

PRESENTERS' FASHION SENSE AND AUDIENCE PREFERENCE FOR TELEVISION PROGRAMMES IN UMUAHIA

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Abstract

Over the years, presenters of television programmes are seen by the audience of such programmes as idols as their adeptness in programme presentation in their media houses not only make them popular but also make them acceptable and most times admirable by the audience of such programme. This empirical study is positioned to investigate the fashion sense and appearance of television presenters as it influences the audience's preference for such television programmes. This study was anchored on the lookism theory. The researchers of this study made use of survey research methods to elicit the responses of Umuahia-based respondents who are frequent television viewers to ascertain if the presenters' fashion sense does in any way affect their choice of television programme selection. This was achieved through the administration of structured questionnaire copies to a sample size of 384 respondents who represented the larger population of Umuahia residents. The data generated was presented using a frequency table and simple percentage formula for easier understanding. It was found among other things that there is a significant relationship between the presenter's appearance and fashion sense and preference for the selected TV programmes among the audience, but there are other variables that influence programme viewership more than the appearance of the presenters. It was recommended that, among others, producers of unpopular programmes can revive their programmes by paying reasonable attention to presentation variables such as the presenter's speech mannerisms, appearance, and fashion sense.

Keywords: Presenters, Fashion Sense, Audience Preference & Television Programmes

Introduction

The audience is an important aspect of broadcasting that should not be disregarded or undervalued. The term

"audience" refers to a single person or a group of people who consume specific media offerings. There would be no media if there were no audiences. The audience is

the "singular most important element in mass communication," as each broadcast program is tailored to a specific demographic. The language, characterization, and approach to broadcast programs are all determined by the audience. The aesthetic embellishments and creative elements required to ensure the attainment of the program's purpose are also determined by the target audience (Littlejohn, 2021).

Even though different audiences in different locations receive the broadcast programme at the same time, the attitudes and preferences of different groups of audience members differ. As a result, some researchers argue that the audience of mass communication should be considered in terms of categories, subgroups, or target groups rather than the entire population. Konkwo (1997), emphasizes that media preference is still influenced by a variety of factors, including the audience's demographics, which include age, gender, educational attainment, economic status, and mental state. Psychographic characteristics such as tastes, motivation, moods, beliefs, outlook, values, norms, and aversions are also important.

According to Becker (2003), one of the most reliable findings from all of the research on media relationships is that people's levels of media use vary greatly. Related studies continue to emerge, elucidating media characteristics and aiding in a better understanding of why media diets are consumed in various ways by different people in various situations and physical locations. People pay attention to media messages and interpret them based on their interests, beliefs, values, and experiences, according to Folarin (2012). These are the factors that influence people's preferences for one television show over another. Several studies have been carried out to answer a

variety of questions about media and channel preferences. According to Nigatu (2019), one of the variables that have piqued the interest of media scholars concerning audience program preference is the presenter's perception.

The presenter presents and hosts programmes reads the news, conducts interviews and reports on subjects and events. Presenters work in front of the camera or on the radio. A presenter is someone who hosts, narrates or otherwise plays the lead role in narrating or hosting a radio or television show. According to Becker (2020), a presenter is also somebody who presents or hosts television broadcasts, including factual documentaries, live events, and sports. Presenters are the lifeblood of a show.

Presenters of some television shows have endeared themselves to their audiences in a variety of ways including entertaining, educating, and shaping their minds. Because the physical appearance and nuances of the presenters are frequently mentioned as important factors that influence audience preferences and viewership for various television programs, this study examines how the appearance and fashion sense of the program presenters shape audience preference for the show's presenters.

Problem Statement

Variables such as age, location, gender, educational attainment, economic status and mental state of the audience, in addition to their tastes, motivation, moods, beliefs, outlook, values, norms, aversions, interests, beliefs, values and experiences, are all elements that influence media preference.

However, we live in a society where human and material evaluations are heavily influenced by appearance, attitude

and numerous behaviours (Ejem & Fab-Ukozor, 2016). It is vital to remember that television shows are presented by humans who are viewed by the audience and that the audience is made up of people whose innate behaviours are often influenced by their perceptions of looks, attitudes, and numerous mannerisms. Because the television audience is made up of people, there is an indisputable human propensity among viewers to prefer certain programmes over others based on the presenters. If this is the case, to what extent do the appearance, dress sense, attitude, and numerous characteristics of select TV show hosts influence the preference for their shows among Umuahia audiences?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

- 1) Ascertain the Umuahia audience's level of exposure to select TV programmes;
- 2) Find out the perception of presenters of the selected select TV programmes by the Umuahia audience, in terms of their appearance and fashion sense;
- 3) Determine whether the Umuahia audience watches the selected TV programmes because of the appearance and fashion sense of the presenters
- 4) Find out if the appearance and fashion sense of presenters influences the preference for the TV programmes by the Umuahia audience more than other variables.

Significance of the Study

Television is a medium of communication that incorporates sight and sound (eyes and ears) unlike its counterpart, the radio.

Therefore, the presenter of television programmes ought to understand that their viewers attribute greatness to their programmes by their looks vis-à-vis diction, smile and dress among others. The significance of this study to the media industry is to create awareness of how the presenter's look has been adjudged a yardstick for measuring programme preference by the audience.

To bodies of theories, this study stresses the application of the theory of lookism in explaining how people make instinctive judgments of others based on their physical appearance and other observable characteristics of the individual and that impacts how they respond to those people (Dunn, 1991).

To researchers all around the globe, this study will add existing literature on media use and the lookism concept, which is an under-researched area in communication studies, as well as guide any researcher who wants to do work on exposure and programme preference.

Review of the Literature

Aspects of Television

A study of the use of ICT in television news processing must first comprehend the concept and technology of television. Television or simply TV, is a technology that allows full motion broadcasts to be transmitted to remote receivers; it is also a device that is used to watch those broadcasts, as well as the name for the entire process from filmmaking to broadcasting and receiving.

Television, according to Anyanwu et al. (2015), is a system for transmitting and receiving images and sound using electronic signals transmitted over wires and optical fibers, as well as electromagnetic radiation. These electronic signals are typically broadcast from a

central source, such as a television station, to be intercepted by reception devices such as television sets in homes or cable television service providers' relay stations. The most widely used mode of communication on the planet is television. Though most people will never meet a country's leader, visit the moon or take part in a battle, they can witness these events through television visuals.

Agba (2002, explains that television has a wide range of uses in society, business and science. The most prevalent use of television in the home is as a source of information, education, socialization, and entertainment. Besides the television related to broadcasting, television in a broader sense is also used by security personnel to monitor buildings, manufacturing plants, and a variety of public facilities. Employees of a public utility company use a camera mounted to a robot arm or a remote-control vehicle to monitor the status of an underground sewer line on television. Doctors can use a microscopic television camera to probe the interior of a human body without having to perform major surgery on the patient. Educators utilize television to communicate with pupils all around the world (Chen, 2019).

Television has some advantages over other media, which include that it appeals to senses of audio-visual which is vital for protests; also breaks language and illiteracy barriers; stimulates viewership among groups; and is veritable media for advocacy and mobilization. Although television has the potential to be a powerful tool for national development, it has several drawbacks. According to Nwodu and Fab-Ukozor (2003), it has a very limited reach; it is primarily a city affair; it is relatively expensive to afford, and it necessitates a constant power supply to function. According to Salu (1994), the advantages of television include its wide-

ranging reach, optimal frequency, opportunities for demonstration, immediacy, entertainment exposure, and nearly boundless prestige.

No other medium, according to Cutlip, Broom, and Center (2000), can provide a window into the world like television. As a publicity tool, it has a lot of power and potential. Because it combines printed texts, spoken word, and visuals in motion, colour, music, animation, and sound effects into one message, it gives a wide range of opportunities for telling a tale. In the form of a video news release, a public relations practitioner can use television to produce footage for news or documentary programs.

Programmes on Television

A broadcast programme is a material created on TV, radio or the Internet created and distributed to meet specific needs or achieve specific objectives and broadcast to a pre-determined target audience in broadcasting (Eastman & Ferguson, 2006). Those set of broadcast materials is called TV programmes if they are produced for the Television audience and aired by a TV channel. That is to say, they primarily appeal to the audience's visual and auditory senses.

Duyile (2005), divides programmes into two categories: spoken words broadcasting, which includes discussions, drama, talks, educational broadcasting, programs for special audiences (women, children, rural listeners), magazines, documentaries news and current affairs broadcasting and religious broadcasting; and music which includes cassette recordings, live musical performances of all kinds, and a wide range of entertainment. The author goes on to break down the many sorts of broadcast programs that fall under the following categories.

Simple talk, interviews, and discussions are all examples of talk programs. A talk show can range from a one-minute involvement to a magazine show to a one-hour interview show, all of which involve audience participation. The goal of the talk show could be to inform, educate, or simply entertain the audience. The finest talk show is one that focuses on a single topic. There is also the instructional program, which has sparked more interest than any other broadcast program. No other method of disseminating information, whether through text, classroom lecture or discussion, or magazine articles, appears to be as effective as television and radio, which allow a single teacher to speak to thousands of people.

For instructional programmes, several exclusive properties make television and radio extremely valuable. Among these are easy communication, a sense of realism, technical assets accessible through the media, timeliness, and specific motivation. Nevertheless, several flaws in educational programs have been identified. They include a general lack of ingredients such as reciprocal relationship, regularity, flexibility, and system, in addition to physical sense limitations.

Scholars, on the other hand, believe that not all broadcast content is serious or important to society. It is for this reason that there are entertainment programs. A large number of hours are dedicated solely to entertainment, and these are the hours that help build broadcast media's popularity by attracting and retaining viewers. Many stations use the term "light entertainment" to refer to a wide range of programming, including books and short story reading, serialized drama, mainly light and humorous drama, an assortment of light musical entertainment programs, community singing, comics, some types of listener feedback programs, and quiz and

panel games. The amount of talent available determines how successful these programs are. Furthermore, there is the children's program, which is more vulnerable to public criticism than any other aspect of television programming (Eastman & Ferguson, 2006; Duyile, 2005).

There are also news programmes which are an important part of every radio or television station's programming. News broadcasting is an exercise that almost every broadcasting company participates in. Large-scale operations involving news editors, film teams and special reporters are among the types of news operations. Because of the large audience for news and the public's trust in broadcast news, newscasters must have a strong sense of responsibility and are well-educated experts. The news programme is very important to anyone since it keeps people updated as to what is going on in their town and other communities. News fulfills people's curiosity and concern and it gives basic facts, which allow people to make up their thoughts and so join the general discussion that leads to community discussion (James & Ward, 1998).

Characteristics of the Audience and Media Use Patterns

The "recipients (actual or potential) whom the communicator aims to reach with his communications" are the audiences. Audiences are made up of many types of people who actively expose themselves to the message of the media (sometimes with particular expectations from the media). Program producers and planners typically use data obtained from audience surveys or research in planning and producing their programs to be relevant or effective. Rating research data are frequently used in broadcast media to measure the popularity or utility of programs among the audience.

According to Merrill and Lowenstein (1993), the nature and content of the mass medium are also determined by the precise composition of the audience. As media develop and evolve audiences evolve with them. The notion of media and audience evaluation has been suggested by several mass communication writers. They identify at least four stages in audience evolution. They include the following: the elite stage; the mass stage; the specialized stage; and the interactive stage.

There is a Uses and gratifications approach (UGT) to considering why and how people actively search for specific media to satisfy specific needs. The theory is an audience-centered approach to understanding mass communication. Diverging from other media effect theories that question "what does media do to people?", Uses and gratifications theory focuses on "what do people do with media? It postulates that media is a highly available product and the audiences are the consumers of the same product.

The Uses and gratifications hypothesis is positivist in its approach, grounded on the socio-psychological communication tradition and focuses on communication at the mass media scale. The main question of UGT is: Why do people use media and what do they use them for? UGT discusses how users deliberately choose media that will satisfy given needs and permit them to enhance knowledge, social interactions/companionship, relaxation, diversion, or escape.

The theory assumes that audience members are not passive media consumers. Rather, the audience has power over their media consumption and assumes an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. Unlike other theoretical standpoints, UGT holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their desires and

needs to achieve gratification. This theory would then suggest that the media strive against other information sources for viewers' gratification. The uses and gratifications hypothesis has a heuristic value today because it gives communication scholars a "perspective through which several ideas and theories about media choice, consumption, and even impact can be viewed.

Review of selected TV programmes

News Line

News Line has been presented over the years by famous presenters such as Frank Olyse, Ruth Opia, Cyril Stober, etc. News programming was central to NTA's and the government's efforts to forge national unity. The network ensured that news presenters did not simply read prepared scripts but acted as part of the news-gathering team. As many of their early news writers came from print journalism, NTA made sure that writers understood the importance of writing for visual presentation. NTA introduced a new line of newscasters and reporters such as Ronke Ayuba, John Momoh, Cyril Stober, Bimbo Oloyede, Ruth Opia, Sienna Allwell-Brown, and Sola Omole, among others. Specialized news programmes like Newsline were also introduced as a magazine programme that addresses the potpourri of issues in the country and has many segments for each issue on the programme.

NTA Network News

NTA's news mostly reports on government activities. Its major news production is Network News, an hour-long programme that airs at 9:00 pm between Monday and Friday except on Wednesdays when it is replaced with News Extra. Network News usually starts with news from the presidency, then news from the National

Assembly and subsequently ministries and state governments. Other news productions include News at 7 and Nationwide News at 4 pm. Investigative reporting and human stories are usually subordinate to covering government activities, except for Newsline which airs on Sunday evenings. The 9 pm news programme has one of the network's highest advertising rates for 30-second ads. Paid news segments such as 'News of Special Interest' are inserted into network broadcast news such as Newsline or the 9 pm network news (Akingbulu, 2010; Esan, 2009)

Take a Step hosted by Moses Humphrey

Take a Step is a Quiz educational programme and TV programme aimed at promoting learning among Secondary school students. Students are asked questions from various subjects and when a student gets each question correctly, they are asked to take "light steps". The first to get to the podium gets the first prize. It is hosted by Moses Humphrey.

Theoretical Framework

The Lookism Concept

This study is anchored on the lookism theory. While there are many claims to the origin of the theory, Etoff (1999), popularized lookism theory. The theory assumes that human beings make an automatic judgment of others based on their physical appearance. Lookism presupposes the existence of positive stereotypes, preferential treatment, and prejudice shown towards people who are physically attractive and whose appearance matches cultural preference. Society associates unattractive things with negative things, and those things tend to be avoided (Etoff, 1999). The media as cultural agents help to perpetuate lookism, especially with television and magazine. Television, for instance, projects attractive persons to be more cerebrally competent, emotionally attuned, and socially alluring. To what extent do lookism

tendencies towards programme presenters affect how the audience prefers their programmes in Umuahia?

Research Methodology

This research employed a survey research method. The survey research method is one in which a group of people or items were studied by "collecting and analyzing data from only a few people considered representatives of the entire group, either through the use of interview schedule or questionnaire instrument" (Ekott and Iman, 2006). Wimmer and Dominick (2003) enumerate the advantages of the survey method to include reducing cost, ease of collection of data from a variety of people and recourse to already existing data. Collis and Hussey (2009), note that the benefit of the survey method is that it is designed to collect both primary and secondary data from a selected sample, analyze them and generalize the result to the entire population and it is so rigid that it protects against bias and also maximizes reliability.

The population of this study consisted of the audience of broadcast programmes in Umuahia. The sample size used in this study was 384. The Cochran (1963), formula cited in Ojoli (2015), was used to get a truly representative sample of the target population. The researchers used stratified and purposive sampling techniques. Area stratification was adopted as the procedure for selecting a sample in four axes in Umuahia. Seventy-seven (96) viewers of the selected TV programmes were purposively chosen from those axes. The samples from each of the axes were chosen on a simple random basis.

The questionnaire was used as the measuring instrument for collecting data from the respondents. The questionnaire was made up of two sections, A and B, Section A, which has 5 items, contains

questions about the physical data of the respondents, and Section B, which has 12 items, has questions bordering on the research objectives. Copies of the questionnaires were administered directly to the respondents. This was done by hand with the help of four research assistants.

Frequency tables and simple percentage was used to describe the data collected from the respondents. Thereafter, the result derived served as the bases for the discussion of the findings, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.

Data Presentation

Table 1: TV Reception Format Used at Home

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Cable	293	81
Terrestrial	67	19
Total	360	100

The data in Table 1 shows that 293 (81%) of the respondents use cable (satellite) TV to watch TV programmes at home,

whereas 67 (19%) of them use terrestrial TV.

Table 2: TV programmes Mostly Watched in Umuahia Urban

TV programme	Frequency	Percentage
NTA Network News	199	55
NTA News Line	130	36
Take a Step	31	9
Total	360	100

Table 2 above showed that 199 (55%) of the respondents described “NTA Network News” as their most viewed TV programme; 130 (36%) of the respondents

described “NTA News Line” as their most viewed TV programme; and 31(9%) of the respondents described “Take a Step” as their most viewed TV programme

Table 3: Regularity of Exposure to the Mostly Watched TV programme

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	190	53
Not so often	130	36
Occasionally	40	11
Total	360	100

Table 3 above showed that 190 (53%) of the respondents said they watch their favourite TV programme very often; 130 (36%) of the respondents said they watch

their favourite TV programme not so often; and 40(11%) of the respondents said they watch their favourite TV programme occasionally.

Table 4: Respondents' Perception of the Presenter of their Preferred TV Programme, in terms of their Appearance and Fashion Sense

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Positive (often smartly dressed, endearing, handsome, eloquent, etc)	360	100
Negative (often dull, shabbily dressed, inarticulate, ugly, etc)	0	0
Can't say	0	0
Total	360	100

Table 4 shows that all 360 (100%) specifically as often smartly dressed, perceive the presenter of your preferred endearing, handsome, eloquent, etc. TV programme positively; that is,

Table 5: Respondents' Perception of the appearance and fashion sense of Presenters influence preference for the TV programmes

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	279	78
No	31	9
Not sure	82	23
Total	360	100

Table 5 above showed that 279 (78%) of preference for the TV programme; and 82 of the respondents agree that their perception (23%) of the respondents are not sure of the presenter influences their preference whether their perception of the presenters for the TV programme; only 31(9%) of the influences their preference for the TV respondents did not think their perception programme. of the presenters influences their

Table 6: Respondents' Degree of Agreement of Relationship between Perception of the appearance and fashion sense of Presenters and Preference for the TV programmes

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Decision
Strongly disagree	0	0	3.81	High
Disagree	32	9		
Undecided	80	22		
Agree	83	23		
Strongly Agree	165	46		
Total	360	100.0		

Table 6 above indicates that 37(9%) of programme. Whereas 80(22%) were sampled respondents disagreed that there undecided; 83(23%) agreed; and 165(46%) is a relationship between perception of strongly agreed. presenters and preference for the TV

Table 7: Responses on Presentation Variables that Mostly Influence Preference for Preferred TV programmes

Options	Frequency	Percent
Fashion	71	20
Appearance	115	32
Speech mannerism	166	46
Other observable physical makeup of the presenter	8	2
Total	360	100

Table 7 above indicates that 71 (20%) of the respondents considered fashion as a presentation variable that mostly influences preference for preferred TV programmes in Umuahia Urban; 115 (32%) said appearance; 166 (46%) said

speech mannerism; and 8(2%) of the respondents considered other observable physical make-up of the presenter as presentation variables that mostly influence preference for preferred TV programmes in Umuahia Urban.

Table 8: Responses on other Factors, Apart from Presenter-Related Ones (Fashion sense and Appearance), Mostly Influence Preference for the Preferred TV programmes

Options	Frequency	Percent
Reward the programme offers to you	8	2
The chance to learn something on the show	54	15
The entertainment value of the show	114	32
Your preference for the TV channel	166	46
The popularity of the programme	18	5
Others	0	0
Total	360	100

Table 8 above indicates that 8(2%) of the respondents said they are influenced by the reward the programme offers to you; 54(15%) of the respondents said they are influenced by the chance to learn something on the show; 114(32%) of the respondents said they are influenced by the

entertainment value of the show; 166(46%) of the respondents said they are influenced by their preference for the TV channel; and 18(5%) of the respondents said they are influenced by the popularity of the programme.

Table 9: Responses on how Perception of Presenter's Fashion sense and Appearance Compares with Non-Presenter Related Factors in Influencing Preference for Preferred TV programmes

Options	Frequency	Percentage
The presenter's fashion sense and appearance are more influential	309	86
The non-presenter-related factors are more influential	9	3
They are equally influential	42	12
None is influential, whatsoever	0	0
Total	360	100

Table 9 above indicates that 309(86%) of the sampled respondents said that the presenter's fashion sense and appearance are more influential than non-presenter-related factors in influencing preference for preferred TV programmes; 9(3%) said that the non-presenter-related factors are more influential than said that presenter's fashion sense and appearance in influencing preference for preferred TV programmes; whereas 42(12%) said that the non-presenter-related factors and the presenter's fashion sense and appearance are equally influential.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: How is the Umuahia audience's level of exposure to select TV programmes?

Analysis of the data in Table 2 indicates that 55% of the respondents described "NTA Network News" as their most viewed TV programme; next in the order is "NTA News Line" which is viewed by 36% of the respondents and only 9% of the respondents mostly watch "Take a Step." In terms of the regularity of viewership, Table 3 demonstrates that 53% of the respondents watch TV programmes very often; 36% of them watch the TV programme not so often; and 11% of the respondents do so occasionally.

TV programmes have gained massive popularity in Nigeria, and as the data above reveal, "NTA Network News" is at the forefront of Nigerian TV programmes. The programme has been adjudged the most preferred television programme by the audience. The philosophy is to inform and educate the Nigerian audience across the 36 states of the federation and Abuja. It has the highest coverage of any TV programme in Nigeria and naturally ranks amongst the most viewed TV programmes

in Nigeria. Generally, this finding confirms Anyanwu et al. (2015), findings that Nigerian are active consumers of broadcast media.

Research Question 2: In what ways does the Umuahia audience perceive presenters of the selected TV programmes (in terms of their appearance and fashion sense)?

Table 4 demonstrates that 100% of the respondents perceive the presenter of their preferred TV programme positively; that is, specifically as often smartly dressed, endearing, handsome, eloquent, etc. Whereas none of the respondents feels that the presenter of their preferred TV programme is often dull, shabbily dressed, inarticulate, ugly, etc.

The audience members seem to always have some kind of perception towards the programme presenter. Nigatu (2014), asserts that one of the variables that are receiving growing interest among media scholars concerning audience programme preference is the perception of the presenter. It has been a long-held suspicion that there is already an undue value on the physical appearances of programme presenters by the audience (Fab-Ukozor & Ejem, 2016), and that is a key proposition of the lookism theory. Even in the workplace, Adrian (2014), found out that physically attractive people, for instance, have an advantage at work; they are more likely to be selected for jobs.

Research Question 3: To what extent does the Umuahia audience watch the selected TV programmes because of the appearance and fashion sense of presenters?

Analysis in the Table 5 demonstrates that 78% of the respondents are certain that the appearance and fashion sense of presenters

influences their preference for the TV programme; only 9% of them did not think that the appearance and fashion sense of presenters influences their preference for the TV programme; and 23% of the respondents were not sure whether their perception of the appearance and fashion sense of presenters influences their preference for the TV programme.

Rating their answers above according to the degree of agreement, Table 10 indicates that 9% of them disagreed that there is a relationship between perception of the appearance and fashion sense of presenters and preference for TV programmes. Whereas 22% were undecided; 23% agreed, and 46% strongly agreed.

Konkwo (1997), stressed that media preference continues to be determined by several factors such as the demographic of the audience which includes location, age, sex, educational qualification, economic status, and mental situation. He also cited psychographic attributes such as tastes, motivation, moods, beliefs, outlook, values, norms, and aversions. By this study then, the relevance of the lookism theory has been confirmed as it is found that people make automatic judgments of a TV programme based on the physical appearance and other observable characteristics of the presenters.

Research Question 4: To what extent do the appearance and fashion sense of presenters influence the preference for the selected TV programmes by the Umuahia audience more than other variables?

Analysis on Table 6 indicates that the majority of the respondents (46%) thought that speech mannerism is the presentation variable that mostly influences preference for preferred TV programmes; 32% said appearance; 20% of the respondents

considered fashion and only 2% of them considered other observable physical make-up of the presenter as presentation variables that mostly influence preference for preferred TV programmes in Umuahia Urban. In other words, while the appearance and fashion sense of presenters influences the preference for the selected TV programmes by the Umuahia audience, they do not influence preference for TV programmes more than other variables do. In response to other factors that influence their preference for TV programmes, other than the presentation variables, Table 12 indicates that the majority of the respondents (46%) see the preference for the TV channel as the most influential of the lot. 2% of the respondents said they are also influenced by the reward the programme offers to them; 15% are also influenced by the chance to learn something on the show; 32% are also influenced by the entertainment value of the show; and 5% of the respondents are also influenced by the popularity of the show.

However, the researcher tried to compare the influence of presenter-related factors and non-presenter-related factors in influencing preference for preferred TV programmes in Umuahia Urban. Table 7 indicates that the majority of the respondents (86%) said that the presenter's perception is more influential than non-presenter-related factors in influencing preference for preferred TV programmes; only 3% said that the non-presenter-related factors are more influential than said the presenter's perception in influencing preference for preferred TV programmes; whereas 12% said that the non-presenter-related factors and the presenter's perception are equally influential. This finding accentuates the opinion expressed by Ejem et al. (2022) on how human appearance has been objectified to the point that it guides our perception of

elements in society and the value those elements offer.

Summary of Findings

The major findings of this study include the following:

1. The programme, “NTA Network News,” is the most viewed TV programme in Umuahia Urban and there is, generally, very regular viewership of TV programmes among viewers in Umuahia Urban.
2. The audience of TV programmes in Umuahia Urban perceives the presenter of their preferred TV programme as people who are often smartly dressed, endearing, handsome, eloquent, etc.
3. The majority of the TV programme audience in Umuahia Urban is certain that the presenter's appearance and fashion sense influence their preference for a TV programme. In other words, there is a significant relationship between the presenter's appearance and fashion sense and preference for the selected TV programmes among the audience in Umuahia Urban.
4. While the appearance and fashion sense of presenters influences the preference for the selected TV programmes by the Umuahia audience, they do not influence preference for TV programmes more than other variables do. The most influential presentation variable is the speech mannerism of the presenter.

Conclusion

This study examined how the perception of the appearance and fashion sense of presenters of selected TV programmes influence the preference for the

programmes. TV programmes have gained massive popularity in Nigeria as exemplified by the preference for the programme: “NTA Network News,” which is the most viewed TV programme in Umuahia Urban. The audience members seem to always have some kind of perception towards the programme presenter. Audience members of TV programmes perceive the presenter of their preferred TV programme positively; that is, they are often smartly dressed, endearing, handsome, eloquent, etc.

In line with Adrian (2014), since physically attractive people, for instance, have an advantage at work; they are more likely to be preferred, majority of the broadcast programme audience is certain that the perception of the presenter influences their preference for a TV programme. In other words, there is a significant relationship between the presentation variables and exposure to the selected TV programmes among the audience. It has been confirmed that people make automatic judgments of a TV programme based on the physical appearance and other observable characteristics of the presenters. Of all the presentation variables, speech mannerisms and facial appearance are the ones that mostly influence the preference for the selected TV programmes.

There are external factors that influence the exposure to programmes, other than the presentation variables. Those factors are mostly the preference for the TV channel and the entertainment value of the show. However, the presenter's perception is more influential than the non-presenter-related factors in influencing preference for preferred TV programmes.

Recommendations

The researcher makes the following recommendations:

- i) Programme producers must not pay attention to the way the presenter is perceived because it can get the viewers' attention away from appearance and onto the story being presented. They should be a balance. Presenters' appearance, for instance, should be matched by quality content of the programme.
- ii) Producers of unpopular programmes can, however, revive their programmes by paying reasonable attention to presentation variables such as the presenter's speech mannerisms, appearance, fashion sense, etc.
- iii) The researcher suggests that future researchers should replicate this study in another geographical area to see if the findings of this study are peculiar to Umuahia Urban.

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