

DISSECTING REPRESENTATIONS AND IDEOLOGIES IN BIG BROTHER NAIJA REALITY TELEVISION SHOW

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Abstract

Representations and ideologies are complex issues for media research on reality, globalization, identity and dominant stereotypes. On the other hand, the study of representation and ideology offers media audience the ability to question the positions of media texts regarding what they represent as against their social realities. This paper conceptualizes reality television as purveyors of representation and ideology that are either capable of creating or eroding value systems and beliefs or sustaining dominant hegemonic cultures and ideologies. Hence, the researchers determined to dissect the dominant representations and the ideologies that are locked in Big brother Naija reality television. This could ultimately inundate Big brother Naija's audience with the power to deconstruct what they consume. To achieve this, the study adopted qualitative content analysis using the Critical Discourse Analysis approach(CDA) to investigate and interpret its research findings. Data for the study comprises relevant You-Tube video-footages of purposively selected three editions of Big brother Naija show that was sampled from existing seven editions within the period of this study from March 2006 to October 2022. Findings indicate that fight and aggression, offensive languages, alcohol abuse and sexual pervasion were dominant representations. Behind these representations are ideologies of sexual culture, gender objectivity and biases, symbolic power and unequal power relations of the West. Hinged on the representation theory, the paper concludes that the Big brother Naija should strive towards positive representations and ideologies that are not inimical to Nigeria's realities, value systems and beliefs.

Keywords: *Reality Television, Big brother Naija, Representation, Ideologies, dominant stereotypes, qualitative content analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis.*

Introduction and Problem Statement

Over the years, Africa has made itself a huge market for Western and European content instead of marketing its own local content. Therefore, it subjects itself to perpetual cultural imperialism through the continuous movement of value systems and ideologies from the West to Africa. Udeze (2005) highlights that television is one of the carriers of European representations which has gained global consumption facilitated by the invention and use of satellite and cable transmissions. Studies including the works of Andrejevic, 2004; Montemuro 2008; Kalango 2007 specify that reality television, a genre of television has on its part made a grand entrance into the landscape of programming in the twenty first century. Meanwhile, several conceptions of the term 'Reality Television has embraced its history, definition and classification as a genre in television and popular culture. The concept of reality entails the capture of the state of things as they actually exist in the physical world; it depicts the nature of things in their actual form. Roscoe (2001) defines reality television as replicated formats providing entertainment programmes where real people are often

placed in situations where their lives round-the-clock are to satisfy the interests of the producers of the programme (Endong, 2014).

It is believed that reality TV contents are supposed to showcase real situations of the standards of the people. This throws up many posers as to whether the contents of localized reality TV shows offer Africans or Nigeria in particular any form of representation. Reality television are again known for adjusting its format, localizing content and reproducing to fit many countries with few changes from originals. Reality televisions are already successfully making it as instrumental force to contemporary global popular culture and entertainment. One of such reality television show is the global Big brother reality show that have spread its tentacles towards European, Asian and African continents that have cloned and adapted to meet local formats. Meanwhile, expectations are high that the adapted Big brother Naija format would be used domestically to represent the standard values of Nigeria in contemporary African and global culture, and possibly project positive ideologies in the light of its cultural dynamics, values, languages and ancestry. Following the antecedents, the Big Brother Naija show followed the format of “Big Brother Africa” version that has continuously been investigated by researchers to discover its impact on Africa. The Big brother Naija after its debut became a success in terms of quality of content with Nigerians as participants, and gaining large media viewership. The show put Nigeria on the world map once again as being the first African country to adapt the Big Brother show after South Africa. Big Brother Naija was cloned to create entertainment and commercial gains for the Nigerian public and has today attracted academic debates and studies about its content, viewership, and audience gratifications. However, to extend the frontiers of academic scholarship, this paper is problematized in the following research questions that would eventually fill remarkable literature gaps:

1. What are the dominant representations of the Big brother Naija reality television show?
2. What are the ideological interests in the representations of the Big brother Naija show?

Review of Related Literature

The Concept of Representation

Nuanced and varied stereotypes are buried in representations which according to Maia (2014) create media imagery and discourses for cultural and political interpretations. The definition of media representation is the way aspects of society, such as gender, age, culture or ethnicity, are presented or re-presented to audiences to create a new reality. Van- Leewen (2008) agreed that how media texts represent individuals and or certain groups have been key concern for media discourse scholars. These concerns are subjected to debate, strong feelings, conflicts and ideological struggle, and determines the collective thinking in society (Hoijer, 1956). Representation in the media is simply understood as the process of construction of reality by the media through the use of language, imagery and other signifiers present in media texts. Meyr (2013) gives a deeper meaning arguing that through the process of media representations using language and imagery, media audience are provided with a perceived or constructed picture of reality, knowledge of the world, or constructed world view. Representation in the media is further understood as merely how media such as television, film and books, portray certain types of people or communities, experiences, ideas, or topics from a particular ideological or value perspective.

Media representations of youths are largely associated with fashion, music, relationship patterns and behavioral values which ultimately portray them as a social problem (Wayne, Henderson, Murray & Petley 2008). Research on gender representation has examined how ideas about masculinity and femininity are reproduced, most often in gender-targeted media texts. Studies from Harrison (2008) and Ringrow (2016) have also explored how the dominant conceptualizations of the body are reproduced and reinforced through texts in highly gendered cosmetics advertising. Meanwhile, (Milestone, 2012; Meyer, 2013) suggest that the media have created representations of romance, love and relationships among teenagers which convey the conventional ideologies of marriage and family as life-goals. Similarly, media representations of sexuality have also been explored within the expanding field of language and sexuality studies (Barker, 2008). In many cases, media representations of sexuality represent women as sexualized, sexed figure, erotized site while male counterparts are represented in masculinity, strength and vigour. Discourses on media texts about race and ethnicity have researched on representations of identities and ‘others’ (Barker. 2008). Similarly, investigations into media representations of terrorism shows re-presentations of fear, moral panic and psycho

–social problems for the audience using languages such as attacked, invaded, killed, bombed and destroyed arising from terrorist group activities (Uzochukwu & Ugwoke, 2018). Although many consumers are increasingly critical, the constructs represented in most media discourses are often pervasive. While media content provide its audience with information and entertainment values, debate has raged about the nature and the extent of the negative impact of some media representations on culture, values, beliefs, and ideological interests. In their various researches, Anderson et al., 2010; Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Johnson, et al., 2002; Wartella, Olivarez, & Jennings, 1998) all believe that media images and representations contribute in significant ways to how we think, act, and feel, and to our broader beliefs about the world and social reality. As agents of socialization and representational symbols, media products like Big brother Naija reality television programs are important vehicles in the representations of standardized realities and the construction of images that projects ideological interests in the global space (O’Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2006).

Understanding Ideology

As cultural values and beliefs are encoded in media contents as representation, so are ideologies behind these cultural values and beliefs. A rather simplistic understanding of ideology within the subject matter of this discourse is that ideology is a set of beliefs and values particularly relating to culture which are buried in media contents like the Big brother Naija reality show. Ideologies are mostly constructed via languages of media texts socio-politically to represent particular dominance including culture, gender, language of communication, values and, identity (Taiwo, 2007). These texts help to define our world and provide models for appropriate behavior and attitudes. The underlying message behind constructed media content and the interests they represent constitutes ideologies at play.

For scholars, (Althusser,2006; Zaidi, 2012; Mohammad 2019).) Ideologies are fixed in the underlying images that are provided as reality. For the Marxists, ideology means belief systems that help justify the actions of those in power by distorting and misrepresenting reality. In its broader sense specifically, an ideology is basically a system of meaning that helps define and explain the world and the value judgements about that world. Ideologies are fundamentally about ways of thinking about, even defining, social and cultural issues represented in media texts. Thus, media texts are sites of cultural contestation targeted at determining from different ideological perspectives the different interests at stake which could be popular thoughts or seemingly absent concepts begging for visibility.

Researchers who study the ideology circulated by media are interested in the underlying stories about society that the media tell, the range of values that the media legitimize, the interests, power dynamics, and the kinds of behaviors that are represented as normal and popular discourses (Åkmark, 2018). This gives a power dimension of ideology where hegemonic ideas are subtly embedded to persuade subordinate or less powerful groups to adopt preferred cultural values and ideas as natural and commonsense.

Ideologies are also buried in discourses represented in media images, and languages. Like other discourses, the focus on ideologies is to reveal dominant interests, underlying meaning and sets of belief, just like when we share ideals about nationalist movement, feminist ideas, British culture, local culture. Another view of ideology sees ideology as the sustained effort to promote the dominant culture and conceal other alternative way of thinking (Galloway, 2006). It portrays the unequal relationship between classifications such as white and black, developed and underdeveloped, what is at normal and what is considered abnormal. From the foregoing, the images, language represented in reality television shows like the Big brother Naija helps us to understand how dominant representations in the contents of the show promotes underlying ideological interests and subvert other alternative views.

Theoretical framework

Representation Theory

Representation theory is attributed to Stuart Hall. The theory indicates that there is not a true representation of people or events in a text, but there are a lot of ways realities can be represented (Hall, 2005). Its relevance to this paper is founded on the postulations of McQuail (2010) that the theory of representation defines the construction or representation of ideologies, experience, already held beliefs and interests communicated in

media texts such as the content of the Big brother Naija reality television. Representation theory argues that since meaning can be produced and constructed, the media capacity to reflect or distort reality is embedded in the content to which multiples of meaning could be generated. Hence, meaning is constructed by representation, by what is present, what is absent (inferred), and what is different (differentiation and identity). This further explains that the audiences are at liberty to interpret represented images of text and communication by available domains of interpretation and by extension deconstruct the work of representation (Kandall, 2022).

While, Lyons, (2013; Marlina & Shakila, 2016) supports representation theory on its capacity to help researchers understand changing attitudes, and values by discovering the kind of representations constructed in media text, Johoda, (2012) criticizes representation theory as too broad and vague as it overlaps with the concepts of common sense and ideology.

Methodology

The population of the study comprises all seven (7) seasons (editions) of the Big brother Naija that featured from March 2006 to October 2022 including *Big brother Nigeria, See Gobbe, Double Wahala, Pepper Dem, Lock Down, Shine Ya Eye and Level Up*. Meanwhile, three among the editions namely Lock Down, Shine Ya Eye and Level Up editions. were purposively selected as the sample size based on the justification that apart from satisfying the research interest they are most recent and featured in significant period of time in Nigeria history during the Covid 19 Lock down and the 2023 electoral campaign period. Six housemates each of the three seasons studied were selected based on their performance and status such as the winners, runner –ups, 3rd, 4th, 5th place and one evicted housemate. This gave a total of 18 housemates whose characters are named in the show as Laycon, Dorathy, Neo, Vee, Ozo, Whitemony, Boma, Angel, Cross, and Niyi. Others are Tega, Phyna, Bryann, Bella, Adekunle, Chi-Chi and Daniella.

The study therefore adopted qualitative content analysis which utilizes according to Miller (2007) the logic of discovery and interpretation to analyze such text as the content of Big brother Naija reality television shows as its research design. Qualitative content analysis offers a scientific procedure for analyzing content of communication in order to reveal meanings, contexts and intentions within messages (Bhandari, 2008). Through this procedure, Wimmer and Dominick (2012) writes that qualitative content analysis allows researchers to extrapolate from communicative data sets, certain words, speeches and concepts that are condensed into categories to illustrate and interpret the range of meaning required under study. Hence, qualitative Content analysis are mostly approached from the research traditions of Critical Discourse Analysis- CDA, which studies written and spoken language, verbal and non-verbal communication and conversational codes in relation to its social context (Luo, 2019). This paper therefore, considers CDA appropriate to unpack the dominant representations, ideologies and the cultural dynamics present in the big brother Naija show. The research instrument used was the Code sheet and the researchers were earlier trained to understand the content categories after which the data they produced were used to construct themes that described and interpreted the outcomes of relevant footages of the Big brother Naija You-Tube videos selected. The content categories for this study were specifically and preferably created to provide meaningful analysis, address the subject matter and realize the objectives of the study in lieu of pre-existing categories (Stempel and Westley in Ogbuoshi ,2008; Wimmer and Dominic 2011).

Content categories The following categories were considered:

Body Exposure: Examples includes sexualized body parts that is tight, nearly displaying, or looseness against body parts like chest, cleavage, waist/ pelvis, butt and upper thighs among others

Sexual Allures: This include sexually alluring behavior, signifying sexual readiness. Examples; licking lips, stroking body, hip shaking, butt shaking, flirting such as bending, seductive moves and seductive dancing.

Objectifying behaviors: Exhibiting behaviors such as quarrelling, or Cat calling like whistling.

Unwanted Sexual touching: such as kissing, hugging, caressing or fondling.

Sexualized Statements: Example; using sexualized languages suggesting cuteness like hot, charming, beautiful, crushing as well as offensive languages.

Sexualized Aggression: these include such actions like undressing before opposite sex, abusing, rape, aggressive physical contact or fighting.

Relationships: Whether participants engaged in relationship ties like dating, romancing, or crush on someone.

Period of study: The period of study includes the time frame for the study which for this study is the last three seasons of the Big brother reality television show from 19th July 2020, to 2nd October 2022, featuring Lock down, Shine ya eye and Level up editions.

Units of analysis: The following units of analysis were analyzed to discover dominant stereotypes and ideological interests without prejudices to subjectivity and existing knowledge.

- Characters: They are participants of the reality show or the selected housemates in the show.
- Languages: Whether characters speak in their native languages, English language, Pidgin English or languages considered as foreign, inappropriate or offensive.
- Camera angles: This include camera directions or camera shots such as long shot, close up shot among others targeted to draw attention and offer some kind of meaning to viewers.
- Conversations: This means dialogues, utterances, charts, jokes and talks exchanges by characters within scenes.
- Scenes; The place where an action or event occurred in the show such as beach, swimming pools, or other instances.
- Actions; what a character does that is particularly guided by an intention.

Results and Discussions

Using CDA, as earlier described, the researcher leveraged on descriptive and interpretative skills to present the dominant representation and ideologies discovered in the sampled contents as follows:

Discourses on Dominant Representation: In response to research question 1 raised earlier, the dominant representations observed in the Big brother Naija show were described in the following themes.

Fight and Aggression:

Fights and physical aggression were noticeably a dominant representation discovered in all the 3 editions of the Big Brother Naija contents reviewed; Big brother Lockdown, Big brother Shine Ya Eye and Big Brother Level up. These were seen from the following extracted snippet:

Fight between Vee ,Wathoni and Neo (Big brother Lock Down edition).

- Vee: Nobody said you have something to hide, you are mad, you are behaving like a mad person. i will show you pepper in this house- Olodo (A Yoruba translation for empty brain).
- Wathoni: You are too quick to say that I am not okay, fuck that shit, I don't give a fuck, I don't give a shit, you know that I am mad, you know that I am fucking mad, I will show you the stuff I am made off.
- In another scene Vee grabs Neo on the neck, and speaks:
- Vee: When I came in here, I was single and I will be single when I leave, what sort of nonsense is this? every Saturday in this house is argument, leave from the door and never come back, I don't care anymore about you, we are done. (suggesting anger from a heartbreak and a willingness to break up from their relationship).

Fight between Laycon and Erica Season 5 lock down edition

Erica loses her temper on Laycon; Winner of Season 5 Lock down edition speaking in a manner that infuriates Laycon and left him speechless. Eric speaks to Laycon in the following manner:

- Erica: let him try to defend himself, he is trying to feel like a perfect person, he is using me to trend. I am not scared of Laycon, he is a fucking idiot, Laycon you are like a drumstick of Chicken, I am only attracted to your brains. I only kissed you under the influence of alcohol. Laycon is a manipulative fool, he is smart and uses his smartness for the bad reason. (she speaks angrily to the hearing of other housemates).

Meanwhile, Laycon remained silent and did not retort back at her quarrels; a character suggestive of modesty and decorum on the part of Laycon.

Fight between Whitemoney and Pere of Season 6 Shine ya eye

- Pere: It is my fault; I am going to unlay everybody's bed today.

Whitemoney: (Flares up) I am a fucking street boy, get out, I will show you shit, ‘yu dei craze’, (Pidging English translation of are you mad) you are a fucking liar, this is not your house, you are a stupid one in this house, if you want to accuse anyone, don’t fucking try with me.

Maria

responded: I don’t want to be friend with anybody in this house, you guys are not showing maturity.

Pere: You are a fucking idiot, you are a stupid foolish idiot, stupid ass idiot, you mother fucker, because you fucker massage your ego, if you have anything with me, be a fucking man (be man enough) and say it to me.

Fight between Bella and Phyna; Big brother Naija season 7 level up housemates

Phyna: Bella, you are fucking rude, you don’t know how to talk.

Bella: You are very stupid

Phyna: I am from the fucking street, what are you doing here you must be very mad. You said you are from Cake and Wine (a wealthy home), you are this, you are that.

Bella: You are mad,

Phyna: Everybody has class, (mocking and mimicking her) even you? you have class and you are here dragging food, you are fighting for food? if no be big brother rules, I for don break those your legs. I will beat you, you must be a useless thing. (the fight continued with rowdiness and quarrelling among housemates).

Inappropriate or offensive Languages

One of the grand rules of the Big brother Naija show is the prohibition of native language speaking by housemates for reasons being that the housemates do not share the same ethnicity and would deprive housemates who are not conversant of the language the right to understand each other in the house. Therefore, the housemates used foreign languages that were either inappropriate or offensive during conversations, romantic affairs and conflict encounters. Examples are sex talks like shag, fuck, fucking, fuck you, fucking bastard, slut, street girls and street boys.

The use of “fuck” is found to be offensive depending on the context of usage, while in some situations it might mean “never mind”, “get out”, “stop that”, it might even connote an abusive language when used together with another offensive word such as fucking Ass, fucking idiot and fucking stinking mouth as it was variously used across the three versions of the Big brother Naija show studied. A similar slang to fuck, that is not sexually derogatory is the word “shit” that was found to be interchangeable used. For example, Vee of Season five spoke to Wathoni a fellow housemate in such manner “Are you not on the fucking bed with someone else” in another argument she said to Neo, another housemate “Fuck that shit, I don’t give a fuck, you know that I am fucking mad”. The use of fuck and other sexually explicit languages like sexy, my vibe and crush appears to be a dominating language use by the housemates signifying a borrowed accent and slang of the American/British culture which is not considered as African or by extension Nigerian. This is a representation of global culture dominance that is fast becoming a popular culture among Nigerian youths. Another example of offensive language use is Aggressive language (Name calling). These language use seen in the studied editions is that of conflict and aggression where housemates call each other names to discredit them. Such words include; you are mad, you are stupid, *you dei craze*, you stink, you are disrespectful, “Olodo” (A Yoruba language for empty brains) You shout like a market woman, you are manner less, you are very lousy. Although, this appears to be a culturally bound Nigerian language descent mostly used in conflict situation especially when one wants to cast aspersions on the other.

Sexual Pervasiveness and Objectification

Cases of observed sexual pervasion and objectification is another dominant representation discovered across the 3 editions studied. This was represented by the deluge of sexually suggestive scenes where male and female housemates share the same bed, sleep under same bed covers, swim partially naked in the same swimming pool and dance with amazingly display of sexually suggestive performances. Other sexually pervasive behaviors recorded in the contents were fondling, ‘sexpositioning’, lapping on fellow housemates, caressing, deep kissing, and dance- sexing. These explicit portrayal of sexual pervasion, nudity and body exposure was found across the 3 sampled Big brother Naija show investigated and it re-enforces the

research findings of Ezeakolam and Awofadaju, (2022); Iyorza, (2021); Okwudiri, Amannah and Ogbemi, (2019).

In a particular episode displayed in the Season 6 Shine Ya eye edition, housemates like Cross, Boma, and Angel, were spotted in a dance hall, gyrating and soaking themselves with Liquor which later got them tipsy and several emotional activities and contacts were transacted in a public glare of viewers. Particularly as seen from the video, Boma and a female housemate Peace were seen to be drunk and Boma exploited the opportunity to hold and drag Peace to a hiding place and gently found his hand into the soft part of Peace chest and was about to fondle her when Peace stylishly removed his hand. Again, Maria and Pere of Season 6 edition was caught by Tega bathing together and kissing in the bathroom with half nudity. African culture strongly abhors such sexual display and considers them as sexual immorality and indecent exposures which have the potentials of arousing sexual feelings, leading to voyeurism. These representations are controversially disgusting to religious groups, morally conscious groups or individuals and perhaps suggesting the dire need of government censorship and rating controls.

Alcohol abuse

There is a common parlance that says “Drink responsibly”. Being a responsible drinker suggests knowing when to drink, and the quantity of drinks that one can control. Excessive drinking was found to be a dominant representation across the 3 versions of the Big brother Naija content investigated. The consequences on social behaviors of participants that engaged in the drinking spree was found to be aggression, self-disclosure and sexual adventures. By allowing the portrayal of alcohol abuse to be represented in the contents of the Big brother Naija show, the producers have inadvertently invited the audiences to accept the practice as a reality that should be negotiated with as cultural norms and values. This representation was showcased in the following scenario:

Erica, a season 5 Lock Down female housemate confessed to have kissed Laycon, a male housemate under the influence of alcohol; she said “Laycon, you are like a drumstick of chicken, I am only attracted to your brains, I only kissed you under the influence of alcohol”

Again, at a Saturday dance party, some housemates of Season 6 Shine Ya Eye including Pere, Maria, Cross, Boma and Saskay and Jaypaul were spotted drinking, dancing and whining and Cross was distributing shots of Gordon alcohol to fellow housemates who took and became tipsy and weird. Phyna of Season 7 level up edition during the show lost her relationship with Groovy owing to excessive alcohol consumption which did not go down well with Groovy. Cautioning her, Groovy, begged Phyna to reduce her intake of alcohol which Phyna refused and they had this conversation:

Groovy: If you want to drink as you like, then, there is no point of us continuing this relationship.

Phyna: You are breaking up with me? (She asked anxiously).

Groovy: I am not breaking up, but we need a space. (and their relationship finally hitched). Similarly, housemate Nengi of Season 6, Shine Ya Eye also blamed the ending of her relationship with Cross on alcohol. These numerous cases of alcohol appeared to be dominant and expressive of representations allowed to thrive in all the shows investigated.

Gender differences: There are several depictions of gendered differences as dominant representations. The female body was portrayed as eroticized site, primed for sexual attraction, seductive and permissible. Examples, female housemates were seen with exposed sensitive parts of their bodies like cleavages, thighs, upper back, and chested burst. Camera angles intentionally beamed at those skimpy shorts, bum shorts and top revealing shirts worn by the female housemates signifying representation of gendered nudity. On the other hand, male housemates were rarely seen with short knickers or singlet that would expose their muscular chest. Again, female housemates literarily engaged in hip shaking, body stroking, butt shaking, flirting around men to seek attention, and swooning in the arms of male housemates. Other examples are cases where female housemates showed more emotional care in male feelings and heartbreaks, open display of sexual affection, confessional statements of love, anger over non-compliance for sexual intimacy and competition. The male housemates were rather portrayed as reserved, throwing glances, pretending to be apathetic to female sexual advances and somewhat reluctant to express their feelings. For instance, Angel of Season 6 Shine Ya eye speaks to a male housemate thus “if you want to flex with me, flex with your full chest” That was a reaction from Angel who perceived sexual advances from Cross asking him to be man enough to state

it that he is in love or want a relationship with her. She speaks up bluntly at it again, “for me, if i am going to be in a relationship with you, i have to know what we are doing, i like definitions”. These gendered differences re-affirms western gender roles, bias, differences and dominance that are ideologically perpetuated as dominant popular culture.

Discourses on Ideological Interests: In response to research question 2, the following themes were raised to describe perceived ideological interests in the dominant representations of Big brother Naija show.

Sexual Culture and Gender Objectivity

Owing to indigenous cultural heritage and the eclipse of religion, Oloworenkende (2019) recalled that sexuality discourses and portrayals have remained silent in the Nigerian context. Language of sex is stripped from everyday communication and the portrayals of sexually explicit contents were blatantly prohibited in public communication while public displays of sexual activities were considered as abhorrent. From the study of the contents investigated, most of what is occupying the Big brother show particularly the African and Nigerian format is the celebration of sexually alluring images and erotic scenes reflecting western interests, biases and ideologies. These reflects the views of (Bucholtz & Hall 2004 in Koller, 2016) on sexual culture as belief systems of mutually constituted ideologies, practices, and identities that give socio-political meaning to the body as eroticized site. The ideologies of sexual culture as popular culture of the West were also embedded in the flagrant display of sexual relations among housemates in the contents of the Big brother Naija show investigated. Despite the persistent warnings by the producer that Big Brother is watching and the elaborate display of the Big Brother is watching eye logo around the rooms of housemates, the display of sexual activities like kissing, fondling, lapping of opposite sex and other explicit behaviors continued unabated. Hence, it would not be out of place to reason that the flagrant display of sexually explicit content discovered in the studied editions were under the disguise of entertainment serving to reinforce imported western ideologies considered to be the dominant culture, popular culture or youth culture as synonymously described.

Sexual objectification was also discovered as the ideologies of western culture situated in the belief that women are created for the male gaze and should therefore strive towards sexual attractiveness and satisfaction of the men. The female housemates dressed fashionably and irresistibly ready to be possessed by the male housemates. While the girls in the Big brother house were dressed in fabrics designed intentionally to expose sensitive parts of their bodies like hips, cleavages, thighs and breasts, the male counterparts were seen clad in long sleeved shirts with some adorning their masculine bodies with jewelry decorated bodies. This represented the male housemates less of sexual objects but as disciplined, preserved and responsible.

Ideologies of Symbolic Power

A common parlance or usages in the Big brother Naija show is that “Big brother is watching”. The display of big brother symbols and constant reminder of the panoptic Big brother is a form of subjugation expressing symbolic power. The emblem is a manipulative ideology intended to legitimize the power of the all -seeing and unseen ruler whose voice is merely heard but not seen. The Big brother cliché also dramatizes the ideologies or belief system that those in power usually manipulate language to enforce compliance from their subjects. This agrees with the arguments of Bourdieu, Saussure and Chomsky that language is not only a means of communication but also a medium of power through which authorities pursue their interests and display their dominance (Maya, 2021). It also symbolizes the believe that human beings are always under surveillance and lacks complete freedom. It evokes the idea of the belief that human existence is being observed and controlled by powerful and mysterious forces (Power of the unseen god) over which one cannot object to.

Ideologies of unequal power relations

Similar to the ideologies of symbolic power is the unequal power relations observed in the Big brother reality show. Unequal power relations are grounded on the ideological construction of inequality along identities of culture, gender, social strata and power dominance. Such inequalities are implicated on the language use and speech actions signifying superiority.

Ideologies of unequal power was shown among housemates entrusted with the Head of House (HOH) leadership and exercised their position to marginalize and enforce compliance from other housemates. This was displayed in the altercation between Chichi, who was empowered with Head of House in Season 7 level up and Bella, a fellow housemate in the conversation that ensued:

Chichi: I was still talking, don't do that again.

Bella: Don't talk to me like that, Head of House (HOH) my foot.

Chichi: Don't try it again.

Bella: Shut the fucker up (Bella is found to be angry and jealous when her fellow housemate becomes the HOH).

Chi Chi: Do not even try me this morning because *I go change am for anyone*, (Pidgin English translation of I will discipline you). I am the Head of House (HOH). I called for a meeting as the HOH and you are all asking me the agenda of the meeting, must you know the agenda of the meeting before you honor my orders, do not trigger me to anger.

Bella: If i trigger you, you must be triggered immediately (She retorted).

Another case of wanton display of leadership powers was the case of Phyna as the Head of House who used her position to distribute food in the house while sanctioning those that behaved irrationally. A situation she considered as being a disciplined leader. In the processes she even insulted Bella as being rude and fighting over food in spite of her acclaimed wealthy family background.

Apart from inequalities shown in the way housemates handled leadership positions, there were speech actions that show class differentiation on social strata as some of the housemates either described themselves as street boys and street girls (Suggesting lower class people from poor background, and or ruggedness in upbringing). Others classify themselves or derogatorily refer to others as coming from Cake and Wine backgrounds (Suggesting wealthy backgrounds, affluence, home grown and well behaved).

Conclusion.

The Big brother Naija reality television show is fast becoming a product of imperialism determined to subtly conditioning the minds of Nigeria to Western values and ideologies. This paper discovered that the dominant representations of the Big brother Naija show were physical fights, sexual pervasiveness, alcohol abuse and gender objectification and biases. This study, argued from its findings that these dominant representations are not a true representations of Nigeria's social realities and are therefore denaturalizing Nigeria's cultural values and belief system. The study also discovered that the dominant representations perpetuates the hegemonic ideologies of sexual culture, symbolic power and unequal power relations of the West targeted at political and social dominance. Conclusively, the researchers agree that the propagations of dominant cultures and ideologies of the west which are contrary to the values of the Nigerian society should be limited such that the program is redefined to serve local interests and ideologies.

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