The Kanywood Home Video and its Effect on Hausa Culture: A study of Gwale Local Government Area of Kano State

MARYAM UMAR MUKHTAR*, Ph.D

Abstract

This study examines Kanywood home video and its effects on Hausa culture. The study sought to elicit answers on the moral questions, societal problems and other burning issues in the Hausa home video. Qualitative methodology was used with In-depth Interview and Focus Group Discussions utilized as instruments of data collection. Findings revealed the need for a proper scrutiny, organization, readjustment, and restructuring to guide and guard the Hausa culture and do away with the problem of imitation. The study recommends that Hausa culture should be given priority by giving it adequate coverage as against imitating alien cultures in the content of Kanywood films. Hausa films makers should endeavor to translate their products to major global languages like Arabic, English and French so as to attract more viewers/audience across the world.

Key Words: Kanywood, Home Video, Hausa Culture, Kano.

Introduction

The history of film industry in Nigeria dates to the colonial period when some propaganda film were Produced and circulated in the country as part of the colonial governments effort to dominate the mindset of the people. Officially, such films are aimed at public enlightenment especially in the critical areas of health, education, and economy. Many sources including Frewshback, and Singer, (2001) gave the date of the first film exhibition in Nigeria as August 1903 at Glover memorial hall in Lagos, and the first Nigeria managed film as a business enterprise was by Herbert Macaulay, while the screening was done in Messra Babbea of Spain. Okwenwa (2000) assert that the development of film has a long history. It started with a film show in part of a moving train by the lumierre brothers' gradually; it became a medium of mass communication with the widest appeal. However the expertise and the technology required producing film became the monopoly of the dominant countries of Europe and America. Film has been recognized as one of the most popular form of art and entertainment throughout the whole world. It serves as the major source of information which involves a source of recorded images through a film projector or video tape or digital compact disc player.

*Dr. Maryam Umar Mukhtar, Ph.D., is a lecturer in the Department of Mass Communication, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria.

Film has the most universal appeal and impact on the people, it is the strongest and one of the most powerful and viable media for fostering cultural awareness, it can also be used as a tool to promote positive social transformation in national development by educating, entertaining and informing people. However, this study is aimed at examining: Kanywood home video and its effect on Hausa culture: a medium that would be very acceptable to the Hausa audience the Nigeria populace and the world at large.

Kano state movie industry is popularly known as Kanywood, it was established in 1990 and is usually cited as one of the first commercial Hausa film in northern Nigeria. The industry was created by the native authority of Kano; it was created to offer job opportunity in the city. The industry combined many actors like Ali Nuhu which is known as *Sarki* meaning the King by his mate or in the industry, Adam A. Zango and host of others. The Kano state movie industry is always curious to inform, educate and entertain the target audience through motion picture and render knowledge to the society. By 2012 over 2000 companies across northern Nigeria registered with the Kano state film association (Kanywood) (Usman, 2004)

Statement of the Problem
Kanywood as a formal term popularly used for Hausa language film industry based in Kano Nigeria distinguished itself in overall interest of the audience. However criticisms have been raised about the cultural avenues for expressing themselves, displaying talent and making reasonable income. Kanywood industry has been criticized on the quality, cultural orientation, indigenous and foreign cultural imitation etc. therefore it will be interesting to know the effect of Kanywood home video on Hausa culture and the audience view towards the phenomenon.

This study is significance to the researcher, as it will broaden the knowledge of the researcher on the area of study, such as the effect of Kanywood home videos on Hausa culture that requires answers for its existence and finding out a way to address the problem. It will also be of significance to the larger society providing answer to the questions that the larger society is yet to receive on the effect of Kanywood home videos on Hausa culture.

The result of the findings will add to the existing body of knowledge, and the literature as a reference material to be added to the existing materials in the library.

Research Questions
1. To what extent Does Kanywood home videos have influence on Hausa culture
2. Does Hausa home videos have any effect to the Hausa community?
3. What are the factors behind the cultural effect on Hausa culture?

Hausa Home Videos
Hausa home videos are films that are produced for home viewing. To Mohammed (2004)

Hausa videos are perfect example of the efflorescence of local media production made possible by the advent of video culture. Already the number of videos produced eclipses the small number of Hausa films made over the last forty years. Unlike many of those films the videos do not rely upon state patronage, but depend solely upon the market of Hausa viewers, making the videos one of the first truly popular forms of Hausa electronic media.

Mohammed   further argues that "…Hausa popular dramas are…. Rapidly spreading all over northern Nigeria, creating their own publics, their own fans, and generating their own critics."Hausa films can also be interpreted as…the culmination of Hausa entertainment because it combines drama, music and dance. It is an attempt to represent the Hausa society. The cinema is older than the television but few celluloid films have so far been produced. Even before the advent of home video many Hausa artists were engaged in television drama. Some of them were very good actors, for example, Kasimu Yaro and Mustapha Danhaki. Tanko (2004).

Before the advent of Hausa home videos, there was a transition from Hausa literary works to Hausa films production. The transition did not occur accidentally. Part of the reason was: there was a boost in the literary industry, coupled with an incessant demand for entertainment, especially amongst the Hausa youth.

The great emphasis given to the theme of *Soyayya* (love) by the new wave of Hausa novels influenced the pattern and style of production of the first general Hausa home videos. There were direct adoptions of Hausa novels to Hausa films. Such adapted novels were *Ki Yarda Da Ni*, *Kara Da Kiyashi*, *muguwar kishiya*, *Alhaki kwikwiyo*, etc. fundamentally, women writers that turned producers were part of the principal figures that spearheaded that transition. Writers such as *Bilkisu funtua*, *Balaraba Ramat yakubu*, *Zuwaira Isa*, among others.

Some experienced hands among men were also involved in spearheading the transition from script to screen. They were authors and producers at the same time. In this category there were people like *Ado Ahmad Gidan Dabino and Bala Anas Babinlata.* Writers who turned producers had production companies named after them. Such as *Balaraba Ramat Yakubu's Ramat* productions and *Gidan Dabino* Video productions of *Ado Ahmad Gidan Dabino*. Another popular writer, *Dan Azumi Baba* was absorbed in RK Studios, along with film production companies that were 'mushroomed in the late 1990s.' There were indeed 'films of the book' which included *Dan Azumi Baba's Bakandamiyar Rikicin Duniya*, 'This deceptive world', *Alhaki kwikwiyo*, 'A misdeed in like a puppy' of *Balaraba Ramat Yakubu*, *A'isha Chediyar 'yan Gurasa's Kwai* a *baka*, 'Ann egg in the mouth' and *In da so da kauna*,'where there is love and desire' by *Ado Ahmad Gidan Dabino*, (Fagge,2004 and Furniss, 2003).

Before the emergence of Hausa home videos there were Hausa dramas that were aired in some television and radio stations in northern Nigeria that happened with the establishment of the Radio Television Kaduna in the sixties. The dramas then had considerable audience across the northern Nigeria. There was a boost in that area, when, in the Eighties there were similar productions in the NTA Kano and CTV (a Kano State government-owned television station).

From 60s to 80s, notable among the popular stars that were similar featured then were Usman *Baba pategi (Samanja), Hajara Usman, Kasimu Yero, Ladan Kontagora and Garuje (Mansur Kwalli), Alhaji Buguzum (Doron Mage), Mallam Mamman (Mallam Mustapha) a*nd *Chinnaka*, respectively.

It is noted above that there was a transition from literary works to film production. There was also the case of 'writers turned actors or producers.' Graham Furniss (2003:12) notes.

One of the most remarkable cultural transitions in recent years has been this move from books into video film. Many of the stories in the books now known as Kano Market Literature or Hausa popular literature are built around dialogues and action, a characteristic that was also present in earlier prose writing of the 1940s and 1950s. Such writing style made it relatively easy to work from a story to a TV drama, and a number of the Hausa TV drama series ('Magana Jari Ce',for example) derived their story lines from texts.

The transition from script to screen itself gave birth to some sort of contradicting positions between Hausa script writers and Hausa filmmakers. This resulted from effort by the filmmakers to directly copy from Hindi or American movies. While Indian and American movies, were largely pirated in the emergent Hausa films. This copying tendency was frowned at by the academics and local populace.

Quite a few of the Hausa video film producers would rather see their craft reflected in the sophistication of Hollywood, especially when the technology became available which would enable them to experiment. An example of this is *Hafizu Bello's film (Qarni)*which cloned Arnold Schwarzenegger's 6th Day in both the poster art work, as well as a fundamental premise of the Holly film to probe into another person's soul….

This practice of preferring to mainly copy Hindi films into Hausa and promoted by Humanized non ethnic Hausa filmmakers- by passes the literary pool of Hausa writers that exist in Kano, Katsina, minna, Kaduna, Sokoto, Zaria and other places in northern Nigeria. Adamu (2006:40-41).

In Tanko (2004) "Storyline Structure in Hausa Home videos: An Analysis of Maikudi, Sanafahna and Albashi", the ,main focus was to measure the storyline structure of these films, comparing them with what is obtained in the Hollywood film industry, that uses the 'Heroes Journey' as a model for story writing. The theoretical framework was based on the Narrative Theory and Narrative Analysis as its analytical tool. In the course of the work Abubakar (2007) who was able to explore that the Vogler's model formed the framework of storyline structure in Hausa home videos that were analyzed by the study. So this model was the major element of storyline structure.

There were still important variations to vogler's model, with all the significant emergence of these elements within the storyline structure. It was therefore observed that as a result of cultural differences, out of the twelve stages of vogler's universal structure of storyline, a few of them were found to exist in Hausa narrative structure. In vogler's model the universal structure of storytelling are beginning, middle and end.

Criticisms of Hausa home videos
There are praises as well as criticisms of Hausa home videos. Different people assess such films differently and from different points of view. Part of the reasons for discarding Hausa home videos is the thinking that these films corrupt Hausa moral practices. This is where the issue of copying Indian and western films comes in. As observed by Adamu (2006:52) that, "this entertainment philosophy of Hindi filmmakers found itself reproduced in Hausa video films, in spite of the Sharia. By 2003 the focus of video films had shifted from erotica in the conjugal spaces of bedrooms to public display of erotica through the skimpy western clothing of the girls and their sexually suggestive dance routines. Video films with more of erotic scenes as opportunities to partake in localized global soft pornography.

Apart from achievement recorded by such films, some 'keen observes' have identified some discrepancies in the production, registration, distribution and marketing of these films. As observed by Usman (2004:38),

> …from the debut of Hausa home video films to date, a lot has been achieved. However, the quality of their production is still low. There may be many reasons for this. One is the low budget associated with their production. There is also lack of sufficient expertise among the producers, actors and others who very much need further training. In the same vein, established production of Hausa home video have to compete with unregistered, easy-to-make, easy-to produce and easy-to-distribute, cheap Hausa home video films. Of course there is also the unavailability of modern and sophisticated production materials and equipments.

Other people criticize these films from their peculiar perspectives. Some of the films are seen as below standard for the simple reason that they are a replica of other people's culture, especially Indian culture. Others are rejected simply because they are seen as platforms for nurturing, promoting and sustaining moral bankruptcy. Hence, they are against the teachings of Islam.

For a discussion on copying Indian cinema, Adamu (2003) is quoted by Ahmad (2004:142) that, "Hausa home video producers copy Indian cinema because of two reasons; first was the heavy dosage of Indian cinema they received in their youth through video copies of major Indian cinema releases, and second the absence of indigenous entertainment media for youth aged 12-25."

To counter the criticism made against most of the Hausa home videos for being replica of mostly Indian films, Hausa fans of these Indian films argued that,…Indian culture is "just like" Hausa culture. Instead of focusing on the differences between the two societies, when they watch Indian movies what they see are similarities, especially when compared with American or English movies. Men in Indian films, for instance, are often dressed in long kaftans, similar to the Hausa doguwar riga, over which they wear long waistcoats, much like the Hausa falmaran (sic; falmaran). The wearing of turbans, chewing sugar cane, and so on… Indian movies reflect back to Hausa viewers aspects of everyday life,"

Hausa video filmmakers were not simply interested in copying the general themes of Hindi films alone, they were also being provided by templates for storylines and similar templates for songs in their (Hausa) films. The thematic elements of Hindi film songs were significantly substituted with Hausa lyrics, so as to make the method of replication a catchy one, (Adamu, 2006).

Some of the attractive controversial fronts in the discussion of Hausa home video are dancing and singing. Though filmmakers have argued that these actions have root in Hausa Islamic culture, but others argued against it as a replica of Indian films. They further argued that there were nothing like 'love garden' for dancing and singing of the opposite sexes, in Hausa Islamic culture, (Kurawa, 2004).

Adamu (2006:59) opines that, "…a consistent thread of criticism against Hausa popular culture was its gender focus…In almost all cases of protests against such development the rationale was to protect the sanctity and purity of the Muslim female."

The fact Hausa society predominantly Muslim, filmmakers are likely to face much challenges for exhibiting immoral behaviors that are at variance with Islam. Adamu (2006:63) captured this in his work, that, the sensuality in Hausa video films, however, is shocking only because of the Islamic environment in which the filmmakers found themselves. Under conventional western filmmaking techniques, they would not even attract any attention. Critical reaction about the depiction of the Hausa Muslim female conjugal spaces started in popular press in northern Nigeria, drawing the attention of the government, which set up a censorship board….In an Islamic society, however, expressions of intimacy, especially between the genders is certain to lead sermons and condemnations.

But the eventuality of the global media dynamism, as observed by Adamu (2006:3) that "No social system can remain insulated or isolated from the dynamics of global media eddies, especially a society making a transition from a traditional society to a cosmopolitan one." This indicates that Hausa film industry is likely to continue to flourish. And that, in itself, is likely to attract the attention of more critics. So, it is a case of what I refer to as 'dual polarization of Hausa home video contents.' That the industry is rising up and the critics are matching up.

In order to match with the philosophy of media domestication, that is a 'process in which trans-global media messages provide a matrix for re-enactment limits itself to sensual stimuli of the messages, devoid, if possible, from the spiritual antecedents of the original' Adamu (2006:6). The active stakeholders of the Hausa film production feel encouraged and satisfied with the contents of their home videos. It is therefore worth noting to know "how media messages from both global and international sources were appropriated and domesticated by Hausa popular culture purveyors for local consumption-especially in literature, music and film", Adamu (2006:6).

As arguments and debates in the Hausa home videos are gathering momentum, some of the positions are contradictory. It is argued that a great number of Hausa home videos viewers that reject these films, are also seen as part of the frontline promoters of such films. Adamu (2006:55) quoted Dan

Azumi Baba, a filmmaker and a producer, who was a novelist before, in the FIM Magazine, of June 2003, page 3, who challenged that, "the Hausa viewing audience contributes significantly to encouraging us (filmmakers) to adopt Westernization in Hausa films. This they do through refusal to buy films that do not have these elements, because despite all their criticisms, they still rush out to buy these films."

To understand this position clearly, a popular actress Mansurah Isah a Yoruba actress living in Kano, argued that, It's modernization, they may not approve, but they still like it, you understand? It's modernity. We are only reflecting what is happening in the real world. You will see young girls and boys in real life going to a party and getting down; well we are only showing how they do it…yet those who abuse us are those who will go to the market and buy the films.

Another actor, Ali Nuhu, adds weight to this debate. His argument, in this context, is broader and more critical. He argued that, the political systems in Nigeria and Niger Republic are based on western models. Why didn't these countries create their own unique political systems? The Western society is the most progressive in the world, and everyone is trying to copy them. Even Arabs, who are strongly attached to their religion and culture, are now copying Americans, in their mode of dress and other things. It is modernity, and you must go with the times, or you will be left behind. Interview with Ali Nuhu, Ra'ayi, Vol 1 No 1, February 2005, p.7.

So the contradictory positions, as highlighted above, are identified with the audience, in this context.

Theoretical Framework

The research is located within the social Responsibilities theory of the media. The social responsibility theory was propounded by F.S Siebert, T.B Peterson and W. Schramm, in 1963. The basic principles of social responsibility theory are as follows.
  (i)   Media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to society.
  (ii) These obligations are mainly to be met by setting high or professional standards of in formativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity, and balance.
  (iii) In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self-regulating within the framework of law and established institutions.
  (iv) The media should avoid whatever might lead to crime, violence, or civil disorder or give offence to minority groups.
  (v)   The media as a whole should be pluralist and reflect the diversity of their society, giving access to various points of view and rights of the pupil.
  (vi) Society and the public have a right to expert high standards of performance, and intervention can be justified to secure the, or a, public good.
  (vii) Journalists and media professionals should be accountable to society as well as to employers and the market (Mc Quail, 2005).

This theory was originated from…the Hutchins commission on freedom of the press, set up in the United States of America in 1947 to re-examine the concept of press freedom as enunciated in the Libertarian or Free Press Theory. This was because the so-called free market of ideas had failed to guarantee press freedom and to yield the expected benefits to the society (Gray, 2004).

Freedom of expression is part of the key terms in the social responsibility theory.

Through individual rights are guaranteed but no one is allowed to misuse his/her freedom for selfish ends. Freedom of expression is a moral right under this theory. It should also be for the benefit of all individuals and society, Gunter (2007). In the light of this therefore, media people are encouraged and obliged to see that different shades of opinions of the citizenry are adequately represented Folkert and Lacy (2004).

Part of the strength of social responsibility theory is this, that it "…values media responsibility, values audience responsibility, limits government intrusion in media operation, (and) allows reasonable government control of media….", .McQual, 2005)

The justification for employing this theory in this study is seen in what Davis and Baran (2009:119) identified as part of the strengths of the social responsibility theory, that it "…the media should be responsible at all coast''

This shows that the efforts put by the filmmakers are appreciated. So also their freedom of expression is guaranteed, the freedom of audience to appreciate, and/or to criticize some contents of the Hausa home videos is also guaranteed and reasonable government control of media is justified.

The Study Context: Gwale
Gwale is Local Government area in Kano state, Nigeria within Greater Kano city. Its headquarters is in the suburb of Gwale. It has an area of 18 square kilometres and population of 362,059 (Three hundred and sixty two thousand and fifty nine) at the 2006 census. Gwale local government's population consists of Great Ulamah, traders, famers, craftsmen who live in walled houses internally oriented to ensure privacy.

The people of Gwale local government are predominantly Muslims among whom are quite number of households. Gwale as a Local Government has the following wards: Dandago, Diso, Dorayi, Galadanci, Goran Dutse, Gwale, Gyaranya, Kabuga, Mandawari, Sani, Mai Nagge.

Method of Study
The study employed two qualitative research methods. Qualitative research approach embraces methodologies that are theoretically framed by critical or interpretive social science paradigms that emphasize interpretation over measurement. This approach "...allows individuals under investigation to respond freely using their own linguistic codes and displaying their natural behavioural forms... " (Gunter 2000:277).

Qualitative approach is best equipped to facilitate the kind of investigation that allows audiences to express their thoughts and feelings about media content

in their own terms. This approach concentrates on real life settings and content (Folkerts and Lacy, 2004).

The two qualitative research methods employed are:
i.   Focus Group Discussion
ii. In-depth Interview

The population consisted of the entire people in Gwale Local Government Area of Kano State

Sampling Method

Purposive and Convenience sampling methods was used for this study. Purposive sampling is employed at two levels:
(i)   Among the population of Gwale, only Adult was purposively sampled so as not to deviate from the discussion.
(ii) In addition, within these Adult that were sampled, ten (10) key informants were purposively sampled as subjects for the in-depth interview. Ten (10) persons were chosen for the in-depth interview (one from each ward), so as to represent the ten (10) political wards available in the population.

An informant in this case referred to a member of the group who talked freely and directly during the Focus Group Discussions that were held.

The purposive sampling method was employed to choose subjects for both the Focus Group Discussion and In-depth Interview while Convenience sampling method was applied in choosing subjects for the Focus Group Discussion. Among the Adult that were purposively sampled from the population, between six (6) to ten (10) Adult from each ten (10) wards of Gwale were conveniently sampled to constitute members for the Focus Group.

Sixty four (64) adults made up the sample size for the Focus Group Discussion. So that in every ward, there is respondents for a Focus Group Discussion.

For the In-depth interview, the sample size is Ten (10) showing that One (1) subject from each of the wards is sampled.

The total sample size for both the In-depth interview and Focus Group Discussion are Seventy four (74) respondents

Validity and Reliability of Methods

To make sure that validity and reliability are achieved, qualitative researchers must make sure that there is completeness of the data in the sense that if one "does a sloppy job taking notes or otherwise recording what was observed, there is the possibility that incorrect interpretations may be drawn from the data" (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003: 114). Also, a qualitative researcher cannot simply dismiss data that do not fit his favored interpretation of the data; rather such cases should be analyzed and offered as to why they don't seem to fit.

Despite using research assistants, the researcher made sure that she was present in all sessions. Notes were taken well. Also, data obtained, whether

favorable or otherwise to the researcher's interpretations were analyzed accordingly.

In effort to ensure the credibility, the researcher employed the use of multiple methods collection. The use of Focus Group, In-depth interview and review of existing works related to this study suggests that the topic was examined from different perspectives, which would help build confidence in the findings.

Findings

Findings reveal that majority of the respondents watch Kanywood movies. Some of the respondents attested that they watch Kanywood movies whenever chanced.

On the question why the respondents watch the movies, majority of the respondents during Focus Group Discussion and In-depth interview watch Kanywood movies for the purpose of entertainment. One of the respondents aged 43 during focus group discussion implies that: *Kanywood movies are unique.*

On getting access to viewing the movies, respondents who got access to viewing Kanywood movies through VCD had the highest number. This implies that majority of the respondents' access to viewing Kanywood movies in its recorded form.

In an attempt to find out whether Kanywood films are of cultural relevance to the audience,

> Only few respondents agreed that Hausa films are of cultural relevance to the audience while majority of the respondents did not agree that Hausa films are cultural relevance to the audience.

On the reasons why they agreed and disagree to the cultural relevance of Hausa movies to the Hausa audience was because they portray other peoples culture, but sometime teaches moral especially on the mode of dressing, they act on what is happening in reality. One of the respondent aged 38 added that:

> Because the actors are after making profit, they imitate Indian culture; they do not act in line with their culture.

But another respondent from Diso ward attested that:

> The audience accessed the performance of Kannywood home video in the area of cultural transmission and impact.

This implies that some of the respondents are satisfied with Kanywood films in the area of cultural transmission and impact. Majority of the respondents strongly agree that Hausa actors imitate Indian actors.

Discussion Relating to the Research Questions

This section looks at discussion and answers relating to the research questions:

RQ 1: To what extent does Kanywood home video have influence on Hausa Culture?

The responses gathered proved that some of the respondents criticize these films from their peculiar perspectives. According to one women aged 45 said

> Some of the films are a replica of other people's culture, especially Indian culture. Others are rejected simply because they are seen as platforms for nurturing, promoting and sustaining moral bankruptcy. Hence, they are against the teachings of Islam.

Few of respondents agreed that Hausa films are of cultural relevance to the audience.

RQ 2: Does Kanywood home videos have any effect to the Hausa Community?

Findings reveal that Kanywood home videos Corrupt Hausa moral practices. This is where the issue of copying Indian and western films comes in. As observed by Adamu (2006:52) that, "this entertainment philosophy of Hindi filmmakers found itself reproduced in Hausa video films, in spite of the Sharia. By 2003 the focus of video films had shifted from erotica in the conjugal spaces of bedrooms to public display of erotica through the skimpy western clothing of the girls and their sexually suggestive dance routines. Video films with more of erotic scenes as opportunities to partake in localized global soft pornography

RQ 3: What are the factors behind the cultural effect on Hausa culture?

Majority of the respondents agreed that the reason behind the cultural effect is because the Indian culture is "just like" Hausa culture. Instead of focusing on the differences between the two societies, when they watch Indian movies what they see are similarities, especially when compared with American or English movies. Men in Indian films, for instance, are often dressed in long kaftans, similar to the Hausa doguwar riga, over which they wear long waistcoats, much like the Hausa falmaran (sic; falmaran). The wearing of turbans, chewing sugar cane, and so on Indian movies reflect back to Hausa viewers aspects of everyday life," Larkin (1997b.1), in Adamu (2006:41).

Conclusion

Based on the review of available literature, results, discussions and personal interview the study reveal that film produced in Kanywood home video play a prominent role in the societal political cultural and economic development of the Hausa societies.

The industry provides an avenue for relaxation of individuals after the days hectic work, it also serve as a major source of revenue, employer of labor, and an important avenue for investment. In term of benefit it has been observed that more than 20 million people are benefitting from Kanywood industry either directly or indirectly.

In conclusion, despite the fact that Kanywood provides some benefit to a significant number of people in one way or the other, it must be mentioned that it has contributed to the alteration of some aspects of the Hausa culture.

Today, *Kunya* (modesty) is minimal in Hausa societies, young Hausa children prefer to spend many hours in watching Kanywood films at the detriment of their academics which result to poor performance at the end of the day.

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