woman's perception of what being beautiful entails. It has also set the criteria women feel they have to meet in order to be tagged beautiful.

Research question four on how far the Nigerian woman is likely to go in order to attain her self/body-image in line with the standards set by television; data as presented in table 6 revealed women wish they had a particular body feature similar to that of a famous celebrity. It also revealed the respondents can go to any length in order to meet the standards of beauty set by television, because they do not believe that the criteria set for beauty are unrealistic and unattainable. As to whether the only way a woman can feel good about herself is if she looks exactly like the images displayed on television of beautiful women, the respondents are undecided. The focus group discussion revealed that majority of the respondents wished they could change or alter certain features on their body to their favourite Hollywood celebrities and also disclosed using various methods (make up, padded underwear and so on) in order to alter their look and have a semblance to their television role-model.

This judgment by the respondents affirms the cultivation theory's tenets as they simply have learnt or grown to cultivate the reality portrayed on television, making judgments on what they will do or not do with their bodies or even how they will like to look based reality they cultivated from television viewing.

According to Sarmela (1975), Cultural imperialism is the economic, technological and cultural hegemony of the industrialized nations, which determines the direction of both economic and social progress, defines cultural values, and standardizes the civilization and cultural environment throughout the world.

The developed nations are more technologically developed in television when compared to developing nations. Therefore developing countries mostly depend on the programs being aired by developed countries, affirming the position of the cultural imperialism theory. These programs portray the culture or cultural values of the developed countries and inadvertently will be imbibed by the developing countries as a result of continuous exposure. It is for this reason that Samela (1975:1) posits that:

“Western ideologies, political beliefs, western science, western laws and social institutions, western moral concepts, sexual symbols and ideals of beauty, western working methods and leisure activities, western foods, western pop idols and the western concept of human existence have become objectives, examples and norms everywhere in the world.”

According to Moet (2014), citing Dalnet (2002) who posits that "The images that are presented in advertising are designed to create an illusion, a fantasy ideal that will keep women continually consuming the influential power of the diet, fashion, cosmetic and beauty industries..." It is therefore safe to say that the media definitely play a significant role in creating the narrow definitions of beauty that some women have embraced. Akintayo and Adegoke (2015) citing Baran (2006), posits that "The US culture largely values thinness and beauty in women." They argue that this can be seen in programmes like *Dr 90210* and *Botched* on E-entertainment television. The researchers therefore went on to ask: "can these programmes influence the thought process of Nigerian youths to the extent that they become not just conscious of what they look like, but even go ahead to become dissatisfied with their body shape."

Unfortunately the answer to the above question is yes, as a lot of young females having suffered from the continuous reinforcement of specific images of beauty on television, deny themselves food, watch what they eat, fall victims of Ulcer and anorexia on a daily basis. Observational studies carried out show that undergraduate females in universities spend quite some time in their school's medical facilities treating ailments that are direct results of not eating well. Many spend time at gyms first and foremost as a result of wanting to shed weight or have flat tummies and much more. They carry pictures of their idols on their phones with different shots of the idols showcasing the bodies and image they seek to attain. All these efforts either are as a result of having suffered body shaming, low self-esteem, but completely having nothing to do with real zeal to be physically fit.

Kawecki (2010:53), posits that:

...the distorted view of the female body negatively affects the self-image of all individuals who do not meet the standards of the "ideal" sexuality and beauty naturally. Even those who appear to be socially accepted as the "ideal" beauty suffer because the "ideal" does not exist. As a result, women induce physical regimes in order to compete with the ideal standard of beauty.

Kawecki went on to assert that females may therefore resort to dieting in order to lose weight and they may develop a preoccupation with counting calories before meals. It is therefore safe to conclude that when the images presented on television are that of women with perfect face structures, thin or curvaceous body frame, luscious skin, perfectly aligned teeth, spotless faces and so on, it becomes an impractical race a lot of women chase after and the inability to meet these ideals may result in low self-esteem and body dissatisfaction.

Therefore, the female gender needs to be proud of their own beauty, body type and complexion as, majority of the beauty 'model' portrayed by the media through television are simply illusions and not reality. It is not out of place to be up-to-date with current trends in the world of fashion and beauty but women must spend more time understanding the climate, culture and body type of other women before attempting to set such (model) as standard for achieving beauty.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that Nigerian women commit on the average between 0-4hrs daily watching television and to a very considerable extent, the various television programs they watch have in one way or the other influenced the daily decisions they make as regards purchases, dressing and lifestyle. It also revealed that the Nigerian woman's perception of beauty is wrapped around the standards of beauty set by television as majority of the respondents believe television presents a realistic standard of beauty for women. This therefore denotes that women believe the standards put in place by television is accurate and the Nigerian woman's perception of what beauty entails is in accordance with what is portrayed or dictated by television. This is corroborated by the FGD where the respondents revealed that they wished they could change or alter certain features on their body in order to have a semblance to their favourite Hollywood celebrities who in their opinion are beautiful. Respondents disclosed that they went to great lengths in order to give the illusion of perfection (such as; make up, padded underwear, creams to whiten skin, aggressive dieting and so on) and look like the women they admire on television.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were drawn, hopefully to enable Nigerian women know that beauty is not limited to what is shown on television.

One of the major findings made from this research is that television has so much influenced the Nigerian woman's perception of beauty that they will try very hard to look like the Hollywood celebrities they constantly watch on TV at whatever cost. In order to correct this misconception of beauty ideal, television producers in particular should try not to limit beauty to a particular set of standards.

Advertisers, producers, directors and other media practitioners should try in their programs to recreate what constitutes beauty in the viewers' mind. Talents for audition of roles should not just be the thin or fair complexioned. There should be a constant and repeated projection of women with various characteristics, regardless of their size, colour, skin tone, shape or height, on the specific television programs especially those women are most likely to watch (such as soap operas, reality shows and so on). Champions should be made of such women who are not only thin but also those of corpulent size (dark or light skinned). This can help remould and bring about a reversal of the narrow perception women have about what constitutes beauty.

Results from the FGD revealed that a lot of women believe that what they see on television is "beauty". That is, perfect teeth, perfect hair, hazel eyes, perfectly polished cheek bones and so on. This ideology may be traced back to the infantile stage of most women as they are constantly exposed to television programs where the beautiful women often have tiny waists, long hair, perfectly structured faces and so on and the ugly ones are depicted as fat or chubby with uneven hair edges. Some of such programs are Cinderella, Snow white, beauty and the beast and so on. Parents should therefore not only try to explain to their young female children that beauty is not limited to these

specific characters displayed on television but also help them understand that not everything they see on television is reality. This will help build the self-esteem and self-image of the younger female generation irrespective of their size or colour.

The government and broadcast proprietors also needs to make the broadcast environment more friendly by creating an atmosphere where producers can be more creative and naturally make programmes that will promote the African or Nigerian beauty (skin, teeth, color and stature) such that there will be a shift from the way beauty is being perceived by young and growing undergraduates.

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