

Nollywood and Nigerian Seventh-day Adventists: A Critical Analysis

Part 1: Theoretical Framework

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ABSTRACT— Some television contents, as well as the amount of time spent in viewing them, may present a subtle avenue for the deceptive efforts of the devil, by distracting us from focusing on issues that lead us into the pathway of salvation. This paper is the first in a series, in which this discourse is contextualize within the Nigerian home videos, highlighting the challenges they pose to the Nigerian Seventh-day Adventists regarding some of our key beliefs. The aim of the present paper was to develop a theoretical framework to situate the arguments in the subsequent papers that follow. The current paper also presents the results of a questionnaire survey carried out among 273 members in 3 Nigerian Seventh-day Adventist churches during the month of January 2010 to assess the use of Nigerian movies among Seventh-day Adventists. The results from the analysis of this data indicate that the use of these movies is highly prevalent among Seventh-day Adventists, especially among the younger age group. More frequent use of these movies was seen among those less engaged in the church, either through their attendance to church activities or not holding any church office. These groups of church members represent an opportunity for the church to create an environment within the church that will find them spiritually engaging. Disproportionate use of our daily times for movie watching may displace our times to engage in other well-meaning activities that will

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help us to grow spiritually, especially in the light of the evil days we live.

Keywords: Television, Nigerian home movies, Seventh-day Adventists, Nigeria, last days, Seventh-day Adventist beliefs

I. Introduction

By all indications, there is no doubt that we are living in the last phase of earth's history. As Seventh-day Adventists, this fact does not only lie at the heart of our mission, but tells the most stories of our background as a church: a people with the end-time message for this generation. However, a sober paradox is that we seem not to demonstrate an earnest spiritual readiness that matches the trends of our times. In his article, Jang (2009) very well noted our present dwindling attitudes toward the Second Coming of Christ. It seems that, while we wait for the Second Advent Christ, we fail to "watch" as the Bible encourages (Matthew 25:13).

Although the deceptive skills of the devil have remained as subtle as ever, our world today is witnessing more perilous times than before. We are enveloped with much rationalization, at a time when truth and falsehood seem to lie in a continuum, so that it sounds almost abnormal to categorically say "this is true" or "that is false". Rather, expectations in these days are that what is true or false ultimately "lies in the eyes of the beholder," or it is something that lies within one's personal domain, so that no one should tell you what is right or wrong but yourself. It is no doubt that it is at such times that we need to turn our eyes upon the Word of God, praying fervently for the spirit of discernment to guide our lives.

Our ability to overcome the temptations we face lies first of all on our ability to identify the avenues of our warfare, through the power of the Holy Spirit. The present analysis presents a series of papers, in which it is contended that one of the major subtle avenues the devil has intensified his efforts to deceive many in these days and, possibly, "the very elect", is through the contents of the variety of television programs we get exposed to, and the amount of time we dedicate to watching such programs. This proposition is not a new one. Many have called our attention to this truth in the past, and there are constant current reminders in this direction (Fore, para. 3; Orthodox Family Life, para. 17; Sigman, 2005, p. 1ff). However, our attitudes

today seem to indicate that we may be well loosing our attention on the “way-marks” (Jeremiah 6:16).

To state more clearly, the aim of this series of articles is to explore and highlight the challenges posed by exposure to television contents on some selected biblical beliefs as Seventh-day Adventists. This discourse is situated within the context of the trend observed in the Nigerian movie industry, arguing that several contents as depicted in these so-called home videos challenge some of our beliefs and can lead an unwary soul astray; thus our attention is called to these trends. These articles also highlight the fact that the amount of time we devote to these movies may displace our time for the study of the word God, thereby denying ourselves the opportunity to grow in grace. In the present paper, which is the first in the series, the aim is to develop a theoretical framework and background that will guide subsequent presentation of the other papers that follow. In addition, the results from a structured questionnaire survey conducted in selected Seventh-day Adventist churches in Nigeria to assess the attitudes of Seventh-day Adventists towards the use of these movies are also presented. In highlighting these results in this first paper, it is hoped that they will serve as a guide to the discussions in the subsequent papers. In the papers that will follow after this, the following topics would be addressed, in that order, as being presented in these movies, critically analyzing them from the Seventh-day Adventist perspective: 1. the state of the dead and life hereafter; 2. poverty, misfortune, and human sufferings; and 3. divine reward and retribution.

II. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The primary motivation to pursue the line of argument in this series of papers (that is, on the fact that the continuous exposure to the Nigerian home videos that touch on the selected Seventh-day Adventist beliefs may negatively affect our perception and appreciation of these beliefs) resulted from personal critical observations and analysis of Nigerian home videos over time. However, such personal inclinations may remain hypothetical and isolated if not concretely based on issues that factually raise problems within the confines of the church. Therefore, this section of the paper is intended to develop a theoretical framework within the context of the study hypothesis that would establish the road-map to base the

issues raised in this series and situate them as potential challenges within the church. In other words, this section of the paper attempts to present the theoretical background that explains the effects of television viewing on human behaviors. Subsequent to establishing this theoretical premise, and contextualizing it to the points of discourse, a review of some previous studies that have analyzed the effects of television viewing on human behaviors would be undertaken.

A. Theoretical Framework

Historically, the hypotheses on the effects of the communication media, television viewing in our present context, on human behaviors have been motivated by the conceptual framework of social learning theories (Bandura, 1977, p. 1ff; Huesmann, 1986; Bandura, 1994; Huesmann & Miller 1994; Andersen et al, 2001). In this respect, it is contended that what we see affect us, consciously or unconsciously, and could sustain some cumulative influences on our thought patterns and actions. These effects could be positive or negative. On the positive spectrum, it is argued, for instance, that the media possesses some excellent “potential for expanding the horizons of the young and for offering powerful new tools for teaching and learning” (Andersen et al, 2001). With these potentials, many educators welcomed the idea that television could serve as an engaging informational platform for learning. Thus several educational programs have been developed in this regard, especially targeted at young people. It suffices also to add here that television has undoubtedly remained an invaluable tool for the furtherance of the gospel during the last half a century. The negative effects of television viewing were outlined to include corruption of values; decline in taste, morality, social engagements, self-discipline, and learning; and instigation of passive engagement that can lead to addiction. In addition, more concerns about television viewing was that it captured excessive amount of time and interest of the viewers; time which otherwise could have been spent more constructively (Andersen et al, 2001). Although these theories have been developed regarding television use by young people, they nonetheless remain strongly applicable to adults. Even though children and adolescents remain the most vulnerable groups at higher risk of having more sustained effects of television, we, however, base our arguments in this paper

on the generalization of these effects to adults as well, especially as it affects our spiritual taste.

Within the sphere of these theoretical underpinnings, there are two schools of thought. On one hand, it is contended that it is the contents of the television programs we view that may be of more important concern (Andersen et al, 2001). According to this theoretical leaning, depending on the content of a television program, viewers are likely to behave in accordance with what they watch (Andersen et al, 2001). As Andersen and colleagues (2001) elaborated, “content-based theories predict that programs providing educational messages and displaying models of appropriate behavior should have a positive impact on those who view them and that exposure to inappropriate, misleading, and antisocial messages should have a negative impact.” When the actions displayed on television are seen as a realistic reflection of the world, viewers have greater tendencies to incorporate and act on them. They are also more likely to identify with media characters they like and tend to act like such characters (Andersen et al, 2001). Continuous and repeated viewing of television contents, according to Huesmann (1986) and Huesmann & Miller (1994), may lead viewers to cumulative long-term effects since existing scripts, in the process of time, would always be retrieved, rehearsed, solidified, and expanded. Bandura (1977) explained that the main effects of learning from viewing are attention and retention (pp. 24-28). Thus, on exposure to television contents, information is stored in the memory of the viewers and is stored there, even in the absence of any behavioral manifestations of any actions, until some cues in the environment, or from the individual revives them, thus motivating viewers to express those actions.

The second school of thought within social behavioral theories related to television viewing concerns the amount of time spent watching television programs. The proponents of this line of thought believe that regardless of its content, “television as a medium has effects on time use, physical activity, attentional or other cognitive skills, and intellectual effort, in part because of television’s inherent audiovisual properties” (Andersen et al, 2001). The basic tenet in this proposal is that of time displacement, such that “television viewing displaces or takes time away from such intellectually demanding activities as reading or homework, creative and imaginative activities, physical activity, and social interaction” (Williams 1986; Koolstra & van der Voort 1996; Andersen et al, 2001). Therefore, time spent watching television programs directly displaces or causes a reduction

of time that should have been used for other concurrent activities. An expanded viewpoint to this hypothesis argues that television viewing is chosen as a default when viewers find no readily available alternative activities to engage in or when other activities available are not of interest (Andersen et al, 2001).

Albeit, the above theories were originally developed to understand the effect of television viewing on social behaviors, their underlying principles, nevertheless, can be safely extrapolated to issues related to religious beliefs and spirituality. According to the *Orthodox Family Life*, “television's success in developing un-Christian world views may be more crucial than its immediate impact on behavior and attitude”(para. 17). On this basis, it would be sound to hypothesize within the context of the present paper that, on one hand, viewers’ repeated exposure to television contents that contradict their biblical beliefs may in the long-run lead to conflicting or unconvincing perception of such beliefs. On the other hand, we can also safely assert that viewers’ continuous movie viewing would displace their time to engage in other spiritually-enriching activities, for example, less time to study their Bible, lack of meaningful prayer time, and irregular attendance to church programs. Adding these perspectives together, the cumulative resultant effect of television viewing would be a person with a dwindling spiritual life, with lack of interest in spiritual matters. On the strength of these hypotheses, which in our views are soundly valid, based on the views of the underlying theoretical frameworks which have been confirmed in several studies (which we shall subsequently review in the next section), we believe that repeated exposure of Seventh-day Adventists to Nigerian home videos that touch and contradict our key beliefs may lead to the stated negative effects.

B. Review of Previous Studies on Effects of Television Viewing

Motivated by the above theoretical framework, several studies have investigated the effects of television viewing on a spectrum of human behaviors, especially among young people. In this section, we present a brief review of some of these studies. One of the land-mark studies in this area was the one conducted by Andersen and colleagues in 2001 in which they examined the long-term effects of television viewing on 570 adolescents in the United States whose television use was studied as preschoolers. The children were followed up to assess whether the content of television programs they

viewed as preschoolers influenced their academic performance, leisure reading, creativity, aggressiveness, participation in extra-curricular activities, use of alcohol and cigarettes, and on their self-image during adolescence. Their results showed that adolescents who viewed educational television programs during their preschool age had higher grades in school, read more books, placed more value on achievements, had greater creative abilities, and were less likely to be aggressive (Andersen et al, 2001). Other studies have also shown that watching educational programs may predict better academic abilities and imaginativeness of children (Thakkar et al, 2007).

To assess the contribution of television viewing on the rising current violent behaviors in our societies, there have been findings from several studies indicating that, as children are exposed to watch more violent television programs, they tend to become more aggressive and more likely to exhibit negative social behaviors (Hearold, 1986, pp. 65-133; Paik and Comstock, 1994; Bushman and Anderson, 2001; Bickman and Rich, 2006). As a model to explain the reason for this trend, Bickman and Rich (2006) investigated the association between television viewing and social isolation among children, reporting that viewing violent programs was associated with reduced time spent with friends. Therefore, since aggressive behaviors have been associated with peer rejection, increased aggression resulting from viewing violent programs may prompt friends to reject and isolate the aggressive child. Interestingly, it has also been shown that exposure to violent television contents during early life does not only influence behaviors of the child during childhood and adolescence but goes a long way to predict aggressive and violent tendencies even during adulthood (Huesmann and Miller 1994, pp. 153-186).

Television viewing has also been associated with other behaviors, such as racial and sex-role stereotypes (Zuckerman and Zuckerman, 1985), poorer health for example obesity (Zuckerman and Zuckerman, 1985; Van Zutphen et al, 2007; Leonard et al, 2008). An important explanation to the effect of poor health behaviors resulting from television viewing is indicated in results from studies showing that television viewing influences and predicts children's consumption of fast foods and the tendencies to make poorer choices of other unhealthy foods (Jeffery et al, 1998; Taveras et al, 2006; Utter et al, 2006; Todd et al, 2006). The effect of television on obesity, as may also apply to other behaviors, is not limited to children, but it has been shown that exposure to such television contents during

childhood can predict obesity as well up to adulthood (Viner et al, 2005). Among the several socio-economic and socio-demographic factors that have been shown to influence television use by young people (such as parental education, parental income, the family environment, etc), several studies show that parental television viewing (both content-wise and the amount of time spent) remains the greatest independent factor determining the patterns of children's television use (Barradas et al, 2007; Kourlaba et al, 2009). Having television in children's bedroom has also been shown as another important factor in the home environment influencing children's and adolescents' television viewing (Van Zutphen et al, 2007).

III. A Brief Background to the Nigerian Movie Industry³

Starting from the 1990s, there has been an unprecedented boom in the Nigerian movie industry (Wikepeida, par. 1). Prior to this time most movies watched by Nigerians came from the US, Europe, Japan, China, and India (Owens-Ibie, par. 17). Now Nigerians are proud for the ability to produce that which they can totally call their own, through which several cultural values and societal issues can be transmitted (Owens-Ibie, par. 9). At present, the Nigerian movie industry, fondly called Nollywood, is the world second leading movie industry by the number of films produced each year, after the Indian Bollywood (Wikepeida; UN News Service, May 5, 2009, par. 1, 2). It is no wonder that the impact of the Nigerian home videos is felt in most African countries and beyond (Wikepeida, par. 11). In general, one could affirm that so far the Nigerian movie industry has witnessed profound successes in every segment.

However, a critical look into this rapid growth will demonstrate some laxities that are not easily identified by a casual observer, especially the current drive for monetary gain. In the words of Owens-Ibie, "this boom has caused a general drop in quality and fuelled intense competition to promote their commercial appeal." (par. 1). As Time Magazine analyzes, "that quality is often sacrificed to rapid turnover almost doesn't matter. A typical video is shot in two

³ To our knowledge there were no accessible published sources on the historical background and developments in the Nigerian movie industry. Therefore, most of the sources used in this section were mainly unpublished electronic sources, in addition to our personal knowledge of some of these developments.

weeks and offers terrible acting, unimaginative shots and volume jumps between cuts.” (par. 2). Several influences have detected the trend in the performance of the Nigerian home videos. During its starting time most productions were inspired by the contextual structures of the Nigerian context and some specific societal issues. However, the seemingly drive to project a Nigerian cultural heritage has not always materialized, rather “quite a number of them offer stereotypes which give a slanted view of Nigerian cultures” (Owens-Ibie, par. 48).

In recent times, there seems to be a noticeable paradigm shift towards a resemblance of the American Hollywood, a quest which is greatly informed by the belief that Nigerian movies seem to enjoy a wide global reception, so it stands the chance of competing with its contemporaries. However, a critical assessment of the quality of such productions seems to indicate a major concern, especially considering that many of the actors are only talented in the business but not trained professionals in the career. The motive to compete with their peers in other contexts is also reinforced by the portrayal of some issues which have no contextual relevance to their primary audience, thus the Nigerian audience, being mostly uncritical of the contents of these shows, is forced to accept issues that do not reflect their present daily experiences nor are the contents of such shows expected to present relevant issues in the Nigerian life in the nearest future. As Owens-Ibie notes, “the middle ground between commercial consideration which is primary and other secondary consideration, including culture, yield products which neither please local people nor are strong enough to break significant grounds with overseas audiences” (Owens-ibie, par. 53). Some societal ills have also been of a recent trend in most movies, e.g. smoking, sex, fraud, violence, and wealth, etc., “which are designed to entertain excite, provide escapism and appeal to the emotions” (Owens-Ibie, par. 47).

The growth in the Nigerian movie industry is evident. However, as pointed above, these developments apparently present also some noticeable negative trends, at least as far as not reflecting issues that concern the Nigerian people and positively shape their everyday experiences. It is only with a critical mind that one can identify and confront such negative issues contained in some of these movies. Conversely, it is worth noting that most Nigerian viewers lack the critical ability to identify the issues that subtly may be deceptive to them. On this note, it is indispensable that there should be a good forum to sensitize viewers to be aware of such trends; else unwary

souls may be led astray on continuous exposure to some of these movie contents. So far, there is a scarcity of such forums within the Nigerian context, particularly within the Nigerian Seventh-day Adventist community. This is the objective the present study pursues: to attempt to fill this vacuum. By bringing our attention to these subtle and tempting distractions and the challenges they pose to our spiritual growth, church members would undoubtedly develop the needed critical and selective attitudes towards viewing these movies. In addition, the timely exposition in this paper may serve as a motivating informational tool for local church leaders to stimulate discussion forums within their churches on the issues to be raised in this series of papers.

IV. Study Methodology

A. Movie Database

Between December 15, 2009 and January 15, 2010, The Internet Movie Database [(IMDb – www.imdb.com), which is a major online listing of movies by countries] was carefully searched for Nigerian movies, especially focusing on the pre-established themes of interest to be explored in these papers (i.e. themes related to the state of the dead and the life hereafter; poverty, misfortune, and human sufferings; and divine reward and retribution). Altogether 2,833 titles of Nigerian movies were listed in this database, although it was observed that this listing is not exhaustive of all Nigerian movies as some movies were not listed in the database. This might be as a result of how often the database is updated, some information was not available at the time of the search. In any case, this database represents a more comprehensive and reliable list of Nigerian movies. The aim was to examine the frequency of occurrence of the themes we set out to explore within the pool of these movies. To ascertain the content of each of the movies, attention was basically given to their titles and also by reading through the preview that accompanied their listing. However, where the titles and preview of the movies did not give a clearer view of their contents, a quick view of their contents was done using Youtube (the most widely used online medium for sharing video contents – www.youtube.com). After the search, the movies that fell into each of the themes of interest were grouped

together and are being carefully studied to extract the messages they intend to communicate, which would be analyzed in the subsequent papers.

B. Questionnaire Survey

To assess the use of Nigerian movies among Seventh-day Adventists in Nigeria, a structured questionnaire survey was carried out. First, a purposeful sample of three Adventist churches (1 cosmopolitan-urban church and two countryside churches with different membership background in terms of language and culture) were selected for the survey, with the intention that the three churches would constitute a representative sample of the majority of the Nigerian Adventist community in most important characteristics, especially with regard to the use of Nigerian home movies. Secondly, using a convenient sampling strategy, 320 members from the three churches were given the questionnaires, which contained information briefly describing the objective of the survey, the voluntariness of participation in the survey, and instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. The participants received the questionnaire after routine church services, took it home, filled at their convenience, and returned it to each center coordinator at an agreed date. The survey was carried out in each of the churches during the month of January 2010. The questions asked in the questionnaire included information on basic background and demographic characteristics of the participants, their current and past roles in the church, and questions about their patterns of use of Nigerian home videos. The overall participation rate in the survey was 85% (i.e., 273 out of 320 questionnaires were returned).

C. Statistical Analysis

For the analysis of the questionnaire data, descriptive data was first of all presented by computing the frequencies of selected relevant studied variables. Then, using Pearson Chi-square test, the relation of the most important background characteristics of the study population to their patterns of use of Nigerian home videos was studied. Statistical significance derived from the Chi-square test was defined as a two-sided P -value < 0.05 . All statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 15).

Table 1. Characteristics of the participants to the questionnaire survey and their relation to their use of Nigerian home videos

Characteristics	Frequency (<i>N</i> = 273) <i>n</i> (%)	“Yes” answer to the question: “watch Nigerian movies?” <i>n</i> (%)	<i>P</i> -value for χ^2 test	Watch Nigerian movies more than 3 times a week <i>n</i> (%)	<i>P</i> -value for χ^2 test
Sex:			0.746		0.659
Male	171 (63)	160 (94)		31 (20)	
Female	102 (37)	95 (93)		24 (25)	
Age:			0.013		0.841
< 25 years	105 (38)	103 (98)		21 (20)	
25-35 years	87 (32)	82 (94)		18 (23)	
>35 years	81 (30)	70 (88)		16 (23)	
Level of education:			0.005		0.647
Secondary school Education or less	144 (53)	138 (97)		34 (25)	
University degree Graduate	105 (38)	98 (93)		18 (19)	
Others	24 (9)	19 (79)		3 (15)	
Occupation:			0.043		0.808
Self-employed	22 (8)	20 (91)			
Civil servant	76 (38)	69 (91)		6 (30)	
Student	135 (49)	131 (98)		14 (21)	
Others	38 (14)	33 (87)		29 (22)	
Missing	2 (1)			6 (19)	
Years since baptized:			0.324		0.156
<5 years	78 (29)	76 (97)		17 (22)	
5-10 years	71 (26)	88 (94)		17 (26)	
11-20 years	61 (22)	55 (90)		6 (11)	
>20 years	50 (18)	46 (92)		10 (22)	
Missing	13 (5)				
Currently holds any church office:			0.863		0.002
Yes	138 (51)	129 (94)		18 (14)	
No	134 (49)	125 (94)		37 (30)	
Missing	1 (0.4)				
Held any church office during the past 5 years:			0.644		0.019
Yes	141 (52)	131 (93)			
No	123 (45)	116 (94)		21 (16)	
Missing	9 (3)			33 (28)	
Attendance to Sabbath worship:			0.437		0.011
Regularly	240 (88)	226 (94)			
Occasionally	32 (12)	29 (91)		46 (20)	
Missing	1 (0.4)			9 (32)	

Frequency of attendance to other church programs:			0.614	0.014
Regularly	176 (64)	164 (93)		27 (17)
Occasionally	95 (35)	90 (95)		27 (30)
Missing	1 (1)			
Watches Nigerian movies:				
Yes	255 (93)			
No	17 (6)			
Missing	1 (0.4)			
Frequency of watching Nigerian movies:				
Once a month	50 (18)			
Once a week	79 (29)			
Two to three times a week	69 (25)			
More than 3 times a week	55 (20)			
Missing	20 (7)			

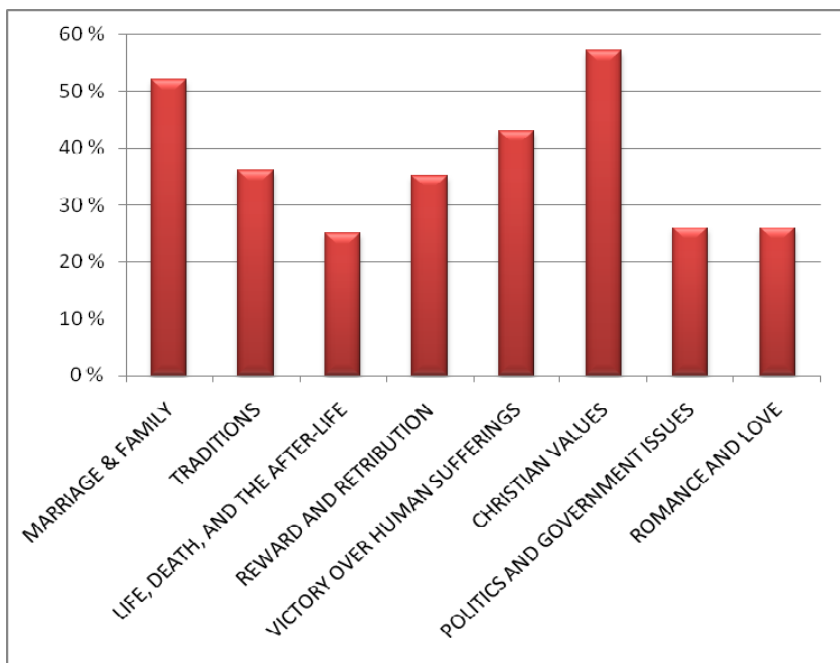


Figure 1. Proportion of the respondents indicating their preferred choices of movie categories.

V. Results

Altogether 273 Adventist church members responded to the questionnaire survey. Of these, 63% were males. Thirty-eight percent of them were less than 25 years old, while 30% were more than 35 years old. Majority of the respondents (53%) had secondary school education or lower qualifications compared to 38% with a university degree. More of the respondents were students (49%). Slightly more people (29%) had their baptism less than five years ago. Those who currently hold church offices (51%) were about the same proportion as those who do not (49%); the same result was seen among those who held church offices during the last five years compared to those who did not. Most respondents (88%) attended church services on Sabbath regularly, whereas only 64% of them attended other weekly services regularly. Most of the participants (93%) said they watch Nigerian movies: of these, 18% said they watch the movies about once a month; 29% said they watch only once a week; 25% said they watch the movies two to three times a week; while 20% said they watch more than 3 times a week (these results are presented in Table 1).

Figure 1 shows the respondents' indicated choices of different categories of movies: movies about Christian values (57% of the respondents) were the most preferred category of movies watched by the participants, followed, in that order, by movies about marriage and the family (52%), movies about victory over human sufferings (43%), movies concerning traditional norms (35%), movies about politics (26%) and romance (26%), and finally movies about issues concerning life, death, and the after-life.

From the Pearson's chi-square test presented in Table 1 to assess the relation of the background characteristics of the participants to their use of Nigerian movies, the results show that those less than 25 years old ($P = 0.013$), those with secondary school education or lower qualifications ($P = 0.005$), and students ($P = 0.043$) gave a positive response to the question on whether they watch Nigerian movies or not more than other comparative groups. On the other hand, the results indicate that watching Nigerian movies more than 3 times a week was more frequent among those who do not currently hold any church office ($P = 0.002$), those who did not hold any church office during the last five years ($P = 0.019$), those who attend church service on Sabbath occasionally ($P = 0.011$), and those who attend other weekly church programs occasionally ($P = 0.014$).

VI. Discussion of Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire survey was used to assess the prevalence and frequency of use of Nigerian home videos among Nigerian Seventh-day Adventists, and in addition to ascertain the background characteristics of the participants that may influence their patterns of use of these movies. The results indicated that whereas the use of Nigerian movies is highly prevalent among Seventh-day Adventists in Nigeria, factors that may predict or influence such trend may include being in the younger age group of the church, having secondary school education or a lower qualification, and being a student. On the other hand, whereas only about 20% of the church members who participated in the survey indicated that they watch these movies more than three times in a week, it was observed that not holding any church office at present or in the past (at least during the past five years) and occasional attendance to church service on Sabbath or other weekly church activities may predict more frequent use of these movies (i.e. using them more than 3 times a week).

An important point of note from the results is that there seemed to be a probable bias towards an underestimation of the frequency of use of the movies by the respondents and their report of the preferred categories of movies they indicated. Most of the respondents indicated that they prefer watching only movies that mainly seem to portray Christian values. However, in reality one may doubt the validity of such responses, especially among the group of young people, since such may not be the most popular trend among the larger Nigerian society. An important note in this line is that movies portraying good Christian values constitute a smaller proportion of the total themes currently produced by the Nigerian movie industry. This was the case during our search of the Internet Movie Database. Thus, considering the amount of time viewers indicated that they use in watching these movies, it is unlikely that such time is spent only to watch movies that constitute the smaller proportion of the larger production. This type of bias in response is a common phenomenon in questionnaire surveys, especially when probing issues that people know are generally not acceptable within their social networks (Brace, 2008, pp. 195-207). So, the fact that members are aware of the spiritual implication of the contents of movies they watch, which they

know are not sound attitudes within the church, may influence their responses to questions probing such attitudes.

Our measure of the frequency of use of these movies (number of times per month or week) was very crude, in that the measures do not give information on the amount of time respondents used in watching the movies. Knowing the amount time used would have allowed for a good quantification of the extent of time-displacement. Despite this potential limitation, it can still be postulated that watching movies more than three times a week, which was found among twenty percent of the respondents, may indicate a near daily use. Interestingly, this trend was found more frequent among those not holding any church office at present or in the past and those who attend church service on Sabbath or other weekly church activities occasionally. In addition to these groups, higher prevalence of watching Nigerian movies was seen mainly among young people (i.e. those less than 25 years old, with secondary education, and students). It has been established that the amount of time used for watching television programs may displace the time viewers could use for other concurrent activities (Williams 1986; Koolstra & van der Voort 1996; Andersen et al, 2001).

In the present line of discussion, a disproportionate amount of time designated to watching Nigerian movies may deny viewers adequate amount of time that should be devoted to both personal times for spiritual growth and times for other church activities. However, an expanded important argument underlying the theoretical framework of the effect of time spent viewing television programs on human behavior underscores that viewers may choose to spend excessive amount of time viewing these television programs when there are no other readily available activities to engage in or when available activities are not interesting (Andersen et al, 2001). This argument seems to agree with the results from the present study, which reveal that those who do not hold any church office or those who do not maintain a regular attendance to church activities represent the group that may be prone to spend quite excessive amount of time viewing Nigerian home videos, while young people may watch more of these movies. Whether such amount of time spent in watching these movies results from lack of interesting programs within the church or as a result of the influences of the social environment surrounding these groups of church members, may be hypothetical, and may need further exploration. In any case, this finding presents an opportunity for the church on the groups that may need more church care, through

establishing programs that are not only interesting and engaging so that every young person and those without any activity within the church find something within the church to engage in but programs that are also intentionally targeted at countering the negative societal influences that surround church members. One such environmental influences noted in this study was that, despite the fact that some respondents do not buy nor borrow these movies, they indicated that they watch them since they are regularly shown on their television.

VII. Conclusion

So far in this paper, and the subsequent ones that will follow, the aim has not been to condemn or discourage watching Nigerian movies as Seventh-day Adventists. However, the paper sets out to highlight the fact that, considering that television viewing is one of the subtle avenues the devil may well stand to deceive many in these last days, Seventh-day Adventists ought to be prudent in the contents of movies they watch and the amount of time they spend in watching these movies. This line of observation was succinctly stressed in the theoretical framework explaining the effects of television viewing on human behaviors which were reviewed in this study, facts which were also supported by the results reported in previous empirical studies in this area. As the results from the questionnaire survey used in this study indicate, watching Nigerian movies is highly prevalent among Nigerian Seventh-day Adventists, more so among young people. More frequent use of these movies was seen among those less engaged in the church, either through their attendance to church activities or not holding any church office. These groups of church members represent an opportunity for the church to create an environment within the church that will find them spiritually engaging. Disproportionate use of our daily times for movie watching may displace our times to engage in other well-meaning activities that will help us to grow spiritually in the light of the times that we live. The present paper is the first in a series. In subsequent series, the aim is to give a critical analysis of the challenges Nigerian home videos pose to the Seventh-day Adventist in the light of some selected Adventist beliefs.

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