



THE IMPACT OF EXPOSURE TO DRAMATISED  
ENTERTAINMENT ON SOCIAL REALITY  
PERCEPTIONS OF UGANDAN AUDIENCE

BY

ADNAN ALI ADIKATA

A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirement  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Communication

Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and  
Human Sciences  
International Islamic University  
Malaysia

MAY 2012

## ABSTRACT

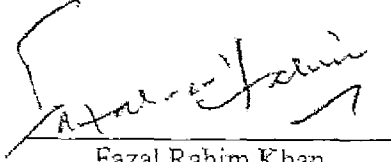
The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of exposure to dramatised entertainment on the conceptions of social reality by the Ugandan audience. The study was guided by the following research questions: (1) Does exposure to Nigerian dramatised entertainment influence social reality perceptions of Muslim audience? (2) Are the effects of exposure to Nigerian dramatised entertainment on social reality perceptions of the Muslim audiences moderated by any variable? Employing George Gerbner's cultivation theory, this study focused on the long-term and frequent effects of Nigerian films as a companion to live and grow with. This research concentrated on the steady, pervasive and extensively shared conjectures, representations, and conceptions exhibiting the established features and interests of Nigerian films as depicted on television. A total of 544 respondents were proportionately sampled from the four campuses of the Islamic University in Uganda using stratified and simple random sampling. Analyses of the social reality perceptions were incorporated while utilising regression analysis statistical procedure. The findings demonstrate proof for the cultivation effect in Nigerian films across a number of dependent variables. Exposure to Nigerian films contributed significantly to perceived prevalence of visits to witchdoctors, perceived prevalence of witchdoctors, perceived prevalence of crime and perceived efficacy of witchcraft. It also influenced respondents' acceptability of witchcraft, and fascination with the Christian community. The findings also presented evidence for cultivation in the first and second-order effects. Nonetheless, proof for cultivation effects did not show up in Islamic practices, and fascination with Christian institutions. Similarly, a test of interaction showed that the observed relationships were not a function of any moderator variable.

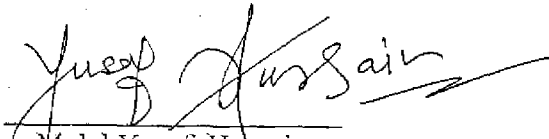
## خلاصة البحث


تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على أثر تعرض المتلقي اليوغندي للدراما الترفيهية على مفاهيم الواقع الاجتماعي. استرشدت الدراسة بالأسئلة التالية: (1) هل لتعرض المتلقين المسلمين للدراما الترفيهية النيجيرية أثر على تصوراتهم للواقع الاجتماعي. (2) هل أثر التعرض للدراما الترفيهية النيجيرية على المجتمع اليوغندي عام أم أنه قاصر على شرائح معينة. ركزت هذه الدراسة على الآثار طويلة الأجل، والآثار المتكررة للتعرض للأفلام النيجيرية على المتلقي اليوغندي؛ باعتبارها مرافق يعيش ويكرر معه وذلك باستخدام نظرية الغرس الثقافي لجورج جربنر. ركز هذا البحث على التخمينات، والتصورات، والمفاهيم والاهتمامات المشتركة على نطاق واسع والتي تتصف بالشيوع والثبات، وتظهر في ملامح الأفلام النيجيرية كما هي معروضة في التلفزيون. 544 مستجيب هم حجم العينة المختارة من أربعة فروع للجامعة الإسلامية في يوغندا، وباستخدام العينة العشوائية المقسمة إلى طبقات والعينة العشوائية البسيطة. تم تضمين تحليلات تصورات الواقع الاجتماعي باستخدام إجراء التحليل الإحصائي الإرتدادي. وبرهنت النتائج على وجود دليل على أثر غرس ثقافي في الأفلام النيجيرية من خلال عدد من المتغيرات التابعة. إن التعرض للأفلام النيجيرية أسهم بشكل ملحوظ في إدراك ازدياد التردد على الأطباء السحرة، وإدراك ازدياد عدد الأطباء السحرة، وإدراك ارتفاع معدلات الجريمة، وإدراك تعاظم فاعلية السحر في المجتمع اليوغندي. كما أسهمت الأفلام النيجيرية في ازدياد تقبل المستجيبين للسحر، وافتتاحهم بالمجتمع النصراني. كما قدمت نتائج الدراسة أدلة على آثار الغرس الثقافي في المستوى الأول والثاني. وبالمقابل لم تثبت نتائج الدراسة أي آثار للغرس الثقافي في ممارسات المسلمين لشعائهم الدينية، كما لم تثبت افتتاحهم بالمؤسسات النصرانية. في المقابل، أظهر اختبار التفاعل إن العلاقات الملاحظة ليست بسبب أي متغير وسيط.


## APPROVAL PAGE

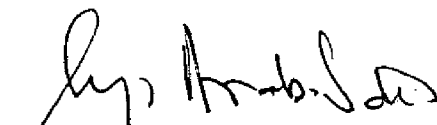
The dissertation of Adnan Ali Adikata has been approved by the following:

  
Fazal Rahim Khan  
Supervisor

  
Mohd. Yusof Hussain  
Co-supervisor

  
Norbaiduri Ruslan  
Internal Examiner


  
Md Salleh Hj. Hassan  
External Examiner

  
Syed Arabi Syed Abdullah Idid  
Chairman

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Adnan Ali Adikata

Signature  .....

Date .....

**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA**

**DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION OF  
FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH**

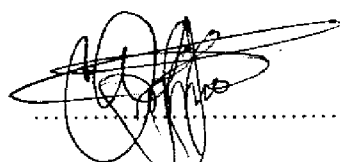
Copyright © 2012 by International Islamic University, Malaysia

**THE IMPACT OF EXPOSURE TO DRAMATISED ENTERTAINMENT ON  
SOCIAL REALITY PERCEPTIONS OF UGANDAN AUDIENCE**

No part of this unpublished research may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder except as provided below.

1. Any material contained in or derived from this unpublished research may only be used by others in their writing with due acknowledgment.
2. IIUM or its library will have the right to make and transmit copies (print or electronic) for institutional and academic purposes.
3. The IIUM library will have the right to make, store in a retrieval system and supply copies of this unpublished research if requested by other universities and research libraries.

Affirmed by Adnan Ali Adikata



.....  
Signature

.....  
Date

*This dissertation is dedicated to the loving memory of*  
*my late father*  
*Ali Abdallah Said,*  
*&*  
*my late uncles;*  
*Mustafa Ramadhan Lasu, and Ahmad Mohammad Taib,*  
*whose last words to me emphasised knowledge acquisition*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I extend my sincere gratitude to the almighty Allah for the enormous and immeasurable bounties He has continuously bestowed upon me throughout my education life. The good health, sound mind and reasoning, stable family and zeal have brought me this far. Hence, I say, *Alhamdulillah rabbil-amin*.

I will forever be grateful to my respected professors who have helped me mature from a disorientated and bewildered first-year graduate student to a Ph.D candidate capable of carrying out a research project of this magnitude. In particular, Prof Fazal Rahim Khan's wisdom and thinking style have repeatedly reminded me to take a step back and consider the broader implications of both my classroom-based learning and my research agenda. I will be forever grateful to my co-supervisor Prof Mohd Yosuf Hussain, for his intellectually insightful guidance and critique, thoughtfulness, and thorough readings of my dissertation. Special thanks to Prof Syed Arabi Idid, Prof. Azmuddin, and Prof Saodah Wok for their tireless efforts in moulding me into a postgraduate student and communication specialist worth the name. I am greatly indebted to the Chairman of the Communication Department Postgraduate Committee, and Head of Department, Assist Prof. Che Mahzan Ahmad. Prof. Firdaus Azzam was so instrumental in my studies and has remained to be one of my greatest mentors.

My fellow graduate colleagues, brothers and sisters, have played major roles in the accomplishment and contentment I've achieved both professionally and personally. Brothers like Saifeldin Hassan, Kayode Mustafa, Ibrahim Abubakar, Murtada Ahmad, and sisters, Lily Arif, Khaizuran, Romlah Ramli, Firdaus, Mbazzaki Mayimuna, Kasauli Rukia, and Sauda Nayiga have motivated, inspired, and helped me to achieve this fate. Br Ahrari Sadullah was my statistics expert who overwhelmingly assisted me with the statistics software and analysis. My cousins Dr Mustafa Omar and Dr Mahfuth Khamis's contribution is immeasurable.

I could not have completed this dissertation without the special and dedicated support of the following great persons. Dr Serwanga Jamil, Prof. Gyagenda Ismail, Dr Wardah Mummy Rajab, Mr. Katongole Nasser, Mr. Amandu Yasin Is'haq, Mrs. Kifaya Musa, and Ms Habiba Hamid. I was so privileged to have these unique, enthusiastic, talented, and extremely amusing individuals as members of my long list of research volunteers.

A special acknowledgement must be made to the Malaysian Technical Corporation (MTCP) under the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education for awarding me a scholarship for my Ph.D. I must say that I am one of the most privileged international students because I am a recipient of the MTCP scholarship twice; during my undergraduate studies in 1995, and my Ph.D programme in 2009. Thank you, you have trained a scholar in me.

My sincere appreciation to specifically Dr Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, Rector of the Islamic University in Uganda (IUU) for the facilitations, moral and financial support that enabled me to undergo this training in a record time. IUU's staff development scheme paved the way for this achievement. In the same vein, I would like to thank the International Islamic University, Malaysia's administration for the fees waiver that was extended to me in my first semester as part of the

operationalisation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between IIUM and IUIU. The waiver gave me a settled mind that allowed me to concentrate fully on my studies until I was deservedly awarded the MTCP scholarship. I am greatly humbled by this noble gesture.

Finally, I give special thanks to my entire family for their unconditional love and support. Brothers Kassim, Mudathir, Ahmad, Ajmal, and sisters Hamida, Faita, Farida, Salila, and Yusra were great. My mothers; Mariam (late), Zainab, and Hajjati Amina Mohammad Aditei instilled in me religious commitment, discipline, and the love of learning at an early stage. Hence, I am appreciative. The utmost gratitude of all for this dissertation, however, is owed to my charming and dearly loved wife Hawa Ramathan. Without her accommodating approach, indulgence, consideration, and patience toward child upbringing, there is no way I could have completed this tasking course. I must thank her for keeping me in her heart, and maintaining peace in my mind and my surrounding. Hawa's exemplary religiousness, positive attitude and commendable behaviour constantly reminded me of what really matters in life. This degree is hers more than it is mine. In the end, I would like to thank my lovely children; Ali Salsabeela, Amina Hiyam, Ahmad Taib, Afiifa Fat-hiyyah, and Akram Abdul-Rahman who had to live without Dady's love, presence, and affection for the duration of my programme. Thank you!

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .....	ii
Abstract in Arabic .....	iii
Approval Page .....	iv
Declaration Page .....	v
Copyright Page.....	vi
Dedication .....	vii
Acknowledgements.....	viii
List of Tables .....	xiv
List of Figures .....	xvii
Transliteration .....	xix
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement .....	5
1.3 Research Questions .....	9
1.4 Objectives of the study.....	9
1.5 Significance of the Study .....	9
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES.....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.0 Introduction .....	14
2.1 Theoretical Framework .....	14
2.1.1 Cultivation theory .....	15
2.1.2 Mainstreaming and resonance.....	20
2.2 Development of Nollywood .....	23
2.2.1 Nollywood Development Factors .....	26
2.2.2 Nollywood Success .....	30
2.2.3 Ways of Consuming Nigerian Films .....	33
2.3 Nollywood Genres .....	34
2.4 Christianity in Nigerian Films .....	36
2.5 Witchcraft in Nigerian Films .....	40
2.6 Summary of Literature .....	42
2.7 Hypotheses for the Study .....	44
<b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS .....</b>	<b>55</b>
3.0 Introduction .....	55
3.1 Research Design.....	55
3.2 Research Model.....	56
3.3 Population of the Study.....	58
3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure.....	61
3.5 Focus Group Discussion .....	66
3.6 Instrumentation .....	67
3.7 Concepts and Measures .....	69
3.7.1 Exposure to Dramatised Entertainment .....	70
3.7.2 Social Reality Perceptions .....	74

3.7.2.1 Perceived Prevalence of Witchcraft .....	75
3.7.2.2 Perceived Prevalence of Crime .....	77
3.7.2.3 Perceived Efficacy of Witchcraft .....	81
3.7.2.4 Acceptability of Witchcraft .....	82
3.7.2.5 Orientation towards Islamic Norms .....	84
3.7.2.6 Fascination with Christianity .....	86
3.7.3 Moderator Variables .....	92
3.7.3.1 Social Status .....	92
3.7.3.2 Type of School Attended .....	93
3.7.3.3 Interpersonal Interaction with Christians .....	95
3.7.3.4 Viewing Motives .....	97
3.7.3.5 Rural-Urban Background .....	103
3.7.3.6 Familiarity with Witchcraft .....	104
3.7.3.7 Family Religious Composition .....	106
3.7.3.8 Religious Commitment to Islam.....	108
3.8 Instrument Pre-testing .....	113
3.9 Data Collection.....	113
<b>CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>117</b>
4.0 Introduction .....	117
4.1 Hypotheses .....	117
4.2 Major Statistical Tool.....	120
4.3 Zero Order Correlation.....	121
4.4 First Hypothesis .....	125
4.5 Searching for the Moderator Hypothesis .....	137
4.6 Summary of the Hypothesised Results .....	168
4.7 Summary of Accepted and Rejected Hypotheses .....	169
4.8 Discussion .....	176
<b>CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>193</b>
5.0 Summary of the Study .....	193
5.1 Implications of the Findings.....	196
5.1.1 Theoretical implications.....	196
5.1.2 Practical implications.....	199
5.2 Recommendations for Future Studies .....	202
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE.....</b>	<b>220</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
3.1	Respondents' profile	63
3.2	Mean and standard deviations of minutes of watching Nigerian films in a day	72
3.3	Mean and standard deviations of number of Nigerian films watched in a week	74
3.4	Mean and standard deviations of perceived prevalence of witchcraft	76
3.5	Mean and standard deviations of perceived prevalence of crime	80
3.6	Mean and standard deviations of perceived efficacy of witchcraft	82
3.7	Mean and standard deviations of acceptability of witchcraft	84
3.8	Mean and standard deviations of orientation towards Islamic norms	85
3.9	Mean and standard deviations of fascination with Christianity	88
3.10	Factor loadings and communalities on dimensions of fascination with Christianity	91
3.11	Mean and standard deviations of income	93
3.12	Mean and standard deviations of type of school	95
3.13	Mean and standard deviations of interpersonal interaction with Christians	96
3.14	Mean and standard deviations of viewing motives	99
3.15	Factor loadings and communalities on dimensions of viewing motives	102
3.16	Mean and standard deviations of rural-urban residence	103
3.17	Mean and standard deviations for familiarity with	106

	witchcraft	
3.18	Mean and standard deviations of family religious composition	107
3.19	Mean and standard deviations of religious commitment	110
3.20	Factor loadings and communalities on dimensions of religious commitment to Islam	112
4.1	Zero order correlations between criterion and predictor variables	124
4.2	Impact of minutes spent watching Nigerian films and number of Nigerian films watched in a week on perceived prevalence of visits to witchdoctors and witchdoctors in society, and crime	129
4.3	Impact of minutes spent watching Nigerian films and number of Nigerian films watched in a week on acceptability, and efficacy of witchcraft	132
4.4	Impact of minutes spent watching Nigerian films and number of Nigerian films watched in a week on fascination with Christian community and Christian institutions, and orientation towards Islamic norms	136
4.5	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceived prevalence of witchcraft in society	138
4.6	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceived prevalence of witchcraft in society	141
4.7	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceived prevalence of crime	143
4.8	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceived efficacy of witchcraft	146
4.9	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on acceptability of witchcraft	148
4.10	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on orientation towards Islamic norms	151
4.11	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on fascination with Christian community and Christian institution	153
4.12	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on fascination with Christian community and Christian	157

	institutions	
4.13	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on fascination with Christian community, Christian institutions	159
4.14	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on fascination with Christian community, Christian institutions	161
4.15	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on fascination with Christian community and Christian institutions	164
4.16	Impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on fascination with Christian community and Christian institutions	166
4.17	Summary of accepted and rejected main effect hypotheses	170
4.18	Summary of accepted and rejected moderator hypotheses	174

## LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
1	A model describing the relationship between independent, dependent and moderator variables	57
2	Distribution of respondents by gender	64
3	Distribution of respondents by campus	65

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Over the years, the study of media effects has attracted enthusiasm and craving zeal in scientific research. There is still a significant growth of interest, among researchers, and curiosity in understanding the effects of long term exposure to mass media. Early research has produced considerable volumes of findings which have added value to the existing body of mass media knowledge. However, developments in the field of communication and mass media tend to present further curiosity that calls for more academic investigations. One such latest area under discussion is the unanticipated emergence of the Nigerian films and their likely impacts on the construction of social reality perceptions of their audiences, and this is the main focus of this research.

Chapter one of this study is divided into four related sections. They provide a general description of the theme of this research. Section one presents the introduction. Section two deals with the background and significance of the study. Section three presents the research problem, and section four outlines the research questions and objectives.

## **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The emergence of the Nigerian film industry, later coined Nollywood, during the past two decades caught many by surprise. The films' aggressive worldwide distribution promoted a self-sustained industry which has attracted the interest of the local and international public (Esan, 2008). After establishing itself as one of the favourite entertainment choices, the Nigerian film industry-Nollywood-is now ranked first

ahead of Hollywood and Bollywood in terms of film production (UNESCO, 2009). This unanticipated rapid growth has led to many local and international studies that have examined a variety of issues related to Nollywood (Künzler, 2006; Osei-Hwere & Osei-Hwere, 2008; Haynes, 2007; Haynes, 2009; Offord, 2007; Ugochukwu, 2008; Esan, 2008 and Akpabio, 2007).

It can be argued that ever since the emergence of Nollywood at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it has had a reflective influence on the African culture in form of distinct Nigerian accent, traditional costumes and behavioural peculiarities (Onuzulike, 2007). To a larger extent, these films hold a noticeable position in the minds and hearts of Africans within the continent and those in the Diaspora (Omoera, 2009). Besides their unpunctuated presence in cinemas, video halls, and local television stations, these films are a consistent feature on channels of interest to African audiences via satellite or cable channels. Nollywood practices are entrenched in the television industry where drama is the most significant component of programming for a great deal of the audience as the appeal for drama is quite universal amongst viewers (Esan, 2008). These films, according to Esan, are mainly classified as Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa based on drama, the most important component of television programming for a wide range of audience. Each of these tribal inclinations and classifications tend to mirror tribal values, beliefs and cultural norms.

Religious elements have been part of television production themes since the emergence of cinema hundreds of years ago (Meyer, 2005). Likewise, the relationship between Nollywood and the Church has been historical in nature. Specifically, since the development of cinema in Nigeria, the film industry has been sustained by the colonialists and the church. The former utilised it to advance and achieve their

colonisation mission, while the latter used it to spread Christianity in most parts of Africa (Akpabio, 2007).

Currently, the Igbo tribesmen who are predominantly Christian are credited for the boom of the industry. They control the larger video market targeting the English-conversant audience all over the world (Haynes & Okome, 1997). The film content mainly reflects the beliefs and value systems of the force behind the industry. This is expected in cross-cultural communication contexts where production and viewing happen in distinct geographic, social, and religious set-ups. Likewise, ethnic and religious affiliations around the film industry are thought to be pervasive during casting, in the shooting locations, and story lines (Esan, 2008). Sometimes, thoughts and ideas for forthcoming films are obtained from deliverance sessions in churches in and around the cosmopolitan residences of Nigeria (Meyer, 2005).

In Uganda, Nollywood enthusiasts are a multi-religious composition of people from almost all religious denominations. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) census report of 2006 identifies nine religious affiliations including traditional or African religions. According to the UBOS statistics, Catholics are the majority (42%), followed by the Anglicans (37%) and Muslims (12%), although some sources (Chandi, 1998) put the Muslim percentage at over (40%). Irrespective of whether the politics of numbers is taken into consideration, statistical evidence indicates that Muslims are a minority in Uganda. They live, interact, and conduct most of their social affairs in a multi-religious environment dominated by their Christian counterparts.

The religious diversity referred above is evident in most family structures which consist of Muslim only or interdenominational parenthood and/or relatives. Due to their divergent religious affiliations and cross cultural interactions, these passionate

Ugandan viewers of Nigerian films may demonstrate different levels of religious commitment as well as divergent levels of social reality perceptions. For the young viewers, these may be constructed in a school setting during their adolescence.

According to the 2002 national population and housing census, Uganda's education system is dualistic, with formal and informal systems. Under the formal system, the government follows the four – tier educational model. School going children complete seven years of primary level, four years of ordinary level, and two years of advanced level secondary education prior to joining tertiary level of education. At present, university education is offered by both public and private institutions. In addition to formal education sector, the informal sector serves all those persons who did not receive formal education. Under this system, the less educated, mostly young adults, disadvantaged, and/or drop out children get a range of practical/hands-on skills.

Ugandan Muslims attend religious and secular schools in most parts of the country. The need for social integration, in a multi-religious community, and the limited number of Muslim-owned schools, has compelled Muslims to attend secular schools with their non-Muslim country mates. Schools as agents of socialisation, play an important role in the construction of perceptions and social development of the adolescents. Due to their emphasis on moral uprightness, Christian religious schools have a profound impact on students' general performance and graduation rate (Altonji, Elder & Taber, 2002). Accordingly, the varying school norms have the potential of wielding a strong influence on values, attitudes, perceptions, and students' behaviours (Barrett, et al., 2007). The authors argue that religious and secular schools shape public religious expressions as well as private devotional activities of the students. Normally, students strive to conform to accepted school norms. Such schools, which

are either government or privately-owned are distributed all over the country and are found either in rural or urban areas of residence. Generally, lifestyles in those rural-urban settings are relatively different in many ways. Accordingly, the rural-urban set ups and types of schools attended by the Muslims might exert some influence on their social reality perceptions.

Regardless of the viewers' socio-economic status, family religious composition, level of interaction with Christians, type of schools attended, rural-urban background, level of religious commitment, and familiarity with witchcraft, they tend to watch the films with the intention of learning something. One of the few studies on Nigerian films in Uganda by Marshfield & van Oosterhout (2006) indicated that most Ugandan film enthusiasts consider Nollywood films to be educational in nature mainly due to the fact that the films teach them some useful things in their lives.

Interestingly, even when media critics and Nigerian regulatory authority have criticized Nollywood for emphasising the negative themes and appealing to the lowest common denominator, Nigerian film viewers still tend to highly approve of the Nigerian films (Akpabio, 2007). For a certain section of viewers, Ukah (2003) argues that, they interact with the Nigerian films with the purpose of learning various moral values embedded in those films. Nevertheless, the films' potential to educate its viewers about certain social, marital and domestic issues often compel husbands to become reluctant to allow their wives to watch films in makeshift video halls for fear of learning, and/or importing presumed bad behaviours (Marshfield & van Oosterhout, 2006).

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

George Gerbner, the brain behind cultivation theory, regards television, upon which the theory was conceived, as an overriding force in modelling contemporary society (Griffin, 2009). Due to its dominant power, television as a medium that transcends the barriers of space and time, supplies a large amount of shared images and messages across history and shapes the environment in which people survive and relate (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan; Signorielli, and Shanahan, 2002). Similarly, in advancement of the same argument, Signorelli & Morgan (1996) emphasised that as a basis for common images, and information since its invention, television plays a significant role in our mediated society. Hence, an increase in viewership has made television to become a continuous and collective learning environment. It has the potential of telling the world about several issues including good, and bad; powerful, and weak; success, and failure; and society generally through film, video or dramatised entertainment (Signorelli & Morgan, 1996). Therefore, understanding television should not be confined to its function as an entertainment medium. Rather, television should be broadly perceived as a medium with the potential to communicate, and cultivate norms, rules, and values of a society (Henderson, 2007).

By and large, videos or films which form part of the television experience are watched through broadcast, cable and satellite television or video cassette players, and DVDs. These films contribute to impressions, perceptions, and stereotypes of viewed characters. Accordingly, it is recommended that films should be included in studies analysing the influence of television on viewers' perception of reality because they have the potential of defining a culture's valuation of mutual communal roles, practices and ways of thinking that progressively turn out to be internalised overtime (Burdette, 2006). Through inference or association, these films define why things

happen, and how they occur. Khan (1991) explains that such a role-model role is “presented in a powerful and perhaps consistent symbolic system and pattern of rewards and punishments, power relations and valuations that are vicariously learned, adopted, identified with, and internalised as the norms of a given culture”.

Films such as those produced in Nigeria have so far become one of the most accessible forms of entertainment in many parts of the world. Their popularity is evidenced in the manner in which broadcast television stations in countries like Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe schedule varying hours of Nigerian films throughout the week (Osei-Hwere & Osei-Hwere, 2008). Nigerian films have spread in many different forms making them an affordable entertainment on small television screens, and makeshift video halls. In some parts of Africa, they are projected as images on large screens in ultra-modern cinema halls, and sold cheaply in form of video tapes, DVDs, and VCDs. They are also rented out to potential, and interested middle class clientele of small video clubs around big, and small cosmopolitan towns in most parts of the African continent and the Diaspora (Ogunleye, 2003).

In spite of their popularity, those films by and large symbolise the Nigerian culture, represent values embedded in their society, and have a great potential of influence on an entire African population (Onuzulike, 2007). These films explore conflicts between the traditional ways, and the challenges of contemporary living, and feature variations in lifestyles to be found in urban and, rural areas. They also offer a contrasting set of values that the viewer may have to choose from. These possible cultural differences in the concept of entertainment must continue to arouse scholarly interest if the effects of Nollywood on other communities are to be understood (Esan, 2008). Consequently, the dominance of morality accounts, and the pervasiveness of

occult practices in a society, commonly referred to as witchcraft, coupled with evangelical entertainment films make research into this area a necessity.

In view of the above, Nigerian films present a very fertile ground for research. Onuzulike (2007) argues that Nigeria is Africa's model nation state in modern times. Therefore, her impact on the other African cultures, specifically exercised through the dominance of the Nigerian film industry, which is an exceptional means of communication and social transformation, cannot be underestimated. Surprisingly, this dominance is not reflected in scholarly works about Nollywood. On the other hand, Meyer (2005) indicates that, inspite of Nollywood's increasingly growing popularity across the African continent; there has been unexpectedly little attention for empirical or theoretical explorations of the relationship between film and religion. In the same vein, Okome (2007) believes that the Nigerian film industry is in dire need of more academic thought, and that scholars and society have not yet acknowledged the significance of this industry. In particular, it is argued that, the cultural value of the Nollywood and the outstanding patronage it has stimulated all over the world necessitate very careful investigations, while taking into account the interchange between the films' forms of representation and the narration of cultural values (Ukah, 2003).

Inspite of the films' rich research potential, as noticeably demonstrated above, academics have failed to bring the Nigerian film knowledge into play (Haynes, 2009). Haynes argues that there is need for more studies of Nigerian films as "prolongations, or possibly betrayals of specific cultural traditions, as interventions in specific local debates or histories". It is upon this background that the present study explores the potential impact of Nigerian dramatised entertainment on the construction of social reality perceptions of Ugandan Muslim audiences.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study focused on finding answers to the following research questions:

1. Does exposure to Nigerian dramatised entertainment influence social reality perceptions of Muslim audiences?
2. Are the effects from exposure to Nigerian dramatised entertainment on social reality perceptions moderated by any variables?

### **1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

In line with the above stated research questions, the study envisaged the following objectives:

1. To study the influence of Nigerian dramatised entertainment on social reality perceptions of Muslim audiences.
2. To investigate whether the effects of Nigerian dramatised entertainment on social reality perceptions of Muslim audiences are a function of moderator variables.

### **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Of the communication theories, cultivation theory addresses the cumulative impact of television. This theory has highlighted certain communication aspects related to television viewing and films, relative to other theories. It also provides a framework for a better comprehension of the long term media effects through research findings that imply that the mass media provide a small but major consequence on viewers' social reality perceptions (Riddle, 2007). Similarly, cultivation theory allows researchers to establish some of the effects of long term television exposure on viewers (McDonnel, 2006). Nevertheless, cultivation theory has also been one of the