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THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN PERPETUATING
THE 'POP CULTURE'
AMONG KENYAN YOUTH

Moderator

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree in Social Communication

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work
to my loving parents and my three brothers
who have supported and encouraged me
as I did this research.
May you all be blessed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am highly appreciative of the support given to this investigation by the people around Westlands.

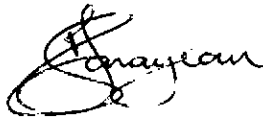
My sincere gratitude to the research supervisor Dr. Wanakacha Samita for the critical follow up of this work, to my dearest friends Ashi Danjuma and Ben Omol and Tosin for their continued support and encouragement all through these years.

Further gratitude goes to my family, friends and members of the St. Patrick's Society for providing all the required support for this research. Thank you all for making the research a reality in such a short time.

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree in Social Communication. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

Signed:



Name of Student:


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This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college supervisor.

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Name of Supervisor:

DR ZACHARY W. SMITH

Date:

17th OCTOBER 2006

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This research is aimed at identifying the cause of the different changes occurring within the youth living in Westlands a cosmopolitan area with a variety of people. For sometime, I have had the opportunity to see for myself the transformation the people of Westlands Division here in Kenya have gone under. It has been very interesting. This has drawn my interest and my curiosity into an in-depth analysis of it. These transformations are in the form of image and style of dressing, language and social behaviour. According to me, the influence in these changes come through the media especially the Western media because a high percentage of the television content in our Kenyan TVs is Western. In the past, different cultures were formed because they had different political opinions and needed a route to air them. "Popular culture is perceived to be a political arena, a place where certain ideas are advocated and others are condemned."¹ Within today's culture from the West the values are not of political motives but are influential in the social aspect of the Kenyan youth. This type of culture is defined as "popular culture". so vast an area that, we can only focus on certain aspects. In so doing, we hope to analyse how media has perpetuated Western culture in Kenya today. According to Edward

¹ C. FRIEDBERG, *Popular Culture, An Introduction*, 3.

Taylor, a British anthropologist, "culture is that complex whole, which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as members of society."² This is seen in the detailed descriptions of the traditional culture in Africa. "Geertz defined culture as historically transmitted patterns of meaning embodied in symbols by means of which men and women communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about an attitude to life."³

Culture is described as dynamic, meaning, it changes quickly or gradually with time. One of the agents of change is Westernisation: An assimilation of Western culture, the social process of becoming familiar with or converting to the customs and practices of Western civilization. Westernisation has been stated to have the biggest impact on African culture. It is from the Western world that I analyse the term *Pop Culture*.

"Pop" is the short form of the word 'popular'. *Pop Culture* in my own understanding is the latest and most *hype* way of living among youth today. *Pop Culture* is the way one presents oneself in appearance, the way he or she talks or walks; one's social behaviour, and one's entertainment preference. My interest is in how this form of culture from the West spills over and is adopted by the Kenyan youth.

Pop culture is most prevalent on the electronic media such as television, movies as well as on print media such as magazines. This research aims at investigating the effects of Western *Pop Culture*, portrayed through the mass media, on the youth in Kenya especially those living in Westlands.

² Z. SAMITA, *Communication Culture and Society*, Lecture notes.

³ Z. SAMITA, *Communication Culture and Society*, Lecture notes.

Hypothesis

- ❖ Exposure to media accelerates adoption of *Western Pop Culture* by Kenyan youth.
- ❖ *Pop Culture* in Kenya is most prevalent in the local movie and music industry in Kenya.
- ❖ That people can do something to shape and control the influence of pop culture.

Context of Investigation

My area of investigation will be in sections of Westlands Division. These sections will include *Sarit Centre*, *The Mall*, Mobil Petrol Station, *Hidden Agenda* and *Crooked Q*, which are zones frequented by the youth.

Specific Population

The young people, I am investigating are, of ages between 15 and 30 years. I have selected this age group for various reasons. It is at this stage that they seek to identify and express themselves and are easily influenced by the media. They find themselves looking for ideas in areas such as style, language, information on what's new and happening in the outside world.

Structure Of The Thesis

This research will be presented in three chapters. The first chapter focuses on African and *Western pop culture*. It presents a clear working definition of the concept of *pop culture*

and elements entailed in *Pop Culture*. These elements include: Image and appearance; entertainment preferences (music and movies); language and; social behaviour.

The chapter has a brief history various manifestations of *Pop Culture* that have emerged in the past years, relating them to contemporary culture. Since *Pop Culture* is known to play a big role in the formation of these cultures, the chapter highlights this role and effects on youth.

Given that this is a broad topic to cover in the research, I have chosen to narrow it down to two elements, which are image and social behaviour, as they relate with other dimensions. Chapter two is the methodology used in this research endeavour. This was through participant observation, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, pictures and content analysis of some magazines. Analysis and interpretation was done to discover the findings of the research. Since media seem to significantly affect the youth today, the second part of this chapter sees to apply the different media theories that lead to the formation of cultures. This underlines relationship between youth and the media. In chapter three deals with case studies of countries that have policies that have worked to improve their film industry. The application of my research deals with policies that the Kenya Government has and needs in relation to media to help improve the local film industry and in turn help eradicate the Western popular culture. Modalities to implement this are included. Finally, the study has concluding remarks. A brief summary of the research is given in relation to the major findings.

Objectives

- To find out whether or not the Western *Pop Culture* that is portrayed on the media is indeed affecting Kenyan youth.
- To see whether or not *Pop Culture* in Kenya has taken over the local movie and music industry in Kenya.

Significance

This topic is very relevant because there are changes in youth behaviour here in Kenya and worldwide. Youngsters have begun mimicking Western youth. We have accepted that such changes are bound to happen because culture is dynamic. What we need is to account for such changes. We must seek to understand youth today instead of condemning them. My aim is to persuade the people on the seriousness and importance of this study and state how foreign culture in Westlands has impacted the youth. We need to look into the policies that apply to the media with a view to establishing their effectiveness even in terms of policy formulation and implementation.

Finally, I believe this topic is researchable and literature can be found.

Sources of Information

Secondary data:

- Library books
- Internet
- 'Buzz' magazine within the *Sunday Nation* newspaper.

Primary sources:

- In-depth Interviews
- Participant Observation
- Questionnaires
- Photographs

Limitation

Unreceptive public

During my in-depth interviews, it proved difficult to have some interviews. Some of the people were adamant not to be interviewed. This was a small discouragement and a minor set back. In spite of this, we got some very corporative and resourceful respondents.

CHAPTER 1

“POP CULTURE”:

A DYNAMIC AND CREATIVE WORLD

Introduction

In this first chapter, is the definition and discussion of Pop Culture, its nature, characteristics, manifestations and context initially today. The chapter proceeds to examine media exposure of the youth to the Western Pop Culture. This may be through electronic media such as TV, the new media, Internet, and also through print media such as magazines. Further, the chapter gives a detailed description of my area of investigation, the location population and the lifestyle. This chapter concludes with the section on the influence of Western Pop Culture on youth in Kenya

1.1. Defining Pop Culture

As has already been stated in the general introduction, anthropologist E. Taylor, defines, "culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."⁴

Louis Luzbetak, a Catholic anthropologist, describes "culture as a people's way of coping with physical, social and environmental issues hence reflecting people's worldview."⁵ The word "pop" comes from the word "popular", which means, "Pleasing to, enjoying the favour of; or prevailing among the people; suited to the understanding or the means of ordinary people seeking the favour of the common people."⁶ Indeed, "popular culture has the audacity to make pleasure its purpose."⁷ This means that popular culture is created to satisfy and please the individual within the society. It may satisfy their need for democracy or their need for good appearance.

"Popular Culture refers to a whole range of phenomena, many of which are connected to mass communication."⁸ The term popular culture could also refer to, "the texts carried by the mass media and to a large range of non-mediated activities, interests and behaviours - though these behaviours may be indirectly connected to the media. I am talking here about fads, fashions and other forms of collective behaviour."⁹

⁴ Z. SAMITA, *Communication Culture and Society* Lecture notes.

⁵ Z. SAMITA, *Communication Culture and Society*, Lecture notes.

⁶ Oxford Dictionary, *Popular*

⁷ C. FRECCERO, *Popular Culture. An Introduction*, 3.

⁸ A.A BERGER, *Essentials of Mass Communication Theory*, 122.

⁹ A.A.BERGER, *Essentials of Mass Communication Theory*, 122.

Therefore, pop culture is defined as the latest and most hype way of living among different types of youth today that aim to please their own desire. It is seen in their appearance, way of social behaviour and in their language. The elements and characteristics of pop culture are dynamic not static. They change with time. For example, this year being 2006 the hype thing could be to wear dreadlocks only to change in 2007 to for instance an Afro.

1.2 Traditional (African) Culture

African popular culture here refers to the traditional culture that existed in the past and still exists within certain communities here in Kenya, for example, the Maasai. The traditional culture mostly used the spoken word to communicate. These past cultures were rich in their values and beliefs and had different ways to ensure that the members of the community upheld these systems. In case of one breaking the law, there were repercussions. Within the African context, culture enabled people to behave maturely in society; it enhanced order within society through conventions and code of conduct. Culture was critical in interpreting reality and meaning. In particular, it enhanced human relations.

Within this kind of setting there were many modes of communicating messages. Examples include myths, songs, drama and proverbs. A myth is a sacred tale that represents a community's truth and teaching. A song was a participative way of storing information and giving evidence of past event. Drama was part of expressive media that may involve dance, among others. A proverb was used to reflect the wisdom of the community or teachings about aspects of life such as health, religious and social life.

All in all, these forms of media were meant to function in diverse ways within the society as communication vehicles to;

1. Preserve and transmit societal values. For instance, a song could be transmitted through various generations and retained.
2. Authenticate values and belief systems and practices.
3. Explain the social norms as well as values e.g. rituals and proverbs and myths
4. Act as a social control within the society-inspiring adherence to societal norms and value and dissuade people not to transcend certain limits e.g. with regard to marriage and gender.
5. Cultivate a communication spirit. To give a sense of belonging within the society. Communitarian spirit integrated the divine and the human.

The traditional culture valued the rites of passage, namely birth, initiation, marriage and death.

The rites were used to mark an individual's social mobility, transformation from one social status perceived to be inferior to another one perceived to be superior. The series of teachings and instructions became the cardinal formal formation. In order to acquire the integral wisdom and knowledge of the community one had to go through them.¹⁰

In each successive status, the individual acquires new privileges and responsibilities. The African setting had informal education that ranged from history, family life education, sex education, physical education, arts and crafts, moral, ethics and medicine. All this was for the sustainability of the society.

Over the years, many agents of cultural change have occurred. With this came formal education. Some of these agents are inter-marriages between cultures, inter-trade

¹⁰ Z. SAMUELA, *Communication Culture and Society*, Lecture notes.

relations, colonisation and other forms of westernisation. Westernisation is an assimilation of western culture, the social process of becoming familiar with or converting to the customs and practices of Western civilization. With westernisation came education, religion, technology and institutions. These aspects of westernisation have significantly affected the African traditional culture both positively and negatively. My focus is on the impact the media has had on our cultural values today.

1.3. African Popular Culture

With the coming of colonisation, missionaries brought in new kinds of associations, new forms of identity and new publics that have been forged in Africa. "The press, the church, the school and more recently the electronic media addressed new categories of listeners. New forms of entertainment- organised sports, cinema, commercial theatre have brought large numbers of people together in new ways."¹¹

Although Western culture was not significantly different from the African's, the missionaries came into Africa with the intent of providing formal education to the African. They believed Africans to be uncivilised and introduced Christianity to them. Gradually aspects of African traditional cultural beliefs, values and practices started being negative and wrong. For example, polygamy and circumcision are not as popular as in the past. Currently they are fading away. Nevertheless in some Kenyan cultures such as the Maasai, these are still strongly adhered to.

Even after the end of colonisation, Africans in general and Kenyans in particular have been immensely impacted and have great interest in the happenings in the West. "To

¹¹ K. BARBER, *Readings in African Popular Culture*, 4.

'develop' simply means to become more like Britain or the United states."¹² Kenyans who had the opportunity of acquiring formal education equally changed according to the new changes that occur in the West. They ignore their own traditional culture and adopted the ways of the West. From my own research, I was able to categorize the popular culture evolution that occurred in Kenya since the sixties, and named them according to the most distinctive elements: dress patterns, singing styles or dancing styles, among many others. As the years went on and the popular culture in the west evolved so did the culture in Kenya. One of the greatest influences would come from musicians.

1.3.1. Bell-Bottoms Era

During this era, the Kenyan youth appreciated music from Elvis Presley, ABBA and James Brown who dressed in bell-bottoms and grew their hair long. This was known as an Afros. Bell-bottoms were trousers that were tight on the hips and thighs and wider at the bottom (Cf. Appendix I). Afros was the growing out of hair into a big size and was neatly kept (Cf. Appendix II). The ladies would wear the same trousers or short skirts and large eye rings. The dancing style requires one to twist their hips. The shoes they would wear were known as platforms because the heel was the size of a block. Some of the youth aped this in support with the black movement led by the Martin Luther King Jr. This popular culture went into the seventies.

¹² C. MCCARTHY, *The Uses of Culture: Education and the Limits of Ethnic Affiliation*, 43.

1.3.2. Rap and Break Era

During the eighties, the trend in clothing style changed dramatically from the tight bell-bottoms to buggy jeans and big t-shirts. This was referred to as the 'Rap and Break era'. This is because the youth would sing songs that are fast in intonation. This was known as Rapping. The dancing style in this period was to either move like robots or spin and whirl on the ground with the help of hands and legs. Shoes worn were mostly sneakers. This is because if there came a time when one required to rap and break, one would be ready.

1.3.3. Dot Com Era

Today the culture is much different. The previous popular culture had a sense of conservativeness in the dressing and in the lyrics of the songs. However, today's popular culture has liberalised in a great way. The dressing styles are far more revealing than the 1960's and the lyrics of the songs are crude in terms of sexuality, full of vulgarities. Today's culture is not essentially original but a case of mix and match. The culture has picked up a few characteristics from different periods mixed and matched to produce what is there today. What was known as the bell-bottoms is now known as hipsters and the rapping that was there in the 1980s is now the norm in the music industry.

All this has taken place within the urban setting of the Kenyan society. Kenyans who acquired formal education that passed on from generation to generation. All this happened with the help of the media that effectively portrayed the popular culture of the West.

1.4. Western Popular Culture

A commonly stated point of origin for the phenomenon that we today refer to, as 'youth culture' is the period immediately following the end of the Second World War. Over the years, many different pop cultures have emerged and later disappeared. With these different cultures came totally different values, outlooks and viewpoints differences in fashion, clothing, hairstyles, speech patterns, leisure choices and music preferences. The differences on the surface turned out to indicate differences below, differences of value and perspective. Thus, the way an individual would dress would be a statement in itself.

Grant McCracken identified three features of our world today.

1. *There is difference everywhere:* that is "the world is hot and changeable, a house of many mansions, a place of robust diversity and difference."¹³
Each individual wants and needs to be him/herself or to belong to a particular group/society/community. Not everyone is of like mind. This explains the variety we have, the different religions that are present in this world, and the different social classes. It is also a reason why the world has people with diverse life-styles.
2. *It is a dynamic world* - "everything is in almost constant motion."¹⁴ This is why over the years, many pop cultures have emerged and later disappeared. For example, the Hippies of the 1960s made a come back in the 1990s; Rockers, Punks and many others existed in the past. The world

¹³ G. MCCRACKEN, *Plenitude: Culture by Commotion*
<<http://www.sonelifeafrica.com/model/subcult3.htm>>, 16/03/2005, 1.

¹⁴ G. MCCRACKEN, *Plenitude: Culture by Commotion*
<<http://www.sonelifeafrica.com/model/subcult3.htm>>, 16/03/2005, 1.

is changeable. We have not stuck to the same culture all through. Even the culture existing today will later on disappear and a new pop culture will emerge. This is life.

3. *It is a creative world* - "deep within this culture, there is a relentless generative impulse. With each different culture came a difference in the way of thinking, mode of dressing, and speech patterns. This shows a lot of originality in human beings."¹⁵

According to McCracken, there was a time when the world could be categorized according to classes, psychological types, generations, life-styles, but increasingly the world seems to be resisting classificatory schemes. In his eyes, the world is full of diversity, variety and heterogeneity. This is why he calls it "*plenitude*".

Through my research, I identified some types of pop cultures that have developed over the past 40 - 50 years. These ethnographic particulars, just to mention a few, are:

1. Hippies
2. Punks
3. Goths

Each of these aforementioned groups developed because of differences in perspectives, self-presentation and activity. In each of these cases, there was a deep cultural completion and something much more than some superficial difference. These groups had beliefs.

¹⁵ G. McCracken, *Plenitude. Culture by Commotion*
<<http://www.sonelifeafrica.com/model/subcult3.htm>>. 16/03 2005. 1.

values, own ideas and ideologies. They were well defined, easily read, consistently maintained and policed with some vigour.

Professor Brakes, citing Grant McCracken argues that

Subcultures exist where there is some form of organized and recognized constellation of values, behaviour and actions which is responded as differing from the prevailing set of norms. Subcultures, these scholars tell us, develop in response to dominant meaning systems. They are acts of resistance, protest, refusal which seek to differentiate themselves from the mainstream.¹⁶

Professor Brakes statement by, would explain that the groups of Pop Culture mentioned earlier formed in resistance to the current ways of society.

Let us look at the ethnographic particulars in detail.

1.4.1. Hippies

There were two generations of hippies. The first was in the 1960s and the second in the 1990's. In the former, as mentioned by Jane during an interview, they were the youth of the White race. They preferred long hair and being usually dirty (Cf. Appendix III). They were apparently from wealthy families and now wanted to experience the other extreme, which was poverty. They would always travel light throughout their journeys. These hippies rebelled and resisted racism and war (especially the war of USA against Vietnam). During their time, there was the height of the Black Movement that was lead by Martin Luther King Jr.

I understand the sixties refer to a wide range of political and social struggles in the United States and elsewhere. Some of the significant social movements for subsequent decades and for the popular cultural production are the civil rights movements, Black Power, Black Nationalism, and the identity politics that took their inspirations from them.¹⁷

¹⁶ G. MCCRACKEN, *Plenitude: Culture by Commotion*
<<http://www.soneiteafrica.com/model/subcult3.htm>>. 16/03.2005. 3.

¹⁷ C. FREUDBERG, *Popular Culture: An Introduction*. 7.

Some hippies even travelled to Africa and preferred music like that of James Brown and the King of Rock 'n' Roll, Elvis Presley. "The hippies had a preference for the rural and the natural for the spiritual and the uncontrived, for the spontaneous gesture and an egalitarian generosity."¹⁸ Their music is spiritual, questing and delicate.

Today the fate of the sixties-within-the eighties is a notoriously important issue in the struggle for cultural and political meaning, an instance of the way the conflicting forces in every conjecture attempt to write incontestable histories for themselves."¹⁹ "The eighties ushered in a national conservatism and a right-wing backlash against what was viewed as the excessive liberalism of the previous decades."²⁰

1.4.2. Punks

Punks are similar to the Asian monks of the society. They have renounced the bourgeois (middle class) world in order to instruct the rest of us in the deceptions of desire and the illusory nature of the material world. They prefer to have homemade tattoos and body piercing. They reject all established authority and institutions (Cf. Appendix IV). They break rules in order to reveal rules. Such nihilism would horrify the hippie, stun the rocker, puzzle the b-boy and repel the Goth.²¹

Members of these groups have engaged in protest in one way or another. Each protest is different and internally coherent. Grant McCracken admits that "the formation of youth subcultures came to be because teens will often belong to more than one culture, that they will move from culture to culture in time and over time, and that they will even 'mix and match' these styles from time to time"²².

¹⁸ G. MCCRACKEN, *Plenitude: Culture by Commotion* <<http://www.sonelifeafrica.com/model/subcult3.htm>>, 16/03/2005, 2.

¹⁹ C. FRECCERO, *Popular Culture: An Introduction*, 3.

²⁰ C. FRECCERO, *Popular Culture: An Introduction*, 8.

²¹ ID., 2.

²² G. MCCRACKEN, *Plenitude: Culture by Commotion* <<http://www.sonelifeafrica.com/model/subcult3.htm>>, 16/03/2005, 3.

It explains that the teens or youth do not invent their own new culture, but develop it from already existing cultures by mixing and matching different styles from different cultures. For example, *sheng* or slang is a mixture of different existing languages such as English, Kiswahili and ethnic vernaculars, here in Kenya. This *sheng* or slang is then spoken by a particular group of people, prevalently – but not only - by the society that lives in the lower class regions of Nairobi.

1.4.3. *Goths*

They were described as preoccupied with introspection (that means: examining of one's own feelings and thoughts) and melancholia. Goths were full of sadness and gloom. They were inclined to speak poetically of 'beautiful deaths' and vampiric sympathies (Cf. Appendix V). Theatrical as they were, Goths were not play-acting and self-dramatizing. "There is a coherent, defined and engaging worldview, one that summons other-worldly forces and creatures that have no place at all in the cosmologies of the hippie, rocker or b-boy. It is giving voice to its own distinct cultural universe."²³ The Goths were dressed in dark cloaks and had their hair dyed black and had heavy eyeliner (Cf. Appendix VI). They still currently exist in Germany, but the difference between them now and in the past is that they now walk around with big Alsatian dogs. They are more dangerous today than before and react violently towards those from the Black race.

²³ G. MCCracken, *Plenitude: Culture by Commotion*
(<http://www.sonelifeafrica.com/model/subcult3.htm>), 16.03.2005, 2.

1.5. Contemporary Pop Culture in the Western Society

“Popular culture in many discourses occupies a self-evidently positive position, and the task becomes one of distinguishing between what is ‘truly’ popular and what is contaminated by hegemonic ideological infiltrations.”²⁴ What emerges today as popular culture or sub-culture is not what must be adopted and aped by the youth. The youth should be able to decide for themselves that the current popular culture is that which truly serves the interests of the people and that it does not create a false consciousness of what to be and what to have.

In the United States of America, today’s pop culture is referred to as “Public Culture”²⁵. Youth today in the Western society are alienated from the aged and elderly. They see the aged, who happen to be their grandparents, parents, uncles, aunties, and teachers, as old fashioned and back in time. They do not want to be seen in association with them. The contemporary youth sub-culture in the West is seen as the *happy-go-lucky, party animal, disco-maniac* kind of people. They like to enjoy life by going out to parties and socialising with their friends. We will look at the contemporary youth culture according to the different elements of pop culture.

1.5.1 Entertainment Preference

Popular music is a primary leisure resource for the young people.

From nightclubs, live concerts, cinema films and TV commercials to what Japanese music theorist Hosokawa refers to as the ‘autonomous and mobile’ form of listening

²⁴ K. BARBER, *Readings in African Popular Culture* 3.

²⁵ C. FRECHERO, *Popular Culture: An Introduction*, 2.

facilitated through the inventions of the personal stereo, for a great many young people popular music is an omnipresent aspect of their day to day existence.²⁶

Youth prefer certain music, like hip-hop, rap music, rock, R&B (Rhythm and Blues).

Their idols are R. Kelly who is seen as the King of R & B (despite the fact that he has been accused of having sex with a minor in one of his videos) and who has produced many albums and many hit songs. Musicians like Jay-z, Nelly (Cf. Appendix VII), 50cent and rappers like Jah Rule produce hip-hop music. In most of 50 cents video especially the song named "Just a little bit", the women are portrayed as sex objects and dressed very scantily. This is also the same case for some of R. Kelly's videos. His album TP3.Com is just as bad. Many of the songs speak about sex either in the bedroom, in the bathroom or in the kitchen. Is this a true depiction of what the society is all about? Love for money and sex? Usher Raymond (Cf. Appendix VIII), a competitor to R-Kelly, is the girls' preference.

Music today is about life, love, sex and violence. Some of the musicians use music to get back at their enemies, while others use music to express what is inside them. The diversity of music portrays the diversity of youth. Those who like slow music behave in calm ways and are controlled, whereas those who prefer rap music and rock may be rowdy, noisy and perhaps violent. Music is said to create certain moods in people. This is probably the reaction desired by the artists.

There is a distinction between serious 'art' music and commercial 'pop' music. The social reception of music, he suggests, is essentially pre-programmed, musical composition and production following precise guidelines, which are calculated to produce a specific and uniform response among listeners.²⁷

²⁶ A. BENNET, *Popular Music and Youth Culture*, 34.

²⁷ A. BENNET, *Popular Music and Youth Culture*, 34

With pop music, no listening skill is necessary as compared to art music, where meaning becomes apparent to the listener only after a considerable degree of listening skill has been applied. With this pop music, come music videos. Through these music videos, youth begin to observe the dress patterns of their pop idols. Later on, in the chapter we mention dress patterns, which are under the heading 'image and appearance'.

Other forms of entertainment that the youth have developed a preference for are the movies and TV programmes. Much of the TV programmes shown today have romantic tones and some science fiction. Examples of science fiction movies are *Smallville Alien*, *X-files*, *Mutant X*, *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings*. These are a common attraction among youth. Many soap operas have made headway in the television programmes. The most popular soap opera in Kenya today is *The Bold and the Beautiful*. Slow as it is in plot, narration and having been running for years, it is still very popular today. It is all about love and obsession with men. The women in this series give the impression that their life revolves around the Forrester's. Currently in the hit series are programmes such as *Desperate Housewives* as well as, *Sex and the city*. They depicts, that women must have men to live and to be complete. Is this the culture today that woman must be in relationships in order to feel whole and complete, or is this what the media has made us to believe?

1.5.2. Image and Body Size

Image is defined "as a form of likeness in the mind,"²⁸ whereas appearance means "presenting oneself to the public"²⁹. Most of the girls would want to be slim and not healthy looking or fat. One sees these kinds of women in the music videos produced by

²⁸ Oxford Dictionary. *Image*.

²⁹ Oxford Dictionary. *Appearance*.

many musicians. The women are dressed scantily to show their slim curved bodies. This gives a false impression to the viewers that this is the ideal body, and anything short of being curvy and slim is ugly. Young girls today are being deluged by media images of skinny models. 'Slim is beautiful, fat is ugly'. This is what they believe and this is what makes them weight-conscious. Some are on diets. Eating disorders have now gone up. The media pressurize girls to have a perfect body, bodies that may look like that of the famous actress Halle Berry. In Halle Berry's movie *Cat Woman*, she is dressed in a tight leather outfit that outlines her figure.

Most fashion magazines show models that are skinny. The magazine models and the women that appear in the music videos influence the girls' idea of a perfect body shape. A 1996 poll conducted by Saatchi and Saatchi found out that advertisements made women fear being unattractive or old. But this body image does not just affect the girls. Many males are becoming insecure about their physical appearance, as advertising and other media images raise the standard and idealize well-built men. There is an alarming increase in obsessive weight training and the use of anabolic steroids and dietary supplements that promise bigger muscles and more stamina for lifting.

1.5.3. Body Art and Accessories

Another trend today is to have pierced body parts and tattoos. Piercing may be on the belly button, eyebrows, tongue, lip, nipple, and the ears (Cf. Appendix IX). The men commonly do tattoos but women have also taken an interest and a liking for them. A tattoo may be on the shoulder, lower back, arm or leg (Cf. Appendix X). Most of these ideas have originated from the West and are seen in the popular musicians and celebrities.

1.5.4. Fashion

The current style of clothing is revealing and the make-up is overdone, which in the 1970s this would have been viewed as a sign of being available as a prostitute. Today, magazine models are dressed in clothing like hip-huggers and low-rider jeans, wearing high heels or boots and revealing tops and lots of make-up. This is what is being mimicked by the youth today.

“Fashion is an underestimated social force. It functions effectively not only as an economic colossus but also to engineer social practices.”³⁰ In this statement, Thorstein Veblen explains how the American bourgeoisie invented fashion to distinguish themselves from the lower classes and if the social inferior would adopt their ways, they would change again in order to be different. The young girls would try their very best to get the latest clothes. The media create a false consciousness in the youth and give the impression that it is a must to have such clothes in order to be “*hype and in*”. The imbalance between desire and realization, between valuing a particular object and having the capacity to possess and maintain it, is a fundamental dynamic of fashion. Indeed, fashion may not just be through pieces of clothing; cars are also a major *necessity* for youth. Today youth are seen as materialistic in nature. This means they would like to be accessorised in with things like mobile phones, cars, and jewellery. On this Douglas Kellner states:

Fashion is a constituent feature of modernity, interpreted as an era of history marked by perpetual innovation, by the destruction of the old and the creation of new. Fashion itself

³⁰ T. VEBLER <http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/AHR_archive/Issue-March-1997/finkelstein.html>. 6/03/2005.3.

is predicated on producing ever-new tastes, artifacts, and practices. Fashion perpetuates a restless, modern personality always seeking what is new and admired, while avoiding what is old and passé. Fashion and modernity go hand in hand to produce modern personalities.³¹

Keller's statement could be interpreted to imply that the youth today are trying to be modern and *hype*, by wearing the latest outfits and having the best mobile phone and car. It compels them to do what the other youth are doing, to have what they have.

1.5.5. *Social Behaviour*

As opposed to the olden days, when the young would spend time with their parents, today the youth would rather be out mingling with their friends and having fun. Among their peers, there will most definitely be some form of pressure that will make the youngsters do certain things that are not ordinarily everyday habits. These may be drinking, smoking, speaking in a certain manner and talking to the opposite sex.

As portrayed through the media, youth perceive these habits as normal. Young girls may even choose to smoke because of the notion that smoking prevents one from getting fat. This is because smoking kills one's appetite to eat. Parents view these ways as wrong as they try to teach their children otherwise, but it will only make the youth rebel and also see them as "old fashioned".

³¹ D. KELLNER <<http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/AHR/archive/Issue-March-1997/finkelstein.html>>, 6/03/2005, 4

1.5.6. Language

Today's society has resorted to coarse language and swearing. This is a threatening issue for the parents. The use of inappropriate language is becoming an outlet for rebellious teens. But this is not the only language used by the youth. Much of the language spoken by young people is made of words, which are unfamiliar to the parents, but not disrespectful. For example, words such as 'digs' which means home. The languages have changed to suit youth and alienate the parents. Most of them speak this and if you do not speak it, you are not *'with it'* or *in* with the time. Many of these elements are found in the videos, programmes and music that the youth watch or listen to. The way the media personalities emulate talk is most likely the way the youth will also. The same case applies to the way they dress and what social habits they have.

1.6. Media Exposure and Influence on Youth

Media are an important institution in every society. They are part and parcel of society. The primary role of the media is to educate, entertain and inform, but with the advancement of society, the roles of the media have increased. The media have been able to influence, change society; provoke action and change people's behaviour.

In this day and age, the youth have easy access to forms of media. They have constant use of media to either entertain or inform themselves. Television, movies, magazines, and music videos are some of the many ways in which today's young adults are influenced. This is achieved by creating an image appealing to the youth. The media and their multiple divisions control the variety of material the youth incorporate in their

daily lives. Young people allow themselves to follow along the trends because of their quest for self-affirmation and discovery.

Studies made by the Frankfurt School state that the media create a false consciousness in people. They make the audience believe that they must have what is advertised. This is the reason why fashion is directed towards adolescents for their vulnerability and desires to "fit in".

Of late, the media, entertainment industries and fashion designers have created an image, which has a negative influence on youth, involving sexuality, violence, coarse language and revealing clothing. It is this distinctive style that has worried parents, teachers and even some young adults. It is hard to deny that music and visual images have a tremendous sticking power. The media first affect our moods, attitudes and emotions, then, after a while, our actions can follow suit. Most Americans believe a link exists between media and actual behaviour. The most influenced aspects are in sexuality and violence.

1.6.1. Violence in the Media

"83% of Americans wish the entertainment industry would voluntarily put out some of the sex and the violence from television, movies and music lyrics."³² This percentage is high and should be considered as a serious matter that the media owners should do something positive to counter that negative effect: find alternative ways of entertaining the viewers. The media should then reduce the number of violence on television. Major medical associations have linked the violence in television programmes.

³² http://www.troubledwith.com/stellent/...twi_pf_0!3859.cfm?Channel=Parenting%20Children&topic=Media%20Influence, 20/3/2005.

music, video games and movies to increasing violence among young people. The prolonged and constant viewing of media violence leads to emotional desensitisation towards violence in real life. Also the constant viewing of entertainment violence can lead to an increase in aggressive attitudes, values and behaviour in youth. It may also create a mean world syndrome in the minds of the youth.

1.6.2. Sexuality in the Media

On the issue of youth sex, TV shows and movies make it seem normal for youth to have sex. Young people view entertainment media as the top source of information about sexuality and sexual health. Youth can pick up tactics on how to talk to their boyfriends and girlfriends about sexual issues from the entertainment media. Currently, soap operas are gaining popularity among youth and they have a great influence on them. A good example is *Sex and the City* on Kenya Television Network (KTN). It is the latest TV series and also the most popular. The Internet is the latest electronic media in the world; the most common means of communication. It has no age restrictions. Besides it is the most popular media with the ability to inform youth. Without constant supervision from adults, like parents, teachers or guardians, youth can gain access to all the pornographic sites and be exposed to disguising, misleading and harmful information.

All these forms of media are what have influenced the youth culture today. What youth see on the television, done by celebrities, they choose to mimic. The image, dressing and appearance of youth today, together with the social behaviour of smoking,

drinking alcohol and going out at an early age, is solid proof of the type of culture we are in today. Nevertheless assumptions will be stated in Chapter two in view of findings.

1.7. Defining Kenyan Youth

The population in Kenya is about 30 million. Much of this population is made up of youth. During my viewing of the opening of the fifth session of the ninth parliament, that took place on the March 20, 2006, the President of Kenya, Emilio Mwai Kibaki stated that 72% of the population is under the age of 30 years. This explains that majority of our population comprises the youth. The young people I am investigating are between 15 and 30 years of age. I have selected this age group, because it is this age that seeks identity and is easily influenced by the Western media. My area of investigation is in some sections of Westland Division, Nairobi. "The population of all the inhabitants is 207,610."³³ These sections are the *Sarit Centre*, *Mobil On the Run* and bars such as *Crooked Q*, *Hidden Agenda* and *Bandari Plaza*. These are the venues most frequented by a certain kind of youth as areas of socializing. Sarit Centre is a market place that has many different kinds of shops within in it. The place has shops that sell clothes, shoes, jewellery and electronics. It also has a food court, cinema hall, a games arcade, a gym and a bar. All these are favourable with the youth. Bandari Plaza is also a market place just like Sarit Centre. Bandari Plaza has a bar which sells alcohol very cheaply and has no age restrictions what so ever. Areas like these bars (*Crooked Q*, *Hidden Agenda* and a *Bandari Plaza*) have an age restriction in the night, but during the day anyone can go in. Youth can buy alcohol without showing their identification cards to show that they are of

³³ CBS 1999 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS, *Counting Our People for Development*, 1-3.

age. Youth go to these places with the intention of having fun. Watching movies at the cinemas, eating in the different restaurants or drinking and smoking in the bars is what the youth consider having fun.

Conclusion

From the description of the different cultures that have existed and evolved in both African context and the Western, we can conclude that culture is dynamic and is gradual. It is mixing, matching and borrowing ideas and styles from different cultures that bring into existence other popular cultures. It must be noted that this has only occurred because of the society being exposed to the media. The media has played a big role in perpetuating different cultures over these years. The aim of this research is to see and find out whether today's youth are aping what they see on television that comes from the West. A large percentage of the television content in Kenya is foreign. We will see whether the Western Pop Culture portrayed by the media is actually lived here in Westlands, Kenya. The results and findings will be in Chapter two.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

POP CULTURE AND KENYAN YOUTH IN WESTLANDS

2.1. Research Purpose

This research aims at investigating the Kenyan youth around Westlands. Specific focus is in whether Western Pop sub-culture portrayed by the media here in Kenya influences them. Westlands is a cosmopolitan area that welcomes a variety of people from different backgrounds. Majority of the residents in Westlands are expatriates and Asians, particularly from India. There is a significant number of Indigenous Kenyans represented here.

2.2. Research Methodology

In conducting this research, I have used both primary and secondary methods of data acquisition. The former involves three in-depth interviews and three participant observations. It also includes content analysis and questionnaires as a form of survey to investigate the influence of TV on the youth. The latter shows the trends and verifies my first hypothesis, that exposure to media accelerates adaptation of western pop culture. Ultimately, media messages have on the youth are highlighted.

2.2.1. *In-depth Interviews*

In-depth interviews were carried out in Sarit Centre, The Mall, and bars around Westlands. The purpose was to establish from the youth and shopkeepers whether or not in their view the youth in Westlands exhibited mannerisms similar to those from the West in terms of Pop Culture. Our interest was also directed to find out what present-day those young people were inclined to in terms of fashion and entertainment. Lastly, we sought what their suggestions to counter the negative aspects of culture.

2.2.2. *Participant Observation*

Participant observation focussed on nightclubs adjacent to places, such as "Crooked Q", "Hidden Agenda" and "Sohos". These are bars that play music and are frequented by the youth. Here, I noted the youth's social behaviour, their language, music preference and way of dressing.

2.2.3. *Content analysis of newspapers' magazines*

Analysis of content of youth pages/magazines within newspapers is a quantitative method in data research. They are tools, through which I may gain more information on the youth trends in the country. *Buzz Magazine* is a weekly pullout from *Sunday Nation*. It has documentaries and feature articles concerning youth on matters pertaining to latest fashion trends, youth life “*burning*” issues, gossip on Kenyan celebrities, and latest entertainment in music and movies. These magazines have photos that show how certain groups of urban youth actually present themselves to the Kenyan society.

2.2.4. *Questionnaire*

Questionnaires are a tool that can sample diverse views from respondents who live within Westlands area. Through this, various opinions can be assessed on pop culture. It is a purposive sampling criterion.

2.3. **Research Findings**

Participant Observation

Participant observation took me into different contexts, including bars to see and hear for myself how the youth actually behave today. At night, I would see ladies dressed in skimpy outfits or really tight clothes. Some were short, others long but revealing. A statement goes, ‘*Fashion Knows No Weather.*’ This explains how ladies will dress the way they want, when they want, regardless of the weather. Be it cold or hot, they will dress to impress and to make a fashion statement. These bars will often play Westery

music. Occasionally, I would hear Kenyan music, but once they put the local music for too long the dance floor goes almost empty. The adrenaline in the dance floor automatically rises up once the crowd would hear music from certain musicians. These musicians would be 50 Cent, Nelly, Jay Z, Jennifer Lopez, R.Kelly, Kanye West, Sean Paul or any popular musician. Most of the women dressed in the nightclubs identify themselves with artistes like Jennifer Lopez, Alicia Keys or Rihanna and other female artistes that happen to be their favourite. Each woman had some form of jewellery on them either earring, nose rings, navel ring. Other than image and dressing, the ladies in the clubs would openly and publicly smoke. To them it is a faster way of getting high and looking classy. This false image is probably brought about through the advertisement shown on the television.

There was a drastic contrast during the day. The youth, especially the women, look very different in dressing than they are at night. My opinion is that they do not always dress this way for fear of being ridiculed, condemned or stripped naked by the public as this is known to have happened in the past. They see themselves to be in violation of society's norms. The language of the youth is not distinctively different. This is just one of the rules in pop culture. Only a few words are different and only the youth understand it. Examples of these words are, *Digz*, *Crib*, House; *Rack*, *Ndias*, Car; *Ol'lady*, Mother; *Ol Man*, Father; *Guffs*, *Fegi*, Cigarettes; *Frotho*, *Keroro*, Alcohol; *Skwale*, *Tunyae*, To leave; *Spliff*, Marijuana; *Shwamiz*, A girl; *KO* (*Knockout*), *Snooze*, Sleep; *Nyugis*, Gone mad;

In-depth Interviews

1. During in-depth interviews in various jewellery shops, it became apparent that majority of the youth in Westlands between 18 and 25 went for body piercing. This is because the owners of the shops do not allow anyone under 18 years of age to have body piercing or tattoos unless in the presence of a parent or guardian. Although body piercing is expensive, youth in Westlands still have it done. The price of a tattoo begins from Ksh. 4200 and varies with the size. The bigger the tattoo, the higher the price. They also buy their jewellery there and their preference these days goes for big looped earrings.
2. In a clothing shop, Rose Atieno, an employee of *Truworths*, explained that a variety of customers would come. Her job was to advise them on what to wear and what item of clothing would look good on them. In her view, it was the high-class people that come in to buy clothes. She added that their aim was to purchase evening dresses and party outfits. According to her, not many young people came although if they do come it is in the company of their parents. She explained that their prices were high hence not many young girls could come to buy clothes there.

Although this may be the case, the youth are creative and can get similar items for a cheaper price. They achieve this through hawkers that are situated outside these shopping malls. These hawkers sell second-hand clothes that are imported from all over the world, especially from USA. Second-hand are used clothing previously worn by other owners.

Most of these clothes are very similar to those in the shops and they have a *bargainable* and affordable price.

- 3 From the street vendors, I saw that the most of the clothes they sold, were jeans and ladies' tops. They explained to me that this was what women wanted today. They liked to dress like the celebrities they saw on television. These celebrities could be Jennifer Lopez, Alicia Keys and Ashanti among others. Whatever the youth see today they will try and find it first from the hawkers since the prices are much more reasonable. Moreover, trends in fashion change overtime and so, why invest in something expensive that might go out of fashion tomorrow?

Content Analysis of Newspapers' Magazines

Buzz Magazine is found within the Sunday Nation, newspaper. It has many articles, and features of to interest the youth. The magazine contains articles that deal with fashion, music, movies and feature stories on Kenyan celebrities. The magazine has a total of 19 articles each with its own independent story. Within these articles are photos that form good basis of analysis regarding the trends among the youth.

The magazine begins with a cover page that has the picture of a Kenyan celebrity who is interviewed in one of the articles inside. The cover page also has a brief statement on what the other articles have to talk about, that is, a kind of content overview.

The second page has three articles:

1. First Lines: constitutes the letter from the editor and her views on that issue.
2. Buzzed: has pictures of people taken in public without their knowledge. It could be those who are drunk, or dressed badly or doing something out of the ordinary.

3. We Got Mail: This space is allocated for the public to comment on the articles written the previous week. It is a form of feedback to the editor and the writers.

The third page has only one article named One On One. This is usually an in-depth interview on one of the Kenyan celebrities. It contains a picture of the interviewee.

Page four has an article named Peep @ which deals with information on local celebrity artistes accompanied with pictures of the artistes that are mentioned. The fifth page article is named On Location: it consists of pictures of Kenyan celebrities who were spotted in public events. Comments are added on the side.

The sixth and the seventh pages are centre pages with feature articles on a specific topic but with short interviews from different artists. This section also has pictures.

The eighth page has title Head on Corrishon, which is an animation section that has either has political or social jokes. It is satirical on issues that concern the society.

The ninth page has three articles within it:

1. GirlTalk: Is a short article talking about men.
2. Whuz News Now: The article features international artists and what they have been up to, that is, relevant to the public. It has a picture of the artist being mentioned.
3. Around & About : This section gives information on the best places in town to be at to have a good time.

The tenth page has:

1. Reviews: It is an analyses on movies produced in the West. It has pictures from scenes of the movie.

2. Dem Lyrics: It has the lyrics of songs of certain artistes and the picture of the artiste.
3. Charts: It has the top ten music songs in different categories like: hip-hop, the beat, billboards stomp and box office for movies.

The eleventh page has:

1. Trends: The deals with the latest fashion in clothing and how to mix and match. It contains pictures of the models in different items of clothing.
2. Heat Weekly: This is an opinion column on celebrities in Kenya.

The twelfth page the last page, has:

1. Get Sporty: Which deals with sports stories.
2. Word Power: A games section on crossword puzzles.
3. Off Your Chest: A counselling column on distressed youth.

The article on trends is most effective because it show the Kenyan youth how best to dress. It shows the latest trends in fashion and how to mix and match the outfits. Every week this section has different clothing and items that are popular among the youth. The purpose of using content analysis on this magazine is, first, to establish how the youth are dressed in today's society. Secondly, it is to find out the ratings of local music against foreign music.

Many of the youth are seen in different body arts that aim to make them look beautiful and hype. They can be seen in tattoos and earrings in different areas other than the ear.

Tattooing is the practice of making permanent designs on the skin. It is done by pricking small holes in the skin with a sharpened stick, a bone or a needle that has been dipped in pigments with natural colours. Tattooing is the latest fad, it's like being born a new and

nothing makes this generation happier than what is *en vogue*...but out of seven Kenyan ladies who come, I count two black men.³⁴ (Cf. Appendix X).

And "fashion has invaded the motor industry and for many young people who can afford cars, the trend is a supped-up car. A new culture has emerged where a simple saloon car can be transformed into a convertible with added alloy rims and graffiti."³⁵ (Cf. Appendix XII)

I analysed eleven youth magazines that are found inside the local newspapers. Three were *Buzz Magazines*.

Table 2.3.1: *Indicates items that were available in the article 'trends'.*

Date of Buzz Magazine (in Sunday Nation)	Item of clothing
January 1, 2006	Gypsy skirts and plain tops
January 8, 2006	Trousers with shirt or t-shirts and official shoes for men
January 15, 2006	Flowery tops and plain trousers or jeans.
January 22, 2006	T-shirt and jeans for men
January 29, 2006	Skirts and tops
February 05, 2006	Long evening dress and stilettos, jewellery, perfume and handbags.
February 12, 2006	Gift-wrapping paper.
February 19, 2006	Wrist watches
February 26, 2006	Sun glasses
March 05, 2006	Rings
March 12, 2006	Summer bottom: sweater tops

³⁴ *Sunday Nation*, BUZZ MAGAZINE, January 9, 6-7.

³⁵ *Sunday Nation*, BUZZ MAGAZINE, February 13, 1.

Table 2.3.2: The dressing styles of the celebrities, as they appear in Buzz Magazine.

Date of Buzz Magazine	Formal	Casual	Fancy	Skimpy	With Make-up	With Jewels	Total Number of
January 1, 2006	4	7	18	2	5	4	31
January 8, 2006	2	13	7	6	1	1	29
January 15, 2006	5	8	7	2	4	4	22
January 22, 2006	6	7	10	2	6	5	25
January 29, 2006	0	5	13	0	3	3	18
February 05, 2006	9	7	5	1	6	6	22
February 12, 2006	1	14	8	3	6	6	26
February 19, 2006	5	13	7	1	5	5	26
February 26, 2006	2	5	13	2	10	9	22
March 05, 2006	1	10	9	0	8	8	20
March 12, 2006	6	5	6	1	5	6	18
TOTAL	41	94	103	47	59	57	

The pictures are of Kenyan celebrities dressed in different ways. The results from the table show that majority of the celebrities dress in Fancy outfits that is items of clothing that are in season and are decent. For the ladies, the item of clothing may not be fully covering their backs, chest or legs. This result shows how a like the celebrities dress with the youth in the West.

Second in place is casual dressing, namely wearing either T-shirts or tops with jeans with the aim of being comfortable and free. The individual is fully covered. Most of

this is seen in the men than the women. The tables on 'Trends' and on celebrities indicate that the celebrities dress the same as the article 'Trends' suggests.

Table 2.3.3: *Trend of the top 10 Hip-hop Tracks in Kenya (Buzz Magazine)*

Date	Foreign Music	Local Music
January 1, 2006	9	1
January 8, 2006	5	5
January 15, 2006	5	5
January 22, 2006	7	3
January 29, 2006	6	4
February 05, 2006	5	5
February 12, 2006	5	5
February 19, 2006	5	5
February 26, 2006	5	5
March 05, 2006	8	2
March 12, 2006	8	2
TOTAL	68	42

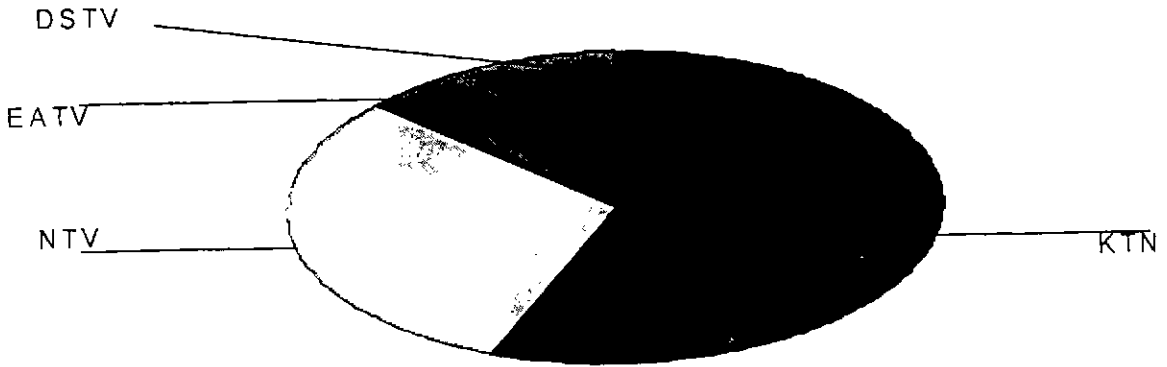
This is a table representing the music shown on the 'The Beat', a "favourite local entertainment music show as nominated by the Chaguo la Teenies Award."³⁶ The show is aired daily from 5:00pm to 7:00pm on NTV. From the table, it is evident that foreign music is aired more than local music, yet this is a Kenyan show. In 6 of the weeks, there is a balance of interest in music but overall foreign music prevails.

Questionnaire

Out of the 117 questionnaires administered 88 were returned. Three of the 88 were invalid, leaving 85 valid. I used purposive sampling criterion to administer questionnaires to young people within a specific age bracket.

³⁶ *Sunday Nation*, BUZZ MAGAZINE, March 5, 11

Pie Chart 2.3.4: Shows favourite TV station among the respondents.



From the pie chart it is apparent that KTN is the most popular television station among the respondents. This is because much of the television content on KTN is foreign. Between the prime time hours which are 7:00pm-9:00pm and after the news comedies and series are aired. Many of these comedies are foreign.

Table 2.3.5: Assessing Foreign Programs

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Not culturally relevant to Kenya	41	48.2	59.4	59.4
	Relationships money, sex	17	20.0	24.6	84.1
	Informative and educative	11	12.9	15.9	100.0
	Total	69	81.2	100.0	
Missing	System	16	18.8		
Total		85	100.0		

The table above explains that about 60% of the respondents' felt that the foreign programs aired on Kenyan television is not culturally relevant to the citizens. This is more than half the respondents. About 27% indicated that the programs were all about money and sex social evils within society.

Table 2.3.6: *Opinion on local programs: Whether or not they watch Local Programs*

		Do you watch local programs?		Total
		Yes	No	
Assess local programs	Not culturally relevant	13	2	15
	Is culturally relevant	16	-	16
	Westernized	17	14	31
Total		46	16	62

Many of the respondents thought that the local programs were westernised. This means that the content of the programs does not reflect what is currently happening within our society. This result supports my premise that foreign programs are predominant over the local production industry, especially the local movie program.

Table 2.3.7: *Should local programs be aired more or less? Why?*

		Why?				Total
		Boring	Westernized	Industry to grow	Interesting	
The Local programs produced shown on Kenyan televisions should be?	More			49	7	56
	Less	12	8			20
Total		12	8	49	7	76

From the table above is clear that those inclined to and wished that local programs be aired more often wanted the industry to grow. Local artists and producers should continually produce programs, by picking the trends and issues that concern our society and reflect it in their programs. The media industry in Kenya should thus promote the local industry by airing, more the local programs. Although this may be the case, there is also, need on the side of directors and producers to come up with programs that are relevant to the Kenyan society.

About three years ago, on April 2003, the Development Through Media (DTM) prepared a research on TV broadcasting "software" in Eastern Africa.

The objective of the study was to assess the amount of foreign content in local TV stations vis-à-vis locally material. The study reviewed the TV content of 16 channels in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. According to the study, information was dominant during total airtime while entertainment became prominent during prime time. Quantitative findings revealed that 14 out of 16 stations allocated from 61 to 100% to foreign content in their total airtime.³⁷

With regard to music, below is a summary of some of the responses.

Table 2.3.8: *Assessing the Content of Local Music Produced in Kenya today*

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Original Kenyan content	21	24.7	31.3	31.3
	Westernized	24	28.2	35.8	67.2
	Immoral	22	25.9	32.8	100.0
	Total	67	78.8	100.0	
Missing	System	18	21.2		
Total		85	100.0		

The Kenyan music today is coming up and, the table above 29 % state that the content of the music is westernized and 26% view it as immoral. The percentage against the music

³⁷ P. Mwangi, *Mass Media and Society*, Lecture notes, 6.

industry is high. This validates my premise that popular culture is taking over our music industry.

Table 2.3.9: *Should more or less local music be aired on the stations? Why?*

		Why					Total
		Improve the music	Discover new talent	Educative	Immoral	Bad music	
Should more or less local music aired on the stations?	More	14	25	7	-	-	46
	Less	-	-	-	8	11	19
Total		14	25	7	8	11	65

Out of the total respondents, 46 conceded that local music should be aired more on local radio stations. This is because the youth would like the industry to grow, instead of being westernised in content. The same respondents suggest that the lyrics should be relevant to the social issues affecting the society. Twenty of the respondents were missing.

2.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

From the research I have done, I have come to understand that the youth in Westlands have greater preference for western culture than for their own culture. The ways of dressing are imitations of the Western celebrities whom they consider as their role models. They adopt these ways because they perceive them as the best ways since it all comes from the West. It is believed that *all that comes from the West is the best*. This is a mentality that has been instilled in people's minds without their knowledge. It is achieved by the constant exposure to the media. The youth's language is used as a camouflage. They normally do not want unintended listeners to hear what they talk about. Those listeners could be parents, teachers or anyone they do not consider as their peer or

comrades. They all want to be in the latest fashion, and doing what the entire West is doing even though it is harmful to their health. Smoking and consumption of alcohol is harmful to their health, but they would rather do it, since it is one of the *requirements or rules* in this culture. Today's culture puts a lot of pressure on youth this is probably why young people in Westlands are actually embarking on this culture. From the results we learn that the media has played a big role in influencing the lives of the youth in many aspects of their lives. Through the constant exposure to foreign programs, the youth begin to believe that this is the way to live.

2.5. Formation Process of Pop Culture: A Theoretical Approach

This section deals more with the theories that are applicable to this research. These theories will try to explain the formation process of pop culture. From this research we can see just how much of the youth are exposed to Western Media. The leading categories that are on the media are either entertainment or informational. The entertainment section is categorized in-groups such as drama, soap operas, game shows, sports and features. The only station in Kenya that devotes equal or more time to local content is KBC. Much of the entertainment section is what keeps the youth interested. They find themselves relating to such types of entertainment as soap operas and eventually taking it into action. That is, they will behave like the actors do in the soaps.

2.5.1. *Understanding Media*

Television is the most powerful medium because there are both visual and audio effects. What one sees and hears is more likely to stick in the mind. "Television is more influential than radio on matters such as behaviourism among the youth."³⁸ The youth are the most vulnerable to television influence. Too much of television makes them anti-social, and later the youth stop being interactive with the family. Electronic media is paralinguistic, therefore, provides the listeners or viewer with sights, sound, gestures that allow one to determine meaning in a fuller way. According to the studies made by the Frankfurt School in 1930, the mass media was known to be like hypodermic needles, bullets or drugs. It was discovered that the mass media brainwashed and indoctrinated the people. It was because of the term bullets that came the term 'Target Audience'. Different scholars came up with different models of mass communication that led to different understandings of the media effects on society and culture. Mass media is a centralized organization with a lot of filters before the message reaches the receiver. Reality is complex. Therefore, there is need for mediation. Mass media mediate between an event and a person who may not have witnessed the event personally. They reduce distances between people. For example the Olympics took place in Athens, but the people in other parts of the world were well aware of what was going on almost instantly. This is due to technological equipments such as satellite, televisions and radio. What the viewers watch is not the actual event but what is reported of it in the media. It is an interpretation of that event. The risky bit about this is that this can cause a distorted and

³⁸ P. MOCCHI, *Mass Media and Society*, Lecture notes, 5.

biased "picture" in the mind of the viewers. The media is known to have different effects.

This is what we shall analyse in this section. We are reminded:

Representations are made up of signs, and together these signs combine to tell a story. Semiotics, the study of signs, allows one to treat the elements of a representation-any representation-as a set of signs that signify something to someone, that point beyond themselves to a range of other meanings, which are in turn partially determined and limited by their social context.³⁹

Thus the power of the picture is indisputable. However, "if we accept the premise that representations are also allegorical, that is, that they tell multiple stories and that those stories are not only explicit story represented by the plot of a given film, then it is possible to argue that the stories that such representations tell are stories about the culture from which they emerge."⁴⁰

2.5.2. *Understanding the Audience*

The word *audience* has long been familiar as the collective term for the "receivers" in the simple sequential model of the mass communication process. This process includes a source, channel, message, and receiver, effect that was deployed by pioneers in the field of media research. It is a term that is understood by media practitioners and theorists alike. The term has entered into everyday usage, recognized by media users as an unambiguous description of themselves. Audiences are both a product of social context (which leads to shared cultural interests, understandings and information needs) and a response to a particular pattern of media provision. The audience for most mass media is not usually observable, except in fragmentary or indirect ways. Media use also reflects broader patterns of time use, availability, lifestyle and everyday routines.

³⁹ C. FRECCERO, *Popular Culture: An Introduction*, 5.

⁴⁰ C. FRECCERO, *Popular Culture: An introduction*, 5.

2.6. Theories That Lead to Pop Culture Formation

2.6.1. Birmingham School

Writers from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in Birmingham first popularised the sub-culture theories. The CCCS reasons for formation were due to the counter-hegemonic struggle and the attempts by post-war youth to resolve the social problems and contradictions created by their material conditions. According to the CCCS, the stylistic trappings of each sub-culture form part of a code by which the members communicate with the 'straight' world. Michel Foucault, a sociologist, states that youth have been produced as a governmental object to solve legal, educational, medical and psychological problems. He characterizes this as *governmentality*. That is, youth are generated within interrelated strategies, which manage the relations of time, bodies and forces and of which sort, differentiate and categorize individuals. The contemporary society is characterized by techniques for taking charge of the time of individual existences, as in school or work. Further:

The CCCS also suggests that sub-cultures developed from global oppositions, such as domination versus subordination, resistance versus conformity, regulation versus expression and young versus old, which pierce their ideological and generational oppression and thereby create spaces for themselves and portray sub-cultural members as constantly striving for mechanisms.⁴¹

This explains that sub-cultures are formed with particular reason relating to the current situation in their society. Some may form in resistance of racial discrimination like for example the Black Movement led by Martin Luther King Jr.

⁴¹ < <http://www.sonefrica.com/model.subcult3.htm> >, 16/03/2005, 4.

2.6.2. Socialization

Socialization is used to describe the process by which individuals are taught the rules and roles they need in order to function in a given group or society that is learning how to become members of society. It can be argued that mass communication plays an important role in keeping cultures and sub-cultures alive. This is achieved by showing what others do; mass communication affects social cultural practices. In many cases, it leads to their modification. For example, some Kenyan communities have put a stop to female circumcision, which is now known to be harmful to the girls. These communities have modified their practices because of the knowledge they have acquired through socialization. This change is for the betterment of the society, although some Kenyan societies, such as the Maasai, are still resisting this change. Svetlana Kilmova, in *Youth*.

Socialization and Social Change, suggests:

That the rate of change in society also impacts on the creation of different pop culture groups. In societies with a slow pace of social change, the transition to adulthood goes smoothly and youth are similar to their parents. There is uniting solidarity between the coming generation and the generation of parents. In societies undergoing rapid social change a smooth transition to adulthood is no longer possible and there is a strong dissimilarity with parent generations...⁴²

In communities that are cut off from mass media and the kind of technology that can disseminate information and ideas widely, there appears to be much less diversity. The rate at which cultural objects and ideas are transmitted in large parts of the world today is a significant factor in the number of youth sub-culture groups. Before the development of mass media, an individual's socialization was more or less tied to his or

⁴² ID., 2.

her family situation. It was shaped most directly by the figures with which he or she interacted directly. These comprised parents, peers, professors, priests and politicians. An example would be to compare *traditionality* and modernity in Kenya. The Maasai that live in the remote areas of Kenya do not have a wide variety of electronic gadgets. Mostly they own just a radio. Up until today, their ways of living have not profoundly changed; they still live a nomadic life. These are not the only communities that have stuck to their ways. Till today, the Maasai's parents are the ones to educate their children on the right way of life. But if one compares the changes that have occurred, youth today hardly relate to their parents. Maasai have their traditional clothing that they wear everyday, but we do not see this in Nairobi because the people have been socialized to believe that it is old fashioned and backward. The Maasai also have traditional rituals, like circumcision and 'ilmoran', where youth are initiated into *moranship*. Warriorship in the community within these rituals, the youngsters are educated into being responsible men and women. These rituals are done in stages as the human mind develops. These ways are in total contrast to the ways of the modern life. Youth today grow up so fast and learn things so quickly due to the electronic media. Easy access and exposure to electronic media at such early stages in life results in both negative and positive results. Those who live in the capital city of Kenya - Nairobi -- are in constant exposure to the media and the changes that are happening around the world. They then adapt to the changing lifestyles and fashion trends, as stated in the research findings in Chapter two.

As a matter of fact "the process of socialization is influenced, to a large degree, by "popular culture" and the mass media: rock musicians, sports heroes, actors, actresses and gangs give young people ideas about how to behave, how to dress, how to relate to others

and what to become.”⁴³ For example, these days’ girls braid their hair in all kinds of styles. The ladies tend to copy Alicia Keys who is a musician by profession from America. On matters such as alcohol consumption, youth see this as a cool thing since some of the music videos done by male musicians portray a life of women and alcohol. In one such music song by the late Tupac Shakur, “*How Do You Want It*”, the video shows many women and the singer drinking and pouring alcohol on the floor.

In Africa, the mass media are becoming pervasive, especially in urban areas. Can we consider the mass media content an objective mirror of the reality or a distorted representation of it? The answer is ‘No’. This is because we cannot prove or assume that what is portrayed is indeed a representation of real life situations. Yet this is not what we are told by the media and youth in Kenya may actually perceive that as the reality.

The mass media can shape opinions and expectations if they are consistent over time. They are a relevant agent of socialization. Mass media are seen as an educational system parallel to formal schoolings. They are one of the major sources of knowledge. Through television and the Internet, the Kenyan youth can learn a lot more than they actually learn from the usual academic education system. Through this same medium the youth can be provided with shared leisure activities like sports and songs.

2.6.3. *Cultural Imperialism*

Socialization can be a result of Cultural Imperialism. The youth in Kenya have been exposed to this pop culture because of the mass media through the process of cultural imperialism. “Cultural imperialism is a theory that asserts the media texts produced in

⁴³ A. A. BERGER, *Essentials of Mass Communication Theory*, 62.

Western nations have come to dominate media channels all over the world."⁴⁴ According to this theory, these television programs and other mass media as well, such as films, records and even comic books destroy native cultures and enculturate people in Third World countries with American and Western European culture. Further, they carry ideological messages that subtly brainwash Third World peoples in accepting American and Western European bourgeois capitalist values and beliefs. Through this, third world countries begin to believe that the West is superior and dominant.

This is a result caused by the increase in foreign content on the television programs. "The overwhelming presence of foreign content can bend the 'cultural evolution' of a society towards 'alien' standards."⁴⁵ In Kenya today, to make a film is costly and risky since not many people would buy the movies. Chances of pirating are higher. This then results to Kenyan media houses importing foreign TV contents. "It costs a great deal to produce television shows, but it is relatively inexpensive to show the programmes on the television networks, so Third World countries broadcast television shows that are made mostly in the United States and Western Europe."⁴⁶ Another example is how the Kenyan youth do not appreciate any Kenyan productions. A while ago, one of the Kenyan producers namely Njeri Karago produced a movie called 'Dangerous Affair'. This movie did not make it to any of the cinema halls because the youth or the audience did not appreciate it. The managers of these cinema studios did not agree to show the movie because they did not see how like would attain any profit let alone get youth audience.

⁴⁴ A. A. BERGER, *Essentials of Mass Communication Theory*, 71.

⁴⁵ P. MOGGI, *Mass Media and Society*, Lecture notes, 5.

⁴⁶ A. A. BERGER, *Essentials of Mass Communication Theory*, 71.

Since Kenya has a lot of foreign mass media productions aired on the television, many of the youth end up forgetting about their own heritage and adapting the western pop culture. For example, most of the Kenyan youth today do not know their mother tongue instead; they learn more foreign language such as French and German. But we cannot blame the media entirely, parents too have failed to teach their children these languages. Being African here in Kenya means that one must respect the ways of their community and adhere to them. Such ways would be to dress decently, preferably in a long dress and talk to their elders in a respectful manner. But contrary to this, the youth around Westlands do not follow these ways. Instead, they dress in low-rider pants with tops that show their pierced navel. They wear make-up and lots of jewellery and talking in different language as stated in research findings. Youth dismiss most African values as old fashioned and backwards due to the mentality they have been influenced by, that the Western ways are *superior*. Youth have been socialized to believe that all that comes from west is good.

A case in point is how certain people wanted to design Kenyan dress that many people including the government politicians should be wearing when representing the country. This idea was not given the support it required and therefore flopped. The Kenyan government itself does not accept Members of Parliament (MPs) to enter the Parliament in traditional wear. As reported in the news a while back Koigi wa Wamwere, Minister for the Subukia constituency, was asked to leave the House for being inappropriately dressed, meaning, dressed with a traditional attire. This is proof of the beliefs certain Kenyans have about our heritage and culture. This is one of the results of colonization by the British.

The youth today wish to be seen in the latest clothing and accessories. They have developed consumerist mentality where all that is being advertised must be purchased.

2.6.4. *Uses and Gratification Theory*

This is a theory of media utilization. Scholars have been concerned with the use to which people put the media, more precisely, the texts carried by the media- and the gratifications they get from these texts. 'Raymond A. Bauer' an American Psychologist offered the idea that people turn to, and use mass media and media content to satisfy certain needs and desires. Bauer suggested that people were selective and related to their expectations, anticipating to fulfil these expectations. Audiences exercise initiative, free Uses and Gratification Theory implies that members of an audience are active and selective in choosing certain texts or genres that provide them with various gratifications. These may be to satisfy curiosity and be informed, to gain an identity or to believe in romantic love. " Such gratification approach works from the premise that there is a plurality of responses to media messages; that people are capable of making their own minds up, accepting some messages, rejecting others, using the media for a variety of reasons, and using them differently at different times."⁴⁷

The media serve to gratify:

- *Personal relationships.* To watch soaps regularly is to enter worlds as closely detail and as fully documented as our own. Many of youth watch soap operas to fulfil their romantic desires and also to inform themselves on how to talk to their friends. The most popular and longest televised soap opera here in Kenya is "The

⁴⁷ J. WATSON, *Media Communication*. 62.

Bold and the Beautiful". This soap has brought about controversial issues because it portrays behaviours that are totally different from the traditional African ways. Once one watches these soap operas they will notice how the female characters in the soap have their lives revolving around men.

➤ *Surveillance*. We use the media to gain information, to keep an eye on the world and to clarify what we think about it. The youth today use the media to gain information on what is the latest trend and fashion in the West. They then resort to buying what they see to be a part of that culture. This is known as the *copycat effect* of the media where people experience through the media.

2.6.5. Reception Theory

"Iser affirms that the reader brings the text into existence. Accordingly, receivers of media messages are contributing to shaping the meaning that they get from media texts. The influence the media message as much as the media message influences them."⁴⁸

This theory focuses on the ways in which fans take up trends presented through mass media and adopt them through highly disingenuous practices. The emphasis is on the way that youth people produce their culture as they receive images and ideas from the media, or mass culture. Youth take up the concepts that are provided through the media and they adopt through a process that is active, creative and which produces a new product. Today, young people are seen mixing and matching as they take from the media those images and ideas that they want to use in constructing an identity which will serve them as they navigate their way from childhood to adulthood. Youth in Westlands have

⁴⁸ P. MUGGI, *Mass Media and Society*, Lecture notes, 6.

adopted this way of mixing and matching what they see from the Western media produced films.

Conclusion

This paper is about pop culture in the West and how it has affected Kenyan youth leaving in Westlands Division. Firstly, I identified the different sub-cultures that have developed in the past, in countries such as America, Britain and Germany. These countries have proven to be most dominant in matters concerning social, political and economic welfare. It is then reasonable to suppose that many countries look up to these countries and in turn adapt to their way of life. One of the discoveries in this research was that there was a reason for the formation of each sub-culture in the past. The people had ideologies, values and beliefs that they needed to outwardly portray to the public and would define them and their way of life. Some of them, such as the punks, condemned the bourgeoisie. Others, such as the hippies, hated racism. Another issue was that these sub-cultures that formed in the West were not born anew but resulted from mixing and matching of different aspects of existing sub-cultures. This shows creativity.

A very influential aspect that has affected youth in Westlands is the Western contemporary culture. Anything that emerges from the West that concerns fashion, language, social behaviour and entertainment preference is easily copied by youth in Westlands. As of today, there is no particular name for this type of contemporary culture, although some call it as the 'dot com'. This culture strives to be creative in fashion. They have no ideologies, values or beliefs like the past sub-cultures. Today's culture is different in language usage, which is used as a camouflage. They do this in order to hide some of the bad habits, like drinking and smoking, or anything they want to hide from

their elders. This language alienates the older generation. Today's culture is mostly about having fun that is why they are referred to as 'disco-maniac', 'happy-go-lucky'.

From my field research on the youth living in Westlands, I learnt that much of the population wants to live life like their counterpart in the West. Their role models are mostly musicians who have made it in the music industry. They have adopted their way of dressing and behaviours and enjoy their music more than they enjoy the local, music produced here in Kenya. They speak the same language that alienates their parents, but an important observation is that Kenyan youth have also created their own language. They refer to it as 'sheng'. This language is more complex than slang in the West. Also, according to my observation, youth in Westlands equally have very dilute values and beliefs, just like the youth in the West. All their knowledge about relationships, fashion and styles and even the language were learnt through the television. This is because the world has become global and the Western influence is all over. Besides, youth have been socialized to believe that all that comes from the West is "the best". All they see and hear from the electronic media, that is, Internet and television is mimicked in their lives. They use the media to gratify their needs, be they in relationships or fashion.

Much of the television content is from the West, because Kenyans do not have many of their own productions to be aired on the TV due to shortage of funds. Television has proven to be a disadvantage to youth, because what they see is portrayed as normal on the media. Western culture influence on youth has caused the youngsters to ignore their culture. Therefore, it has created a lack of identity on their part. In addition, they are unappreciative of the local music productions.

CHAPTER THREE

POPULAR CULTURE POLICIES

Introduction

Media influences the lives of adolescents in a number of ways. Some of the effects are of positive or beneficial (for example the relief of loneliness, acquire information) and some negative or harmful (deafness seems an obvious point, changes social behaviourism negatively). Young people turn to media to get information on different aspects of life because they lack it at home. Media information is seen as consistent. The media has been very effective in consolidating the problem of popular culture. They too can be part of the solution. As stated in my premise I believe that people can do something to shape and control the influence of popular culture. Whatever the influences may be, people - be they government, industry, parents, teachers or adolescents- have considerable power to control or channel them (popular culture.). The traditional culture is not practical in the present generation so we would be pushing if we wanted the youth to go back to their original roots. The television model is also not realistic hence finding a middle ground between the two is the real challenge. It is

because of this that I see media policies in the communication industry to be more effective in maintaining Kenya's culture.

3.1. Media Policies Around the World

Around the world, many countries have been able to maintain their culture through the use of film. These countries include Canada, Algeria, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and India. Among this list India is leading in the production of local film. Within Africa, Nigeria is ahead. It is from these two countries that I have chosen to seek inspiration and learn from them.

Nigeria and India, though thousands of miles apart, have striking similarities that make an interesting comparison in their use of cinema for development. Both developing nations have the potential to cater for the highest populations on their respective continents. "Nigeria had a mid-1990 population of 117 million, making it the most populous nation in Africa. India, by World Bank estimates, will have more than one billion inhabitants by the year 2000."⁴⁹ Both nations have extremely diverse cultures, languages and religions. Nigeria has more than 250 different ethnic groups within its borders. Both of these vast and populous nations have at least made an attempt to use film as a method of development. But neither of them has done so extensively or with much success. Yet this appears to be changing in the case of India.

Film can have the advantages and uses that go beyond other forms of mass media. Film has the advantages of mobility and flexibility, which the broadcast media alone do not possess. Although frequently used in conjunction with broadcast technology such as television, film can also be used independently in local gatherings or for project training purposes. In fact, the necessity of a community gathering to see a film is one of the benefits of this medium; subsequent discussion and peer reinforcement are valuable in achieving the purposes of projects. Film is also widely applicable in education projects.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Africa Media Review Vol 6 No 1: film and development, 27.

⁵⁰ Africa Media Review Vol 6 No 1: film and development, 28.

Film can help spread ideas of development through means of communication. They can have many teachings on the social issues that affect that society like HIV/AIDS. In the cases of Nigeria and India, the cinema is a fairly popular medium that could easily reach a large segment of the populations. The cinema in both Nigeria and India could be used to contribute a feeling of nationhood and as a voice for national planning and to help teach skills.

3.1.1. CASE STUDY: NIGERIA

Prior to independence in Nigeria, film was a monopoly of the white directors and producers. The medium was thought to be too complex for indigenous Africans to produce. Indeed, "the argument went firstly that these films were technically too sophisticated for the African mind to understand, and secondly that they were a bad influence on the Africans because they depicted the negative aspects of European lives."⁵¹ Nigeria ranks as one of the biggest film producers in Africa, surpassed by Francophone nations like Senegal. The nation has more than 100 movie theatres. "Directors such as Ola Balogun, a Nigerian novelist and playwright, have been successful in the country where a vast population makes it possible for such artists to survive on local revenue from their films alone."⁵² Balogun is one of the examples of directors struggling to make it in the local film industry. Film is such a product. Today, film distribution in Nigeria is in the hands of foreign companies, which dictate their will in the matter of the cinema. In Nigeria, films are the province of businessmen who can raise the capital to effect their production and distribution. Some Nigerian directors have to pressurize the government to nationalise the distribution but the economic system prefer

⁵¹ Africa Media Review Vol 6 No1 Film and Development. 29

⁵² Africa Media Review Vol 6 No1 film and development. 29.

to leave the work to the private local businessman. Nigerian government should contribute to the development of the industry through financial support and protection from outside competition. Nationalization of the film industry and exhibition industry in Nigeria would contribute greatly to development of the film industry. This method has worked in Algeria, Brazil, and Burkina Faso. Nationalizing the film industry complete with educational and production facilities thus creates an atmosphere where locally produced films could compete with the influential movies of the West. The Nigerian public must be re-educated in their appreciation of film to the point where both feature and documentary are of equal worth.

3.1.2. CASE STUDY: INDIA

The volume of films produced in India has been astounding.

India makes one out of every four theatrical produced annually in the world and since 1971, has been first in the world in the number of films produced annually. Cinema has been ranked as one of India's ten largest industries; producing an average of about two feature films per day. The recently increased dissemination of films through videocassettes and television had enlarged the total audience for Indian films, although it has cut down on actual attendance at the movie theatres.⁵³

Much of the drive to produce films in India has been at the state level; but there has been crucial input from the government. The government took on a direct involvement with the industry through the establishment of the Film Finance Corporation (FFC), and India Motion Picture Association (IMPEC), whose functions were merged in 1980 under the umbrella of the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC). The NFDC has been

⁵³ Africa Media Review Vol 6 No1 Film and Development, 30.

mainly responsible for sponsoring international film festivals and funding some production and distribution of “quality” films.

Most Indian films continue to reflect the purely-entertainment commercialism. India stands out from Nigeria. Its government has supported the Nation’s New Cinema through grants and support for the construction of theatres. These would primarily show such motion pictures. The government should offer more financial support to the nascent New Indian Cinema to promote more films with development themes.

Conclusion

From the international countries, a number of them being developing countries we can see and learn how local film production is a growing industry. It would, therefore, be good to learn from them on how to also implement policies that can help Kenya develop its local film industry, to grow and in return produce quality programmes to entertain, educate and inform the society. These policies are extensively stated in the Appendix 4.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This research was aimed at identifying the cause of the different changes occurring within the youth living in Westlands. This research was aimed to prove or disapprove my three premises:

1. Exposure to media accelerates adoption of Western *Pop Culture* on Kenyan youth.
2. Pop Culture in Kenya has been predominant over the local movie and music industry.
3. That people can do something to shape and control the influence.

From my research, I learnt that the findings validate my premises. This is because much of the Kenyan media content is filled with foreign programmes and music from foreign countries. Western media has “intimidated” the local movie and music industry because firstly, Kenya does not generate many local productions due to lack of finances. Secondly, the few existing productions are not very popular among the youth. From the results of the research, I found theories that are applicable to this topic and explain why the youth prefer foreign content. Uses and Gratification Theory is amongst the theories we employed to explain situation. It implies that members of an audience are active and selective in choosing certain texts or genres that provide them with various gratifications.

This may be to satisfy curiosity and be informed, to gain an identity or to believe in romantic love. Socialization is used to describe the process by which individuals are taught the rules and roles they need in order to function in a given group or society.

Because of these results, I searched for countries that have implemented the local productions in the media houses in order to preserve their culture and at the same time boost the film industry. India provided an illustrated case, having had the highest number of local production compared to other developing countries in the world and closer to home Nigeria is leading. This is because the Government of India works in collaboration with the producers by offering them support financially. This is a great idea that should be proposed to the Government of Kenya. This is critical in order to boost our film industry and also to ensure that their policy of 60% local content is enacted effectively and successfully. There are other policies that I have suggested and with them is a model of monitoring and evaluating its progress.

With the hope that these policies are implemented and followed through, I believe that over the years, we will be able to proudly state that we have a good film industry. We would also be able to push out the western popular culture.

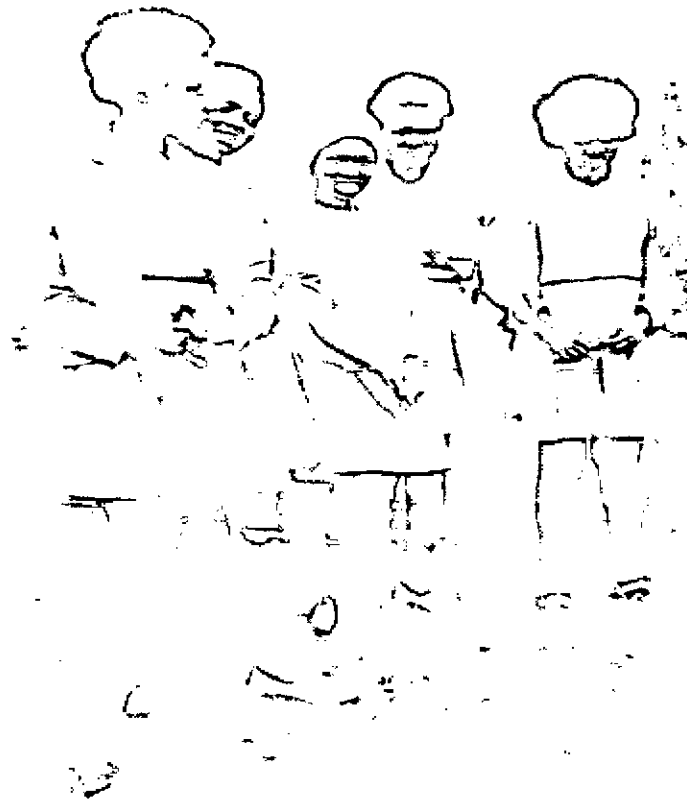
Appendix 1:

**Pictures showing the *African Popular*
*Culture***

Appendix (I)



Appendix (II)



Mini-skirts and bellbottoms were worn by the ladies together with growing Afros.

Appendix 2:

Pictures showing the past *Western*

Popular Culture

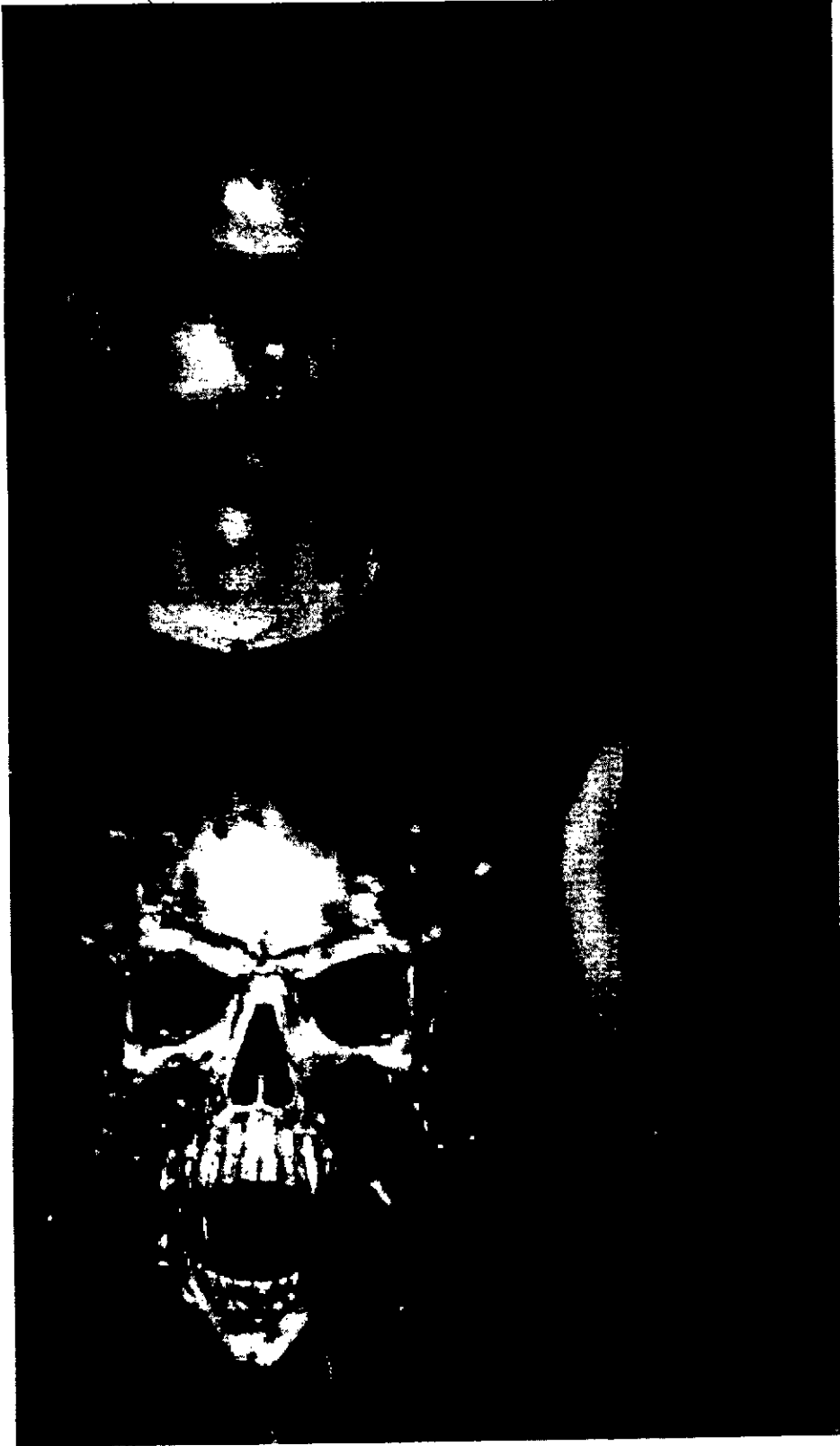
Appendix (III)



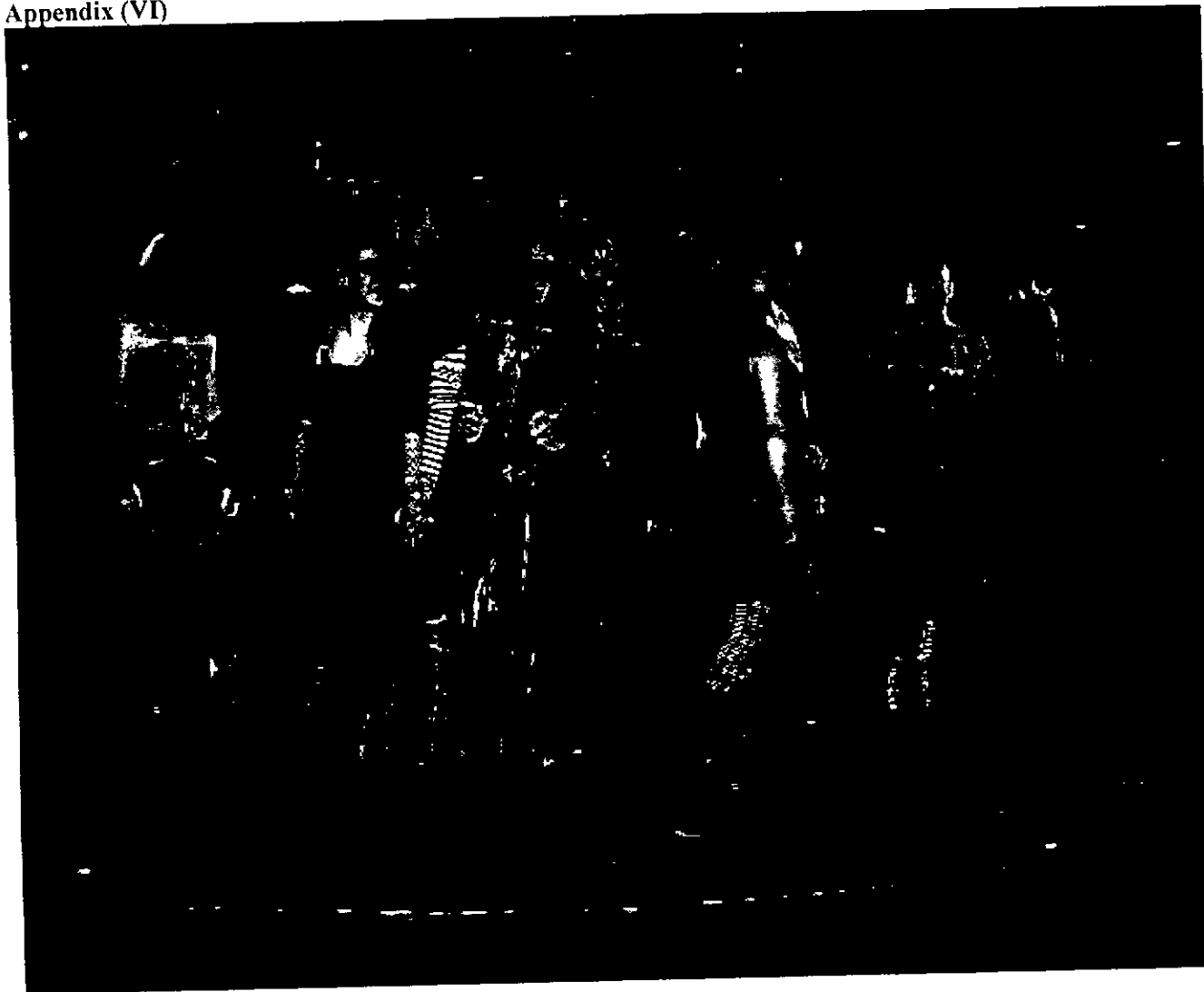
Appendix (IV)



APPENDIX (V)



Appendix (VI)



Appendix 3:

Pictures showing the *Contemporary*

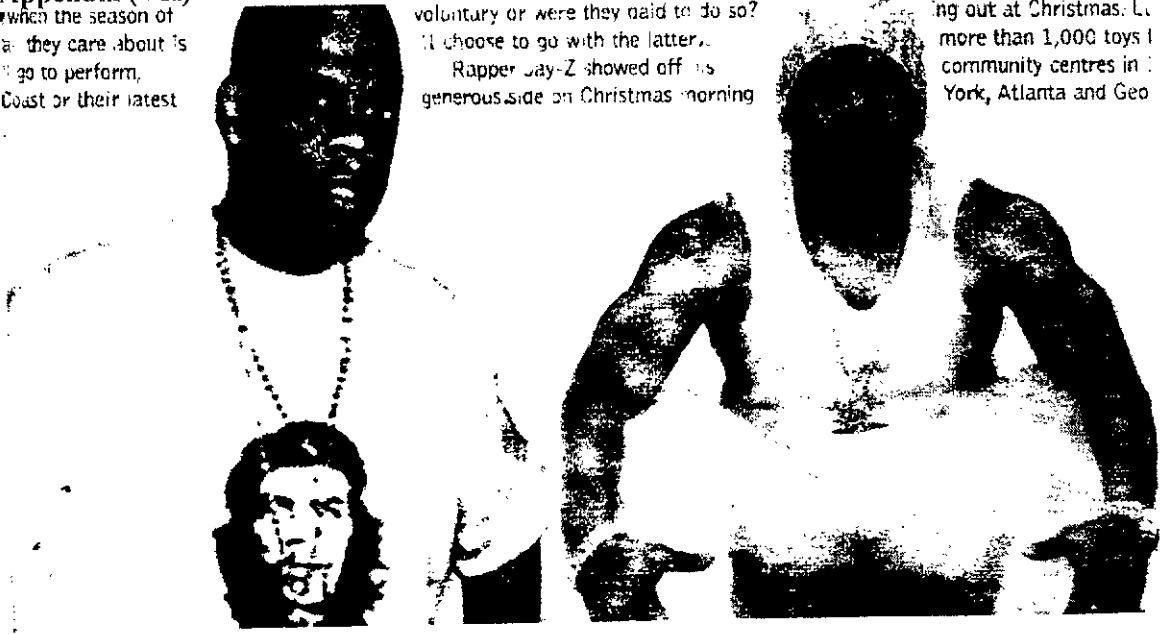
Western Pop Culture

Appendix (VII)

which the season of
a they care about is
to go to perform,
Coast or their latest

voluntary or were they paid to do so?
I choose to go with the latter.
Rapper Jay-Z showed off his
generous side on Christmas morning

ing out at Christmas. Let
more than 1,000 toys to
community centres in
York, Atlanta and Geo



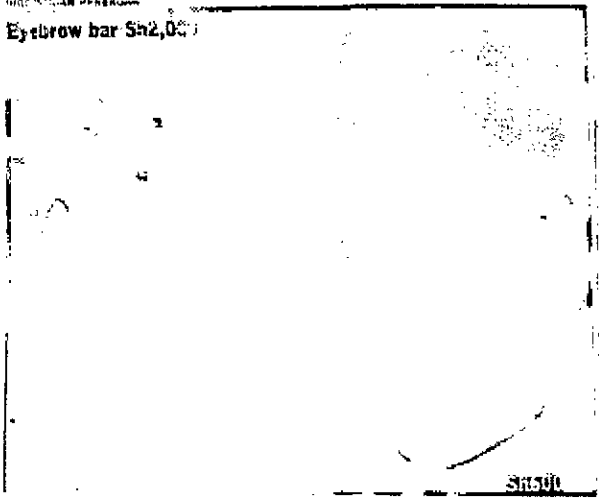
Appendix (VIII)

have

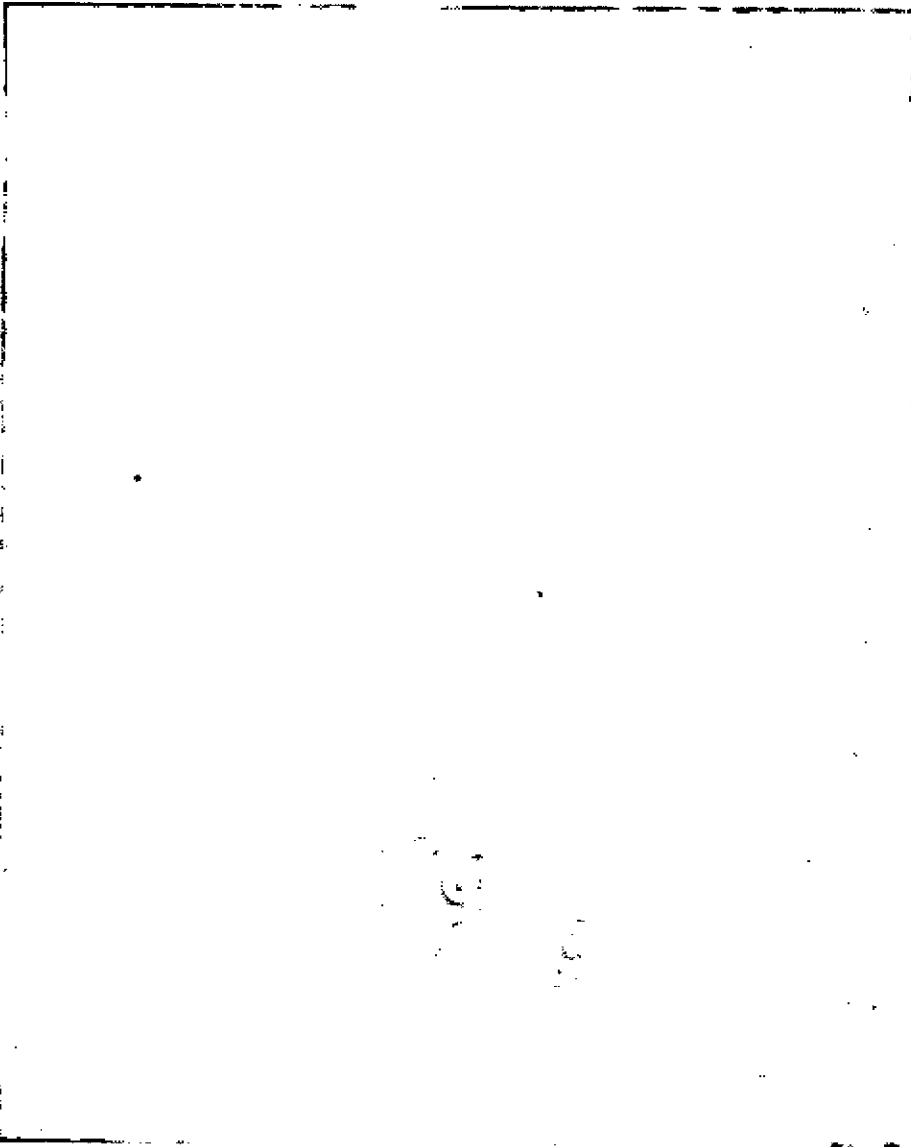


Appendix (IX)

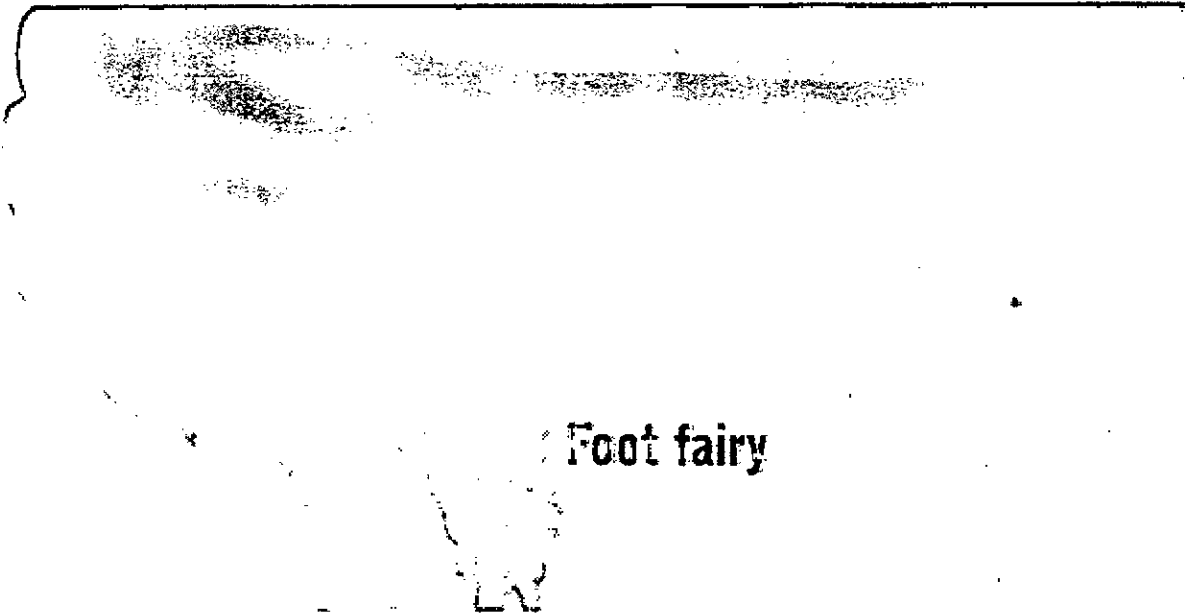
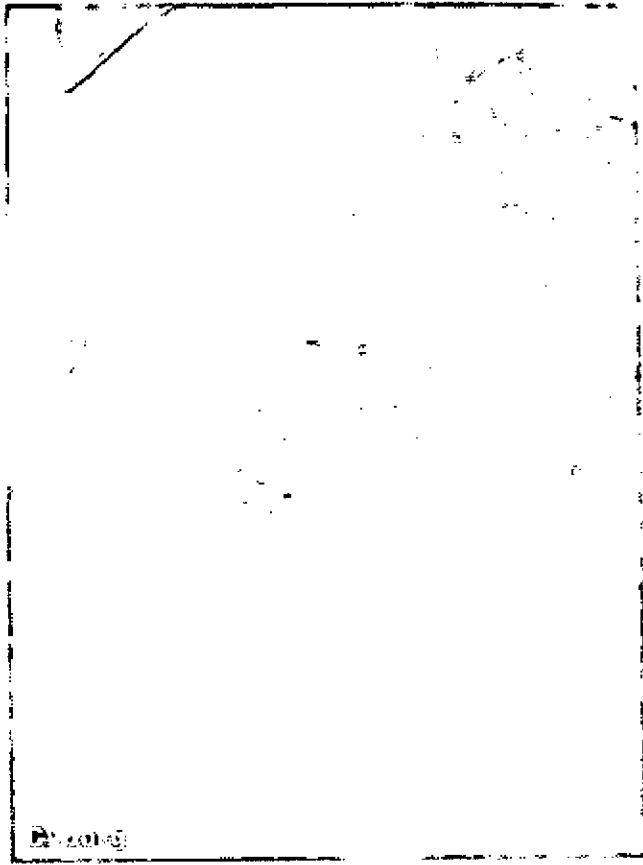
Eye brow bar Sh2,000



Eye brow stud Sh1,000



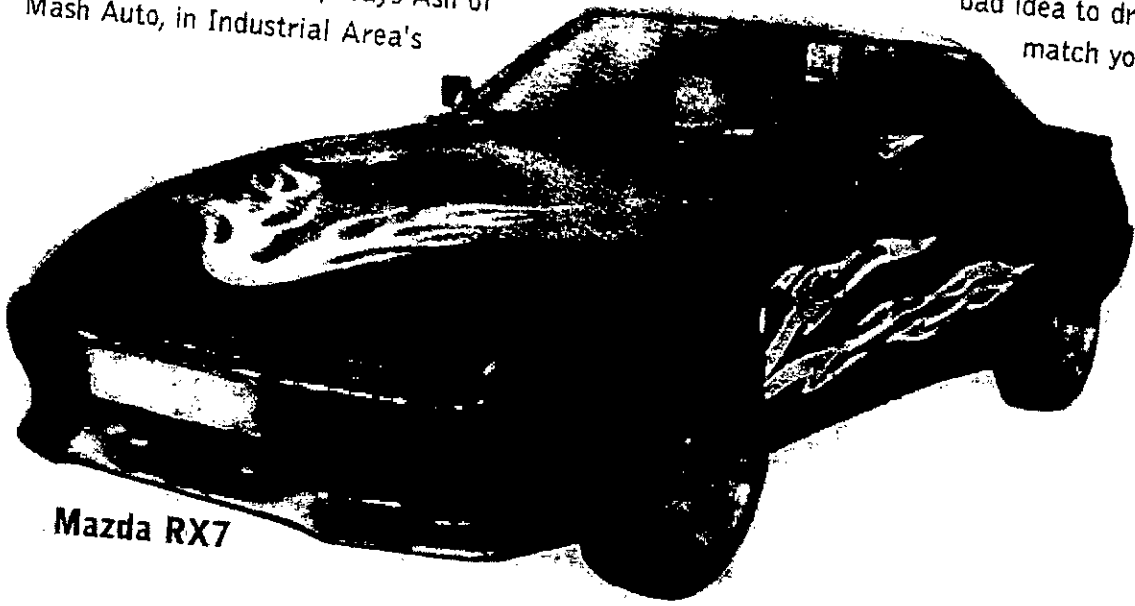
Appendix (X)



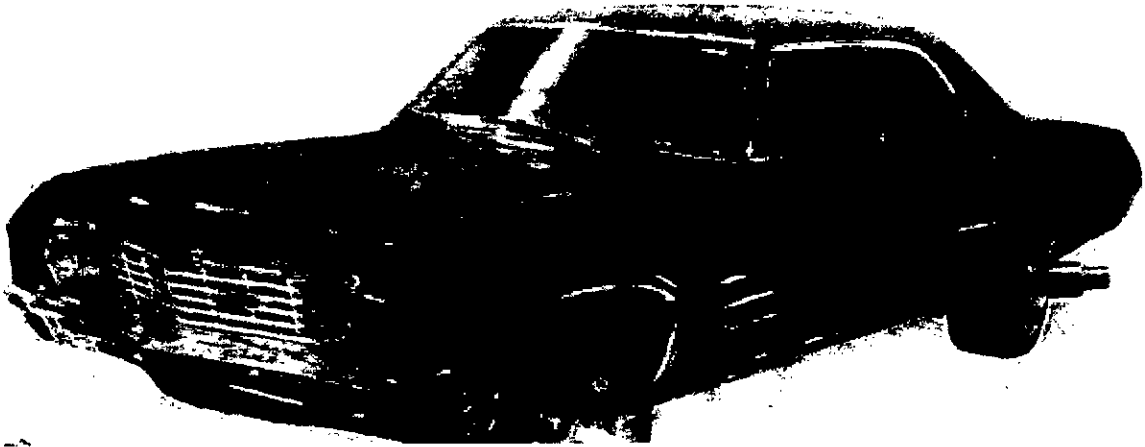
Appendix (XI)

"Communications," says Ash of
Mash Auto, in Industrial Area's

bad idea to dre:
match you



Mazda RX7



Appendix 4:

Questionnaire

Age

Sex

Education Level

a. Primary b. Secondary c. Tertiary

Occupation

1. Do you have access to a television?

a. Yes b. No

2. Approximately how many hours a day do you spend watching television?

a. 1-3 b. 4-6 c. 7-9 d. 10-12

3. What is your favourite TV station?

a. KBC b. KTN c. NTV d. EATV e. DSTV

4. Why do you watch television? Number in order of preference (1-3)

a. Information b. Entertainment
c. Education d. Other (specify).....

5. Who do you mostly watch television with?

a. Alone b. Parents
c. Siblings d. Spouse

6. What type of entertainment programs do you watch most?

a. Comedies b. Soaps c. Music d. Movies

7. List 3 of your favourite entertainment programs.

.....
.....
.....

8. What appeals to you **most** in these programs?

a. Storyline b. Characters
c. Dressing style d. Other (specify).....

9. Do you watch local programs?

a. Yes

b. No

9. Assess the content of **local programs** produced in Kenya today in terms of Cultural relevance and themes?

.....
.....
.....

10. a. The **local programs** shown on Kenyan televisions should be

i. More

ii. Less

b. Give reasons.....

11. Assess the content of **foreign programs** shown on our Kenyan TV in terms of cultural relevance and themes?

.....
.....
.....

12. State the ways in which you think **foreign programs** influence your life?

.....
.....
.....

13. Do you listen to music?

a. Yes

b. No

14. Which type of music do you prefer?

a. Local

b. International

15. Name 3 of your favourite music artists.

.....
.....
.....

16. a. Which is your favourite Kenyan radio station?

17. Your favourite Kenyan radio station airs

a. More local music

b. More International music

c. A balance of both

18. Assess the content of **local music** produced in Kenya today?

.....
.....
.....

19. a. Would you like more or less local music aired on the stations?

- i. More local music
- ii. Less local music

b. Give reasons for your answer above 19a.

.....
.....

20. Which of this jewellery do you wear other than earrings?

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| a. Finger rings | <input type="checkbox"/> | d. Nose Ring | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Eyebrow Ring | <input type="checkbox"/> | e. Navel Ring | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Tongue ring | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

21. a. Do you have a tattoo?

- a. Yes
- b. No

22. a. Do you smoke cigarettes?

- i. Yes
- ii. No

b. If Yes, do you smoke

- i. To fulfil an urge
- ii. As a social habit
- iii. To feel good.
- iv. None of the above

23. a. Do you drink alcohol?

- i. Yes
- ii. No

b. If Yes, do you drink alcohol

- i. Daily
- ii. Weekends
- iii. Weekly
- iv. Special Occasion
- v. None of the above

24. Do you go out to nightclubs?

- a. Yes
- b. No

25. List down 3 of your favourite clubs in Kenya.

.....
.....
.....

Appendix 5

Application: Popular Culture Policies

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government Regulation

a. Reduce Western Media Content

The Kenyan media should firstly reduce the Western media content that is constantly on our television channels.

In Kenya, Minister Tuju had mentioned the need to regulate the media content (*Daily Nation, March 9, p.3*), but so far there has been no follow-up in policy and regulations to contain the amount of foreign 'software' in the local media outlet. Four of the 16 station investigated by DTM affirmed that they have a policy to allocate 60-80% of airtime to local content, but they are not able to comply with the policy due to, among others, the high cost of local productions. Considering the relevance that entertainment programmes' assume in the programmes' fare, emerging opportunities for independent film producers can be identified, but policy makers should create a conducive environment for local productions to develop.⁵⁴

As the adage goes, practice makes perfect. By allowing producers to air their programmes, they gain encouragement to produce more films and their production improves. In this way, opportunities are given to filmmakers to also progress in their career and in turn the Kenyan media industry grows.

b. Support Filmmakers

The government can support the film industry by offering grants and support for the construction of theatres that would primarily show such motion pictures. This way, the producers and directors are assured of a place to market their production. Currently, the problem of creating programmes is the high cost of production. It costs millions to produce films and many of the directors do not have that kind of money. Therefore

⁵⁴ P. MUGGI, *Mass Media and Society*, Lecture notes, 6.

government support would be helpful in developing the film industry in Kenya. It could be done by loaning the film organisation money to produce their films and after their sales, they can repay back gradually.

2. Industry Self-Regulation

a. Airing of More Local Programmes

As suggested above the government can play a role in the production of local productions but the industry players have a definite role to play as well. Usually, the media industry is profit-oriented as is in many business organisations. Commonly known by the public is that the media exist to inform, educate and entertain but the media have bigger roles. The media have the ability to change the behaviour of people. Naturally, the profit motive drives most of these decisions and the essential issue for record companies, radio stations, and cable broadcasters is to decide what will sell to the youth market. It is the process of music industry decision-making that largely determines which bands get signed and promoted, which songs are played on the radio and which videos are produced and aired. It should therefore be the decision of television stations to decide what is good and relevant to be aired.

The people, who produce, sell and broadcast music and music videos, have a perfect legal right to exert behind-the-scenes control over the content and distribution of their products. To put in another way, musicians possess no first amendment right to a record contract. Indeed, when it comes to industry action, one person's censorship is another's social responsibility and good taste. If a record company executive or an art-gallery owner or a book publisher declines to disseminate something, that's not censorship, it's judgement.⁵⁵

Therefore, the media industry players should take into consideration the amount of foreign content aired on the television and radio. They should take up the suggestion of

⁵⁵ P. G. CHRISTENSON, *It's Not Only Rock & Roll: Popular Music in the Lives of Adolescents*, 231.

the former Minister of Communication, Raphael Tuju and enact the policy that states that 60% of the content aired should be local. At the same time, they should screen the content before airing in order to check the quality of production and its relevance to societal issues.

Additionally, KTN has continued to support local talent by introducing local production in its programme schedule. With this in mind KTN is the TV station with the highest percentage of locally produced programmes. KTN premiered in 1990 as the first TV station. It has a 24-hour station by virtue of its affiliation with CNN and channel O.⁵⁶

Currently, this is what is going on with KTN, which is a good move in the right direction to encourage the local film industry.

The channel (NTV) as mixture of exiting British and American comedies, thrilling dramas ranging from political, court crimes, and sci-fi dramas and many more. There are dramas that seek to educate, these are documentaries that are both local and international. NTV offers captivating enticing soaps where love romance hatred jealousy mystery beauty and fun are emphasized.⁵⁷

Nation Television is still more on foreign content and considering that it is slowly gaining a wider coverage and wider audience, it would be best if they too started to show more local programmes.

b. Hiring of Professionals

Currently the norm in today's radio stations is to hire Kenyan celebrities with the aim gaining a wider audience. This is not right because most of the celebrities are not trained in communication and are not professionals. The professionals are not fully aware of the effect they have on what they present on air. An example is when Cess Mutungi a media personality was fired for degrading Charity Ngilu for achieving a Diploma only in her

⁵⁶ MAP-TV, Participants With Stands; KTN Baraza Profile, 16.

⁵⁷ MAP-TV, Participants With Stands; NTV Profile, 10.

studies yet she is the Minister of Health. This was lack of professionalism in her. There should, therefore, be policies or laws that allow only professionals in media communication to be hired in the media industry.

c. Record Labelling

The most widely familiar and most broadly applied form of industry self-regulation is the system of parental advisory labelling. This is the placement of parental advisory labelling on music cassettes and CD boxes or before the beginning of a movie alerts the buyer that the item may contain lyrics or videos that are unsuitable to young children and youth or offensive. This will create awareness to the buyer on what kind of images or words to expect. This will also help parents to know what kind of music their children are listening to. This can create an environment or forum to discuss what content is good or bad. To ensure that this policy works, the government should come up with a law to punish record storeowners selling videos and music to minors.

3. Media Training

Training is aimed at producing critical thinking media people and not just technicians. Media trainees should establish working relationships with community groups as a practical extension by engaging media communicators to engage in community service. It is important that the training institution form some sort of relationship to the energies of social struggle taking place around them. This means learning to consult with community groups. Such direct interaction is also an excellent way of teaching media workers to distinguish which interest group wants what and why. It helps develop an understanding

of their relationship to different interests in society. I would, therefore, suggest that media organisations or institutions come up with a programme where new employees are sent for community service to achieve and be aware of the society's need from the roots.

4. Family Policy: What Parents can do?

"If parents wish to avoid open rebellion, they would be wise to initiate, as early as possible, an ongoing discussion with their kids about music in general and current popular in particular, with the aim of negotiating guidelines that all can live with."⁵⁸As much as we will suggest on the government and industry roles and assume policies to be related with large relatively formal organisations, procedures to guide behaviour are natural in any form of social organisation. The Parents also have a role to inform and educate their children. For the parents, it would be wise to always monitor the television content that their children are watching. If they would also limit the time spent in television viewing and focus on communicating with them, it would result in continually passing on their heritage and culture would not be disappearing and this would be good could for youth's mental and spiritual health.

Mode of Implementation

Policies are created so that different parties benefit. In this research the policy's are there to help the film industry to grow and develop and at the same time the Kenyan youth can be informed and educated on matters relating to them and also entertain them. The policies aforementioned need a governing body to monitor and evaluate whether the

⁵⁸ P.G. CHRISTENSON, *It's Not Only Rock & Roll. Popular Music in the Lives of Adolescents*, 249.

policies are successful and beneficial or they need restructuring. The best policy models would be the incremental and mixed scanning method.

a. Incremental Model

This method suggests that we look at the policies and make them work in stages. The government suggested that the media houses should have 60% local content. This is impossible to attain immediately because the film industry in Kenya does not have that much in terms of production. If this policy is enacted now the media houses will close down due to lack of sufficient programmes to air. Therefore it is reasonable to state that with the support of the government, in two years the media houses should be able to air at least 15% of local content and in the next two years 30% of local content aired, in the next six years 45% and finally in eight years 60% of local content is aired. This way in eight years the media houses can be able to achieve the requirements of the government, which is 60%.

There is a need to create an independent organisation, preferably one knowledgeable in media that can monitor the grants offered to filmmakers. This is to ensure that the money is properly used. At the end of the film production, the producers should give a detailed account of how the money was account. Failure to do this the filmmaker is punished according to the law. This same independent organisation should ensure that the process of acquiring the 60% in six years is attained and adhered to. Failure to do this the broadcasting house license should be revoked. This would ensure the promotion of local productions.

b. *Mixed Scanning Model*

This model looks at the big picture in the present. While looking at the goal, one looks at the errors and corrects them. This mechanism of scanning detects the mistakes, what is working and what's not working. In this case the goal is to have a strong local film and music industry with more local programmes and local music aired. Mixed scanning works with extra-rational factors, like corruption and money squandering and emphasise much on feedback level. The method picks out the drawbacks and changes where possible. This method is applicable to record labelling and media trainers.

The organisation should be open to all to be able to receive complaints from the public including complaints from parents who see adult movies and music in the hands of their underage children. The license of record storeowners should also be revoked if they are found selling music and movies labelled 'Parental Advisory' to minors. If the revoking of licenses does not work, the independent organisation should take stricter measures by taking them to court.

Currently, Kenya has a media body that monitors the media in terms of media ethics and law. This organisation is known as Media Council of Kenya. Authorities in media run it. This organisation receives complaints and looks into them. These complaints could in terms of libel, slander and defamation.

On the issue of media trainers and hiring professionals, I suggest that all media houses send their employees to do community service as a requirement so that the employees are aware of the societal needs. The media should also hire professionals to work in their radio stations instead of hiring celebrities. There are many media

professionals in Kenya who are more in touch with the rules, laws and ethics in media communication.

With all the policies I have suggested and the method of implementing. Then it I believe that the local film industry would grow and in return have better quality. Through this we would be able to reduce the amount of Western content from entering and dominating local media.

Abbreviations

CCCS	Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies
Cf	Confer
CNN	Cable News Network
DTM	Development Through Media
E.G.	For example
FCC	Federal Communications Communication
FFC	Film Finance Corporation
ID	Idem- the same as previously given o mentioned
IMPEC	India Motion Picture Association
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Television
KTN	Kenya Television Network
NFDC	National Film Development Corporation
NTV	Nation Television
POP	Popular

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