

# The Influence of Telenovelas on the Social Life of the Youth of Tamale Metropolis of Ghana

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**Abstract:** Telenovelas are gradually making their way into every home with their melodramatic style of arresting the taste and fulfilling a great vacuum in the viewing pleasure of the youth of Tamale metropolis of Ghana. This paper adopted a purposive qualitative study to investigate the influence of telenovelas in the social life of the youth of Tamale. It discovered that some of the youth have adapted new identities and personalities out of the telenovelas they watch. The youth tend to cultivate some habits exhibited in the telenovelas they watch which is alien to the culture and people of the metropolis. This study recommends formulation and systematic implementation of indigenous policies that will arrest the zeal and craze for foreign telenovelas in Ghana. The government must take particular interest in programmes broadcast on the numerous television channels across the country to ensure that they are consistent with our national goals and aspirations as a people.

**Key words:** Telenovela, Influence, Youth, Tamale, Cultivation analysis.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The mass media, particularly television have undoubtedly become a huge part of the daily lives of many. Television has become a major source of information, education and entertainment. Lasswell (1948) as cited in Folarin (2005:74) has assigned the following functions to the media:

1. "Surveillance of the Environment (the news function)".
2. "Correlation of the different parts of the Environment (the editorial function)".
3. "Transmission of the cultural heritage from one generation to the other (the cultural transmission function)".

Television viewing among all age groups is quite common in Ghana particularly because it is a source of entertainment and leisure for people. Whereas viewing in itself cannot be grudged, it is becoming worrisome to see many foreign movies and telenovelas or soap operas being telecast on virtually every television station in Ghana. Dominick (2013:434), did not mince words in stating that "the mass media also play an important role in transmission of attitudes, perceptions and beliefs". What is not clear though is the concern that these soap operas or series have the potential of influencing the viewer's social life towards a certain direction. In this respect, this paper attempts to investigate the influence

of telenovelas on the social life of the youth of Tamale metropolis of Ghana.

A large proportion of television viewers in Ghana, just like its population, are relatively average income earners in society who depend on the free to air channels for their viewing needs. There is also a growing phenomenon of the culture of television viewing where viewers are opting for paid television and satellite channels in some metropolis thereby creating new identities (Ofori-Birikorang, 2014). "Television continues to shape the social processes, its movement into new spaces aided by digital and satellite technologies are also creating avenues for new cultural formations and identities. The public viewing of television in such arenas promotes the formation or reinforcement of identity groups" (Ibid: 08).

Telenovelas are forms of television genre which literally means 'television novel'. Adia (2014), indicates that telenovelas emerged in Ghana in the 1990s mainly through a few private television stations and has with time become part of the regular television content for almost all stations in the country stressing that competition for its viewership has generated competition, thus driving innovation among local television stations.

Underscoring the significant role telenovelas play in the lives of audience, Mante (2016), asserts that the broadcasting of telenovelas on Ghanaian televisions is gaining popularity to the extent that people dole their hearts out to patronize more of such products to gratify their needs stressing that viewers mostly patronize telenovelas for affective and cognitive needs. Elaborating further, he disclosed that telenovelas have largely been accepted by viewers because of the story lines they present, style, setting, plot and dynamics that sets them apart.

Singhal, Rogers and Brown (1993), observed that entertainment education programmes such as telenovelas should not be seen as odds of development but must be utilized to convoy important educational-development messages to their audience. Such a content should be a purposeful vehicle that would create and increase knowledge about an issue, favourable attitude and behaviour concerning a problematic issues, topic affecting society generally especially in developing countries. This is without doubt suggesting that governments and civil society can take advantage of the

melodramatic feature of soap operas to educate the populace on varied issues affecting development.

For telenovelas to achieve their value as educational-entertainment-development tool, certain factors must be considered. “One such factors represents the necessary infrastructure that must be present in a nation wishing to produce entertainment-education media programmes. A second set of factors critical to the effective creation and implementation of entertainment-education media programmes involves the socio-cultural environment. The interaction of people, social systems and culture. First, we address the importance of a nation’s infrastructure on the creation and implementation of the entertainment-education strategy; and second, we discuss the effects of the socio-cultural environment” (Singhal, Rogers and Brown, 1993).

Jedlowski and Rego (2018), indicated that Latin American telenovelas became widely broadcast on African screens between 1970s and 1980s because of their cheap content. The genre is among the most common entertainment product in Africa currently. Its aesthetic and narrative nature have attracted film producers to incorporate elements of telenovelas into their productions to attract audience.

Tindi and Ayiku (2018), concludes that telenovelas have a profound influence in the cultural identities of viewers. After studying *Simply Maria*, a Mexican telenovela series televised in a Ghanaian television station, the researchers were of the view that telenovelas have had a phenomenal successes that has influenced the local identity of viewers and shape their personalities through internalisation, value-based evaluation and identification with characters. “Invariably, *Simply Maria* influenced the individual identities of viewers as it became part of established popular culture that shaped the personal views and values” (Tindi & Ayiku, 2018).

Tufte (2003), had long held the view that telenovelas though fictional melodrama in character, catches the viewer’s attention in a process of identification leading to articulating of feelings, stimulating conversation and influencing the production of meaning and formation of identity stressing that “they maintain a crucial and well documented cultural and social role and function in the everyday lives of their audiences, but they have only occasionally been explored from the producers’ perspective as a deliberate and strategic tool to promote social and cultural change and promote specific development process”.

Adia (2014), believes that the genre plays a significant role in the lives of ordinary Ghanaian stressing that telenovelas provide emotional release, personal gratification, companionship and escape from reality when viewers are continuously exposed to them. The researcher is of the view that telenovelas are becoming part of the Ghanaian society. This is as a results of their availability in almost every television content in the country. He recommended the need to produce indigenous telenovelas to showcase the cultural heritage of Ghana and this indeed should be endorse.

Donkor (2013), however believes the consumption of foreign soap operas and telenovelas by young people has the tendency to influence teenagers in Ghana to adopt certain foreign cultures that may not be culturally conducive or acceptable for the society in which they live stressing that the intent to learn from experiences of characters is the driving motivation for audience to watch telenovelas. He argued further that viewers are more likely to adapt behaviours such as style of dressing, speaking and leave lives consistent with what is being portrayed in the telenovelas.

Donkor (2013), contends that foreign contents have taken over the larger percentage of the television screens in Ghana stressing that attempts to revamp the local production of similar serials have only resulted in reproduction of the foreign serials with local characters. “These glocalised serials basically have the same cultural values as the foreign ones; this leads to a reinforcement of foreign culture and values”. It does not only replicate foreign content often referred to as “cultural dumping” but disadvantage the local production industry and stifle innovation and creativity.

“The presence of foreign culture in our television content was of interest to this researcher. This is because exposing teenagers to some of the cultural practices in these programmes is likely to lead to adoption of some foreign behaviours which may not be conducive to the environment or culturally acceptable. Some forms of dressing and speaking, foreign to Ghanaian culture, may be adopted by some teenagers who are exposed to such foreign content” (Donkor, 2013:4).

This phenomena where the youth are getting themselves immerse in the telenovelas at their free will creating cultural hybridization could be chiefly blamed on the liberation of the broadcasting space in Ghana that has made it possible for television stations to telecast such contents. This according to Robertson (1992, as cited in Donkor, 2013), blurs the boundaries between the modern and the traditional, the high and the low cultures characterized by the adaption of western media genre to suit local languages, style and cultural conventions using new communication technologies.

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2014), the population of the Tamale metropolises is highly youthful. About 36.4% of the population is below 15 years thus depicting a broad base population pyramid. The metropolis which has a total population of 233,252, has majority of them (80.8%) living in urban settlements with females constituting 50.3%. This study therefore applies the definition of a youthful population inferred for the study. Interpretatively, being a youthful population, the youth of the metropolis engage in activities including watching telenovelas for entertainment, education and information. Being an urban settlement, there is reception to all national television networks hence the advantage to choose programmes of their choice for their viewing pleasure.

Available literature suggests that studies on telenovela in Ghana have all been conducted in the cosmopolitan areas of Accra, Kumasi and few other cities in the southern parts of the country. These studies have mostly focus on themes on gender and education and selected telenovela broadcast pieces (Adia, 2014, Tindi and Ayiku, 2018, and Asiamah and Ofori-Birikorang, 2018). The current study is focusing on the influence of telenovela on a population that is youthful and dominating in a growing metropolis of Ghana. It is unclear if findings of this study would be similar or contrary to earlier studies given the differences in location and cultural settings.

This study is carried based on three objectives which are to; understand the story lines of telenovelas broadcast in Ghana, establish the reasons why the youth of Tamale metropolis watch telenovelas and to assess the influence of telenovelas in the social life of the youth of Tamale metropolis. These objectives will enable this research answer the questions; what are the storylines of telenovelas broadcast in Ghana, what are the reasons for watching telenovelas and lastly what are the influences of telenovela in the social life of the youth of Tamale metropolis?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of related studies have been reviewed in this section as benchmarks to the current research work which focuses on the effects of telenovelas on the social life of the youth of Tamale metropolis.

Donkor (2013), carried out a study among teenagers of Madina in the Greater Accra region of Ghana to understand the meanings teenagers assigned to television serials, the lessons they learn and how they equated situations in the serials to their own real lives. Employing a quantitative approach with a sample of 120 teenagers, the study found that the intent to learn from characters in the serials (58.1%) was the predominant reason for most teenagers to watch serials on television. The need to entertain themselves was another common reason for teenagers to watch serials with drama serials constituting a major preferred piece. As a result, they felt contented with their lives as a result of some of the themes in the serials they watched making them to be self-acceptant.

Since it was a quantitative study, it failed to measure the human feelings such as the emotional and psycho-social elements often associated with a qualitative study which are necessary ingredients in understanding social phenomena such as television serials. Although the study raised significant issues for further studies in the area of serial television shows, it was too broad a topic to be properly treated with a single research approach. The qualitative or the mixed research approach would have better tackled the topic broadly.

Adia (2014), studied the programme element importance of telenovelas in the Ghanaian media by adopting ethnographic approach where interviews and observation were employed as data collection instruments to collect data from mostly women

aged 20 to 30. The principal objective of the study was to explore how television viewing especially telenovelas or soap operas influence behaviour.

The study found that love was the predominant theme of the telenovelas people watch in Ghana with some watchers trying to model characters in their daily lives stressing that by combining entertainment and education, telenovelas can appeal to the emotions and influence the attitudes and behaviours of people. Love and emotional feelings runs through most of the themes in the telenovelas the respondent watched creating good conditions for them to learn more for their personal love lives.

Adia (2014), concludes that telenovelas provide emotional release, personal gratification, companionship and escape from reality when viewers are continuously exposed to them. While admitting that telenovelas have become part of the Ghanaian society, the study recommends the need for indigenous telenovelas to showcase the cultural heritage of Ghana. This way, the country would continue to preserve its unique culture and prevent it from decaying through telenovela influence in the lives of the youth.

Tindi and Ayiku (2018), conducted a study on the local reception of global media texts with telenovelas as sites of cultural mixture in Ghana. Using the hybridity and encoding and decoding model of audience reception to analyse '*Simply Maria*', a Mexican telenovela series televised in a Ghanaian television station, the researchers were of the view that telenovelas have had a phenomenal success that has influenced the local identity of viewers and shape their personalities through internalisation, value-based evaluation and identification with characters.

The qualitative case study was used in studying 25 viewers of the Mexican telenovela broadcast on UTV, a local television station in Ghana. Interviews and focus group discussions were the main instruments of data collection used in gathering data from respondents based in Madina, a suburb of Greater Accra region of Ghana. The study revealed that telenovelas are appealing to audience because of the melodrama content adding that the broadcast of *Simply Maria* in Twi shaped the views of audiences about cultural values.

"The showing of *Simply Maria* marked an important era of telenovela broadcast in Ghana as it is the first Mexican telenovela to be telecast in a local Ghanaian language. By reforming the original Spanish language of *Simply Maria* to Twi, producers indigenised the telenovela, dulling its Latin-American flavour. Invariably, *Simply Maria* influenced the individual identities of viewers as it became part of established popular culture that shaped the personal views and values" (Tindi & Ayiku, 2018).

Asiamah and Ofori-Birikorang (2018), immersed themselves in an ethnographic study of audience viewing of telenovela at selected sites in Winneba in the Western region of Ghana where '*Kumkum Bhagya*' viewers were studied. Kumkum

Bhagya is an Indian telenovela premiered by Adom TV on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November, 2015. The researchers' study was anchored on observation, focus group discussions and interviews where 33 respondents were reached. They studied the interactions and performances that take place as viewers of the telenovelas gather at three selected domesticated and open sites in Ghana interspace with popular culture.

They found that viewing of Kumkum Bahagya cut across various classes on the social ladders thus confirming the assertion that all Africans irrespective of religion, sex, gender, age and culture patronize popular culture such as telenovelas. It also revealed that the culture that surrounds the viewing of telenovela are made up of planned and unplanned activities geared towards a successful telenovela viewing for the attainment of the viewing pleasure of audience (Asiamah and Ofori-Birikorang, 2018).

### III. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative case study was adopted in studying the influence of telenovelas on the social life of the youth of Tamale metropolis of Ghana. Neuman (2014), points out that qualitative study examines individuals, organisations, movements, events and geographic units through detailed, varied and extensive studies. Yin (2011), indicates that qualitative studies can be used to study social phenomenon under real world conditions by representing the views and perspectives of participants. Adopting a qualitative study to study telenovelas and its influence on the social life of the youth of Tamale metropolis is therefore appropriate and precise.

Data for this study was collected between January and February, 2019 through indepth interviews, focus group discussions and observations. This means that a multiple data collection instrument were used to collect data for this paper thereby strengthening the reliability and validity of the study. When data is triangulated from different sources, it adds to the study's credibility and trustworthiness (Yin, 2011). An indepth interview was conducted with five ardent (heavy) viewers of telenovela and two focus groups consisting of seven members per group. The samples were varied in terms of age, gender and occupation. This criteria enables the researchers to understand the phenomenon of telenovelas from the perspective of the youth broadly.

The heavy viewers were identified by the researcher after monitoring the television viewing activities of these people consistently for over two weeks. During the period, the researcher found them viewing telenovelas at different times and subsequently interviewed them as key informant of telenovelas. Those in the focus group belong to diverse background of people who were assembled by the researcher and tabled the subject for discussion.

The researcher used observations to study the reactions of respondents as they comment and shout at interesting scenes in the soaps they watch. The use of multiple sources in data

collection in a qualitative study is to ensure reliability of findings because there are converged at the analysis process rather than handled individually (Baxter and Jack (2008).

The data was further subjected to inductive data analysis to make good use of the large volume of data collected. As a result, the collected data was viewed in patterns, themes, categories thus making it easier for interpretation to be made. "Patterns, categorisations and themes are built from the bottom up through organising data into abstract units. This process demonstrates effective working relationship between the themes and database until a comprehensive set of themes are arrived at" (Creswell, 2009). This therefore enable researchers to make sense of the entire data collected as it is the case in this study. Responses in this study were subjected to comprehensive analysis after inductive analysis without any bias or manipulation of any data.

This study narrowed the sample to the youth of Tamale metropolis because they represent a youthful population that is prone to mass media influence. According to UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2018), majority of the youths are in this cohorts.

The findings of this study were equally analysed along the research questions raised which flowed from the objectives for this study. Some themes emerged from the data and have duly been discussed thematically to make sense of the large volume of data collected. Text and image data are too dense in qualitative research that they need to be themed. "In the analysis of the data, researchers need to 'winnow' the data...to aggregate data into a small number of themes, something like five to seven themes", (Creswell, 2014:245)

### IV. FINDINGS

For ease of interpretation, the findings of this study have been analysed in accordance with the research questions which flowed from the objectives of the study.

*RQ1. What are the storylines of telenovelas broadcast in Ghana?*

The youth of Tamale metropolis watch varied telenovelas broadcast on various television channels across the country. Popular among the list of the telenovelas they watch include; "Light of my Eyes", "We are a Family", "Secret Love", "When am in Love", "In the name of Love", "La Gata", "Twist of Faith", "Lies of the Heart", "Young Dreams", "Reach to the Skies". This study discovered that these telenovelas are telecast on the free to air and paid for television channels in Ghana with large audience following dominated by females. It was also discovered that the Ghanaian media have witness a few local serials such as, "Efiewura", "Trotro", "Taxi driver", "Barber and Shoeshine" "Home sweet home", "Sadia" and among others. Although these serials had their audience, it cannot be compared with the zeal and interest associated with the foreign telenovelas.



From list of the telenovelas above, it clearly suggests that they are genre that are melodramatic and produced in settings other than Ghana. Most of these telenovelas are produced in North American countries such as Mexico, Colombia and Brazil. Others are produced in India and Philippine while others originate from some African countries. Although telenovelas are produced outside the shores of Ghana, Adia (2014), believes that the genre plays a significant role in the lives of ordinary Ghanaian stressing that telenovelas provide emotional release, personal gratification, companionship and escape from reality when viewers are continuously exposed to them. The researcher is of the view that telenovelas are becoming part of the Ghanaian society. This is as a results of their availability in almost every television content in the country. The need for domestication of telenovelas must be seriously pursued to rejuvenate our local traditions and cultures.

A number of storylines can be drawn from most of these telenovelas. Love, hate, revenge, jealousy, enmity, family and customs. Adia (2014), equally found that love was the predominant theme of the telenovelas people watch in Ghana with some watchers trying to model characters in their daily lives stressing that by combining entertainment and education, telenovelas can appeal to the emotions and influence the attitudes and behaviours of people. Such an influence must be properly guided through the same medium otherwise were may end up making the youth cultivate cultures and behaviours inimical to our setting and development.

*RQ2. What are the reasons for watching telenovelas by the youth of Tamale metropolis?*

Respondents indicate that they watch telenovelas because it is full of fun, educating and entertaining. "The life the characters live reflects the reality of our daily lives and give us the sense of humour, laughter and fun. What is acted becomes very real and can easily be related with in real life situation and hence grabs my attention to watch more", explained respondents. What needs to be known is that television serials such as telenovelas are fictional tales that tries to make real what is unreal and may deceive people to believe in things that do not exist in reality. Consumers of such content must get further education in order not to measure their lives with scenes portrayed in these serials.

On entertaining option of telenovelas, respondents are of the view that the mixture of drama, dance and playing pranks by actors in the telenovelas easily put smiles on the faces of the audiences. This relieves the viewer emotionally as it distress them of the burden associated with daily hustle as they strive to meet their economic and social demands. "This get me stimulated even if I am in a sad mood", says a respondent. On the entertainment score, telenovelas appear to be fulfilling a big vacuum in the lives of patrons. No wonder they attract a huge following or audience of all walks of lives including market woman, farmers, parents and children. Other youths in professions such as nursing, teaching and the security forces especially the female class of these professions are avid

patrons of telenovelas purely on account of the entertainment value.

The genre is also described as containing educational value. They educate women to be self-empowering by encouraging them to educate themselves and compete favourably with the opposite sex. Some of the storylines depict the reality of life and teaches you to be patient and avoid revenges. Aside these, some aspect of these melodrama pieces elaborate on the culture, traditions and histories of some race. This makes us to understand why some people behave the way they behal and defeats the negative perceptions about such cultures. The cultivation theory explains these scenario.

These narratives are a representation of cultivation analysis. Cultivation theory as developed by George Gerbner proposes that people who watch television frequently are more likely to be influence by the messages from the perspective of television. Their world view and perceptions start reflecting what they repeatedly see and hear on television. Reality is therefore measured with what they see on television. The more a person watches television, the more the person is likely to be influence by what they watch. Cultivation analysis suggests that heavy TV viewing cultivates perceptions of reality consistent with the view of the world presented in television programmes which concentrate on the long term effect on children and adults (Dominick, 2013).

The timing of broadcasting these telenovelas make them attracts more following. Majority of the serials are broadcast between the honours of 15:00 GMT and 20:00 GMT. These are times when students have returned from school and are ready to watch any entertaining. Parents and housewives at these times in the Tamale metropolis of Ghana have either completed their house chores or are less business hence can make time to entertain themselves with anything on screen. All these contribute to the significant patronage received by telenovelas. Some people are usually in a haste to complete one task or another to enable them watch their favorite telenovela, an indication that telenovelas are an important part of their lives.

Giving reasons why respondents prefer watching telenovelas over local movies, they claim local movies are too ordinary, not interesting, poorly produced and boring to watch. They expressed misgivings that local movies are usually about negativities such as witchcraft, black magic and death. These are themes they indicate does not really represent the definition and culture of Ghanaians. They implore local movie producers to invest more in quality production and good storylines that will reflect the reality of Ghanaians. Asiamah and Ofori-Birikorang (2018), findings are consistent with viewer's behaviour. They found that the culture that surrounds the viewing of telenovela are made up of planned and unplanned activities geared towards a successful telenovela viewing for the attainment of the viewing pleasure of audience. This implies that telenovela fans are only interested

in satisfying their viewing pleasure and may likely watch local productions that meet their taste and pleasure.

*RQ3. What are the influences of telenovelas in the social life of the youth of Tamale metropolis?*

Some respondents indicated that telenovelas are though entertaining and educative, are also destructive to their lives because it is time consuming and can easily sway one's life wanting you to measure your life against what is portrayed in the telenovelas. "I sometimes watch with my boyfriend and when they begin to kiss and fondle themselves in the movies, we also begin to do the same thing. We try to copy what they do so our love life will be stronger", says a respondent. This reflect cultivation theory. Lule (2014), indicates that cultivation analysis is applied to television viewing analysis because the medium has uniquely pervasive characteristics of influencing people to form a picture of reality that does not correspond to actual life. This connotes that the heavy watching of telenovelas by the youth of Tamale metropolis has a high tendency of influencing their reality of life to believe that their love life and romantic affairs at home should reflect what they see in the telenovelas they watch.

Broadening the discussion on the role of the media as an agent of society implies that as the youth expose themselves with television through telenovelas, they learn desirable and undesirable behaviours and cultivate same and possibly develop personalities from these experiences. This could be the reason why sometimes some parents find it difficult to understand how and why their children behave in certain ways total unknown to them. It is probably being learnt from their greatest agent-television. This also means additional responsibility on parents to monitor the programmes their wards watch in order not to introduce to pre-marital sex, violence and promiscuity which are common themes in Asian telenovelas.

Baran and Davis (2010:341), stated that the central argument of the cultivation analysis as a message system, creates a worldview that although possibly inaccurate, becomes the reality simply because we, as a people believe to be the reality and base our judgments about our own everyday worlds on that reality. This is where we need to be cautious about the strong influence of telenovelas viewing in our lives especially on the lives of the youth who are likely to see reality in the telenovelas they watch and likely to implement those experiences in their everyday lives. Transporting wholesale what is portrayed in the telenovelas without re-examining the content might be dangerous and harmful since not everything seen on television is practicable in real life situations.

They again indicated that they pick positive characters in the telenovelas and emulate those characters positively. "I used not to cook and wash my boyfriend's clothes because I did not think it was right thing to do especially when he has not married me but these telenovelas have taught me differently and so now I go to the market sometimes with my own money to shop for him, cook for him and wash his clothes", a female

respondent remarked. Tindi and Ayiku (2018), equally found that telenovela influences the personality of the viewers stressing that telenovelas have had a phenomenal successes that has influenced the local identity of viewers and shape their personalities through internalisation, value-based evaluation and identification with characters.

Another respondent is of the view that telenovelas influence her in a way but she is conscious of the society in which she comes from. She indicates that she is sometimes tempted to dress with short skirts and mini stuffs but minded of her culture and upbringing which abhors indecent dressing. In this scenario, she feels for the taste for a foreign culture which is a reflection of cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism is of the notion that dominant nations use the mass media to shape, influence the cultures and identities of other nations. The exportation of dominant entertainment media is sometimes viewed as cultural dumping because it discourages the development of original local products (Campbell et al, 2007). This is perhaps what the telenovelas portray since these genre have tried to model a new identity for its viewers in Ghana and drastically changing the taste of viewers to prefer anything foreign.

Lule (2014:350) agrees that local consumption of foreign text has serious consequences for the recipient country as is the case of telenovelas stressing that "globalization of media could not only provide content to a foreign country but may also create demand for products....this will contribute to a one-way transmission of ideas and values that result in the displacement of indigenous cultures". This increasingly affects the culture of the Ghanaian thereby making the youth to desire to taste more of the culture of the origin of the telenovelas they watch. Invariably, the culture of the indigenous people would be dumped in favour of foreign one, a development that must not be allowed to fester further.

This problem of foreign serials being telecast without regard to local culture has been viewed negatively by many. "The presence of foreign culture in our television content was of interest to this researcher. This is because exposing teenagers to some of the cultural practices in these programmes is likely to lead to adoption of some foreign behaviours which may not be conducive to the environment or culturally acceptable. Some forms of dressing and speaking, foreign to Ghanaian culture, may be adopted by some teenagers who are exposed to such foreign content" (Donkor, 2013:4).

In a focus group, most of the respondents especially the females admitted that telenovelas teach them how to sweet-talk guys to get money from them. They revealed that they sometimes pretend to love guys because of what they need stressing that they do that to get mobile phones, presents and cash although their hearts belongs to someone else. "We do that to get what we want and after that we start distancing ourselves", they emphasised. This also reflects the serious negative effects telenovelas are having on the morals of our society. Faithfulness, truth and love in relationships are all

affecting as a results of viewers transferring experiences from telenovelas to real life situations. The cultivation theory explains their behavior better. Campbell et al (2007), endorsed the power of cultivation effect stressing that media messages interact in complicated ways with personal, social, political and cultural factors and are one of a number of important factors in determining individual behaviour and defining social values. Audience of telenovelas in Ghana and Tamale metropolis in particular must reflect deeply on the contents they watch otherwise their sense of personal morality and cultural identity would be lost in the processes of entertaining and educating themselves on products they do not understand properly.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Telenovelas provide entertainment, education, emotional release, personal gratification, companionship and escape from reality when viewers are continuously exposed to them. Because of the significant role they play, telenovelas are becoming part of the Ghanaian society. This is as results of their availability in almost every television content in the country. Virtually every television station broadcast telenovelas to the detriment of local movies. It is the view of this paper that the need for domestication of telenovelas should be seriously pursued as a way of rejuvenating our local traditions and cultures.

Consistent with previous studies and available literature, telenovelas are foreign dumping products in an Africa shores where it is probably enjoying unfettered acceptance and patronage than where it originated. Its viewership size is immeasurable. From the youthful population of the Tamale metropolis, staying glow to telenovela programmes in the prime time has become a common activity in their daily calendar therefore giving justification that our society is gradually being transformed through cultural imperialism where dumping of Western and Asian produced telenovelas are at the centre stage of the lives of the ordinary citizen. In this way of cultivating cultures alien to the people of the metropolis could lead to a consequential shift or death of their ethnic, cultural and personal identities.

The study finds it troubling that the movie industry in Ghana is yet to produce serials that meet the standard of the Asian and American telenovelas although it presents a huge market for the industry. We can re-engineer our movie industry to take advantage of the huge market audience of the telenovelas to produce content that is consistent with our local culture so that the youth can be educated on certain aspect of our culture through edutainment concept. It must be done shortly with government's intervention as a national project to systematically orient the youth about the beautiful culture and

tradition of Ghana. We have a beautiful culture that must not be decayed through culture dumping.

This study concludes that the identity of the Ghanaian cannot be the same in the next decades should the current grandeur taste and desire for everything foreign is not halted. This study recommends formulation and systematic implementation of indigenous policies that will arrest the zeal and craze for foreign telenovelas in Ghana. The government must take particular interest in programmes broadcast on the numerous television channels across the country to ensure that they are consistent with our national goals and aspirations as a people. The role of the Ministries of Education, Communication, Chieftaincy and Culture must collaborate in a joint effort at examining the effects of televovelas on the youth of Ghana and strategically resolving the situation.

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