

UKALA'S FOLKISM AND THE POETICS OF PERFORMANCE SPACE

Canice Chukwuma Nwosu

*Department of Theatre and Film Studies
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria
+234(0)8037415046, nwosucoc@gmail.com*

and

Njideka Ihekwoaba

*Students Affairs Department
Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri
ihekwoabanjideka@gmail.com 07036488535*

Abstract

Recently, the word theory generates controversy, skepticism and lackluster attitude among scholars any time it is mentioned in academic parlance. This trend has contributed to dearth of theories in the various disciplines including theatre. However, its centrality to disciplinary and professional scholarship makes its total negation impossible as this will amount to reduction of disciplines to mere occupations. Objectives of the study include assessing the acceptability and service of theory to practitioners, the ubiquity, viability, suitability, simplicity, fluidity and adaptability of theories by practitioners. The study evaluates Ukala's folkism to ascertain if it possesses these qualities. Hence, the preoccupation of the researchers is to interrogate the capability of Ukala's folkism to support performances on any type of theatrical space both the stage and electronic media so as to reveal the importance of this theory to contemporary theatre practice in Nigeria. Case study and content analysis approaches of the qualitative research method were adopted by the researchers for data collection and analyses. The study concluded that folkism is suitable for both stage and electronic performance and is capable of repositioning the declining live theatre culture and sustaining the gains made in the electronic media.

Introduction

Theatre experience of any kind involves space, either by entering a theatre of any kind or watching the performance on the electronic media, a spectator walks into a specific space, one that is designed to produce a certain reaction or series of responses from the audience, during and after

the performance. Hence, how space impact on the production and the audience during and after production to motivate expected audience experiences generate discourses that may be referred to as poetics of space. Thus, the impact of space on the performance and the reception of the performance space by the audience become part of the total theatrical experience that cannot be ignored. There are several dimensions that affect the audience entering into or viewing performance on a particular space for the first time; therefore, several questions need to be asked. Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones listed the following questions: How, for example, is the space entered by the audience? Do they enter through grand wide-open doors or do they climb narrow stairs? Moreover, where has the audience come from before entering this specific space? In other words, is there a space before this space? Once the audience has entered into the theatre space it becomes important to note how the space is divided. Where does the audience sit (or stand) in relation to the performance area, if such a formal space exists? (2)

Bearing these factors in mind, the importance and relationship of Ukala's folkism to theatrical space, medium and stage design concepts as they affect audience reception in modern and postmodern productions in Nigeria are examined; for it is evident that several contemporary directors are yet to utilize Ukala's folkism for productions on theatrical spaces of different media to full advantage in order to maneuver audience reactions in particular ways.

Though the researchers focused on the television medium as an electronic performance space, it is hoped that folkism will be applied to other performance spaces following the basic ideas expounded here to a fuller range of productions than those alluded to in this paper. Presentational and performative techniques of folkism conform to contemporary organization of postmodern productions that "... undertake a radical rethinking of theatrical performance at the end of the twentieth century..." (Gay McAuley, 1)

Though postmodernism is still epileptic in Africa and postmodern performances are not popular, Ukala's folkism is among the earliest performance theories that bestride modernism and postmodernism. It is hoped that utilizing Ukala's theory across the stage and electronic media will help usher in postmodern performance culture in Nigeria theatre practice. Postmodern Directors are:

...reinventing ways and means of exploring the multi-functionality of space as the essential medium of theatrical performance. . . . *Space in Performance* is a highly accessible, lucid and engaging piece of writing. It is essential reading for its exemplary theoretical and methodological approach to the study of theatrical performance as a spatial phenomenon. . . . At the same time, in its passionate support for the theatrical experience, space offers a great deal to theatre practitioners and spectators seeking to enhance their understanding and appreciation of the fascinating art of theatre." (Gay McAuley, 1)

Salient points of Ukala's Folkism reveal that Performance, as distinct from other media, is essentially a relationship between performer, spectator, and the space in which both come together. Space in Performance examines the way arenas, theater buildings, television, radio and film spaces function to frame the performance event. Folkism is not particular about any medium, but the organization of audience and practitioner spaces within the performance space must give the narrator, other performers or actors and the audience room to operate. The nature of the stage and the modes of representation it facilitates, and the relationship between the real space of the theater and the fictional places that are evoked in the story may not matter. The performer's improvisational ability facilitates the marriage of real theatrical space and allusions to fictional places.

Live performance takes place in a three-dimensional space. The study of the theatre of any period in theatre history will reveal that there has always been a constructed evolution of theatre spaces, both formal and informal. Almost in all cases, the audience member becomes part of the performance, hence, an integral part of the performance space. However, the level of involvement of the audience from one era or region to the other differs. Folkloric performances provide strong indicators that the participation of the performer and the audience are almost at the same level whether the performance space is an informal space of village path, market square, river bank or a formal space of shrine or village square or electronic space of radio, television or video. Therefore, the preoccupation of the researchers is to assess the capability of Ukala's folkism in influencing and conditioning theatre practice in the diverse theatre spaces of both the stage and electronic media.

Folkism and Space in Organization of Stage and Electronic Performances

The theoretical and methodological framework of this paper is both semiotic and phenomenological, based in part from the seminal work of Anne Ubersfeld, based on direct observation of the rehearsal process, to production and analysis of professional performances including the role of theory in these activities. The theorist in the rehearsal room has much in common with an ethnographer in the field. This is because contemporary ethnographic practice requires personal participation and observation. Hence the researchers collapsed Ubersfeld theory of performance space into Ukala's Folkism theory to arrive at a strong theoretical base for the analyses of the case studies. The theatre space is product of the interplay between stage space, gestural space and dramatic space and, according to Anne Uberseld, "it is constructed, on the basis of architecture, a (pictorial) view of the world, or a space sculpted essentially by the actors' bodies" (85). The focus of this study is therefore the theatrical space as it impacts, first of all on the performance space, and how the duo of performance space and production impact on the audience. "Ukala's folkism enables him communicate with his audience which is a mixed audience of rural, peri-urban and literate audience. Yet, this erudite scholar in his "Folkism" addresses popular concern in an assimilable manner, deciding the appropriate language in which to do so." (Nwosu, 102-103)

The emerging status of Performance studies as a discipline is obvious; hence it is still evolving appropriate theoretical methodologies. The multi-media and multi-faceted approaches adopted by the researchers engage theater and performance studies specialists, those concerned with modes of representation in contemporary and electronic culture, and students of theater, semiotics, architecture, set design, acting and performance theory. It also offers a great deal to theater practitioners as well as to spectators interested in deepening their appreciation of theater space.

Drama is drama anywhere no matter the medium of performance, thus it is the space that makes the difference, cultural space inclusive. By cultural space we mean the society that houses the performance and the performance space meaning the medium of performance. It is a truism that Ukala's motivation for the evolution of his folkism theory stems from critique of the prevalent theatre performance culture in Nigeria by Critics and Playwrights like A Bodunrin, Oyin Ogunba, Biodu Jeyifo and Bode

Sowande. (Ukala,1). These artists maintain that, there is no certitude in the process of evolving a prototype Nigerian dramaturgy. They insist that; plays written by Nigerian literary play wrights are usually unpopular among the Nigerian audience. (Ukala,1). Looking at socio-economic problems in Nigeria one will appreciate the need for Ukala's experiment with folkism. According to Ukala, these Critics maintain that the unpopularity of Nigerian plays is attributed to:

Use of foreign and "deliberately made difficult language" for average literate Nigerian and ineffectivity of the plays in tackling Nigerian socio-economic problems because:

- (i) Subject matter does not reflect Nigerian socioeconomic condition and current history and aspirations
- (ii) Aesthetic distortion of subject matter beyond local recognition
- (iii) Subject matter presented in foreign and unfamiliar manner that the generality of Nigerians may not identify with it. (Ukala,1)

Apart from these knocks given to Nigerian drama, by these Critics, Ukala is of the opinion that drama in Nigeria has shown non-totalistic drive towards evolution of new forms and genres. This is partly because of Jungian and Freudian influences on modern dramas across the globe and interplay of socioeconomic, political and religious forces in Africa.

The impact of religion is more on the pioneer playwrights like Soyinka, Kalu Uka, J.P Clark and so on as seen in the metaphysical themes of their plays. However, the acceptance of Brechtian influence by the younger generation of modern Nigerian playwrights like Ukala marks a major departure towards a relentless demonstration that man and space (his environment) are pivots upon which creativity and performance rotate. Hence, rather than wait for divine intervention, Ukala has shown in his folkism theory and plays that man can alter his unjust world on the performance space and re-construct it with his creative ingenuity. However, like the ethnographer, working in the field, Ukala achieved this feat through research and experimentation that took him back to his roots. Through observation, personal participation documentation and production as stated by Ubersfeld, he evolved the folkism theory.

Ukala offers a working definition of folkism in his theory and posits that: "Folkism is the tendency to base literary plays in the history, culture, and concerns of the folk (people in general) and to compose and perform them in accordance with the African conventions for composing and performing

the folktale (285). According to Ukala; “the African folktale is not prose, it exists only in performance before a live audience. It therefore entails dramatic phraseology, pleasant to speak and to hear; movement, gesture, impersonation, music-making and dancing, and sometimes costuming, make-up, masking and puppetry (171). Interestingly, highlights of folkism as stated by Ukala are not stage bound and therefore apply to any type of medium or performance space. The dynamism of folkism as a performance theory is appreciated more in the multifaceted attributes of its laws of aesthetic response.

According to Ukala, the laws of aesthetic response were inspired by: “the conventional responses of the narrator and the audience to folktale performance as found by researchers, such as J.P. Clark, Efua Sutherland, Ruth Finnegan and Dan Ben-Amos in different parts of black Africa (33).

The laws are eight in number:

- The law of opening
- The law of joint performance
- The law of creativity, free enactment and responsibility
- The law of the urge to judge
- The law of protest against suspense
- The law of expression of emotions: grief, fear, sympathy and scorn
- The law of ego projection
- The law of closing (33)

Ukala applies these laws in the structuring of his folk scripts like: *Placenta of Death* and *Akpakaland*. Ukala’s folkism is also effective in the performance of the folk scripts because:

- It is effective and popular among the Nigerian audience.
- The folk play unlike the other traditional performances is narrative realized in performance
- The folktale and the play are temporal (allows for creativity), mimetic, interpretative and synthetic.
- Unlike other African traditional performances, the folktale is like a play because it entails much speech.(38)

The influence of Ukala’s folkism on modern and African theatre practice cannot be overemphasized. The popularity of the folkloric tradition among Nigerian Playwrights and Directors is part of Ukala’s influence. Recently one of the foremost exponents of African postmodernism Canice Chukwuma Nwosu through the thaumaturgy of M.J.C. Echeruo’s

Dramatic Limits of Igbo Ritual and Ukala's *folkism* evolved the Mythic-Folkism African Postmodern Theory. The influence of Ukala's folkism over Nwosu's theory is obvious in the reflection of latent postmodern elements of *Folkism* in The Mythic-Folkism Theory. Though the influence of folkism is yet to be fully harnessed in the electronic space of radio, television and film media; there are fleeting moments of adherence to folkism in these areas of Nigerian Theatre. For instance, NTA *Tales by moonlight*, *Umuaka Igbo Taa*, designed and produced by Chidi Opara-Ibeleche and aired on the IBC TV now known as Orient TV Owerri and the popular Nollywood film, *Odum na Akwaeke* directed by Amayo Uzo-Philips are based on folkism. Even though, the adherence to Ukala's theory may have occurred consciously or unconsciously, the influence of Ukala's Folkism in these performances outside the stage medium; provides strong indicators about the ubiquity and versatility of Ukala's Folkism. Moreover, the successful adaptation of Ukala's folkism into film further justifies the potentials of folkism for both the stage and electronic media in Nigerian theatre practice. According to ofonime Inyang "... such repositioning within the context of Sam Ukala's effort in moving the story of *Akpakaland* from its stage orientation to a screen version," (184) remains a plus for folkism especially with regards to its versatility in the present digital age. Hence, the researchers situate this proposition within two episodes of a television performance: *Tales by Moonlight* selected for interrogation, to enable the researchers, ascertain the versatility of Ukala's Folkism across performance spaces.

Ukala's Folkism and the Poetics of Performance Space in *Tales by Moonlight*

The poetics of Performance space and media affirms that space impacts on every performance, reshaping, focusing and repositioning such performances. Theory on the other hand explains principles of performance, conventions, ideas behind the performance and general laws applied by the cast and crew. Therefore, theory combines with the impact of space to shape the performance.

The impact of any electronic medium especially television on a performance cannot be over emphasized. As a medium, television is very powerful because of the influence of immediacy, combination of visual and audio codes and its ability to create a sense of authenticity on the viewer. Folklore as stated by Ukala's folkism involves a narrator who tells a story in the presence of an audience with elaborate use of dialogue and

visual aids which the TV medium also explores extensively. C. Okezie opines that “Folktales are very easy to understand” they are presented in the language of the people, and do not have a fixed form” (24).

During the traditional era even up to colonial period, folktale performance involved a narrator who performed for a number of people from his immediate environment as audience, there was limited coverage as it involves the people within a particular environment. But the narrator communicated and made impact. It is this limitation in limited outreach in the stage folkloric performance that the electronic media folktale is building on for wider acceptance and popularity. Hence, the impact of the television space is obvious in the wider outreach and enhancing of folkloric performative technique.

Tales by Moonlight, a television programme of the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) is an archetypal electronic media folktale selected for study. The programme was introduced by the National Television Authority in the 1980’s to meet the moral and entertainment needs of children, youth and even adults through television. According to B. Gerald, "next to the home and school, I believe television has a more profound influence on the human race than any other medium of communication.” (23)

Therefore, Tales by Moonlight as a television programme has spontaneous message carrying tendency, wide coverage and estimated viewers of about one hundred million people across the Nigerian nation and even beyond. Tales by Moonlight as a contemporary electronic media folktale performance is an update of traditional folktale. This is to conform to the paradigm shift from the traditional means of information dissemination to the modern means of information that characterize the emergent electronic culture. According to Sunday Anozie "A story that is well told and well written will be understood by children for what it is worth; above all, we must remember that if children’s literature is taken as a natural language, then the children are the sole heirs and native speakers of the language" (7). Since its emergence in the Nigerian air space, Tales by Moonlight has followed the presentational and performative techniques of the folklore and researchers affirm that its high impact on the citizenry derives from the folkloric tradition. Tales by Moonlight is produced in different network centres of NTA across the country. This programme despite its electronic mode of transmission exhibits all the attributes of a folkloric performance and Ukala’s laws of aesthetic performance proposed by

folkism theory. Hence, Tales by Moonlight aims to carry out the same functions of stage performed folktale: teaching, entertaining and informing the audience through the electronic space.

The electronic folkloric performance of Tales by Moonlight serves as a medium of communication through which the individual shares in the world around him and beyond his immediate environment. By means of television, millions of people partake of experiences that impart on their lives and help them survive in both difficult and progressive societies.

Like the traditional folkloric performance, the electronic version still depends on a narrator who translates words into action, using stylistic and aesthetic elements to put the message of the performance across to the audience in a specific occasion. The audience through the same art of storytelling is entertained through another performance space- the television medium. Thus, the programme has the necessary communicative values of a folkloric performance that is didactic in nature and gets across to numerous viewers. The narrator in the process communicates certain moral, cultural, social, political and religious values to the listening, viewing and participating audience. During the traditional era, folktales were recited and presented by the narrator to the audience orally, without documentation. The narrator might be parents, uncles and aunties who by this method pass these folktales on from generation to generation.

Due to the influence of the electronic culture and emergence of the electronic spaces, folktale performance takes place in new media that still hinge their performances on the theoretical propositions of Ukala's folkism. This is without prejudice to the fact that some changes take place in this transition involving stage to television adaptation. Thus, in Tales by Moonlight the narrator has folkscripts that are written and edited before presentation. The studio manager sees to the stylistic and aesthetic elements of the programme like the lighting, costume, props, and other materials for the production. He equally makes use of music, drums to convey the emotions and mood of the story as it is being performed so as to achieve the desired effect on the audience.

“The Restless Merchant” and “The Bad Deal” produced by Moonlight NTA Sokoto Network Centre, are the episodes selected for analysis. These episodes were taken from Tales by Moonlight of the Sokoto Network Centre NTA and were aired on the 27th of November 2015 by 5:30pm. The story teller in the first episode is Isyaku Abdullahi, who imitated different

voices, used dual language and dramatizations to enable her communicate to her audiences effectively.

The story started with folkism's law of opening with the Narrator employing the opening code: "Story! Story!!" Decoding it, the audience responded "Story!!!" The Narrator did this to awaken the consciousness of the audience and to further draw them into the story, The narrator employed another aspect of Ukala's law of opening "once upon a time!" and the participating audience according to Ukala responded "time time!!" The narrator aroused the interest of the audience by making use of the law of opening especially by chanting the code "Story! Story!!" Then the Narrator continued: There lived a man called Mallam Edu in a certain village. He was such a busy man and wanted to make a lot of money. Following Ukala's law of folkism this part of the story was performed with some members of the audience coming in to join in the performance. This is in line with Ukala's law of joint performance which recognizes the audience as active and participating audience. The narrator continued after the performance that:

In a bid to be wealthy, Mallam Edu forgot everybody around him including his brothers and sisters. At this point people began to complain about him and his selfish ways of life. Edu always responded by saying that business is competitive and time is precious. He placed money first before anybody even his wife and children. His friend Mallam Abasi advised him but he cared less. The narration conforms to Ukala's proposition that, the folk play unlike the other traditional performances is narrative realized in performance. Hence, the play goes into performing the narrated version after which the narrator continued:

A time came in Mallam Edu's life when he became very sick. (The story is dramatized). And the narrator moves on:

Members of his family were the only ones taking care of him. No one cared to visit him or ask how he was faring, even his other relatives. Edu was bewildered by his loneliness and he complained to his wife. Calmly, his wife reminded him of his sayings, and told him that money is not everything. When Edu was well and hearty he never visited anyone or even cared for anyone except his business and financial achievements. He deeply regretted his actions and asked God for another chance. The narrator ended the story by announcing to the audience that the story has ended. This also conforms to the law of closing in folkism. Following the law of creativity, free enactment and responsibility, while closing the

story, the Narrator asked the children the lesson they learnt from the performance which originally was not part of the story. Responding, four children mentioned one lesson each which include: “No man is an island”, “We need people around us”, “We should listen to good advice”, and “You should care for others, do not be selfish.

The second story started with the narrator opening the performance session with:

Narrator: “Story! Story!!” The audience responds with “Story”. The Narrator continued with the opening and said. “I have a story to tell you” and the audience responded:

Audience: Tell us so that we shall be happy. The opening session like in the first performance followed folkism’s law of opening before the narrator started the story which is titled “The Bad Deal” The story is about a king and his wife who lived with many differences for many years, despite their differences, the king always wear a cheerful countenance, and pretends that all is well. This is dramatized by performers with the action showing the king and his wife. The narrator also adopted the law of creativity as she adapted new experiences into the dramatization.

Contrarily, the Narrator continued, another man in the same community called Mallam Esike has a wife and they always quarrel. One day he visited the king to seek advice, when the king sighted him, he greeted him and asked after Esike’s wife, Mallam Esike replies that the woman’s attitude has become worse and he is fed up with the woman. The king advised him to divorce his wife and marry another woman with a better character. The king told him that it will save him from dying prematurely. Dramatization of the story follows. This is also in line with the law of creativity, free enactment and responsibility. The narrator continued with the story after that; informing the audience that:

Esike’s wife ran to the queen as soon as the news of the king’s verdict got to her. She told the queen the king’s verdict on her. The queen told her to ask her husband Mallam Esike to visit the queen. When Esike got to the palace, the queen requested that Esike should visit her and the king the next day, she told him to hide himself to avoid being seen by the king. The next day on reaching there, the man saw how the king was running errands for the queen and was practically serving her. The man was very surprised and he understood he has a lesser problem compared to the king.

Dramatization follows then the Narrator continued and informed the audience that:

The following day, Esike went to the king and told him of his decision to continue to marry his wife that other people are going through worse situations and still manage to smile. He told the king that he saw a man running errands for his wife which his own wife never allowed.

The king replied that as long as Mallam Esike continues to complain, he will continue to receive bad advice. The king told him that his major problem is that he likes to advertise his problems. He should learn to manage his affairs like a man, because other people have their own troubles too. Following the law of closing the narrator ended formerly with this is the end of the story. Then following the law of creativity he asked the audience moral lessons they have learnt. The following moral lessons were learnt by the audience as they were asked to contribute: “Don’t expose your problems anyhow.” Do not give bad advice to people.” “Learn to manage your problems” “Everyone has one problem or the other.”

Ukala’s Folkism on Stage and Electronic Performance Spaces: A Comparative Analyses

Folkism has been tested in stage performances, and its acceptance and popularity is no longer in doubt as seen in the performance of plays like *Akpakaland* and *Placenta of Death* mentioned by the researchers. The aesthetic makeup of stage performance comprises the presence of the performer in flesh and blood, captivation of the audience, direct retention of audience attention and the impartation of cognitive experience to the audience.

The personality of the narrator in the traditional folktale performance helps to recreate through his worldview, religious belief, experience, verbal skill and appealing voice to give his audience a fulfilling moment. Here, the audience feels the narrator’s personality in flesh and blood. They interact with the narrator physically and the audience is limited in number.

However, the strength of the television version of folktale performance lies in wider coverage, more artistic elements and use of spectacles. The two media make use of the narrator, dramatization and performers. The audiences are participating audiences. The narrator exudes such pleasant personality through his electronically controlled voice, photogenic face to hold his audience to attention in the electronic media folktale

performance. This is because television has powerful visual effects; it is the most influential of all mass media and holds its audience in rapt attention.

Folkism's laws of aesthetic performance are capable of providing support for the two performance spaces to realize their peculiar potentials. The service of Folkism to the theatre practitioner is ubiquitous irrespective of the medium used. Therefore, both in stage folktale performance and the electronic media performance, the laws of aesthetic performance are never absent. Audiences in traditional folktale performance are captivated by the aura and acting techniques of the narrator, who sometimes demonstrates the story and sings alluring songs to add beauty to the story. The narrator makes good use of his descriptive ability to create mental pictures of the story. The electronic performance also makes use of dramatization by the Narrator and members of the audience to add beauty to the narration and to captivate the audience more. The actors through skillful acting tell part of the story.

Comparatively, in the area of impartation of cognitive experience to the audience the two versions (Stage and Television folktale) teach morals and impart knowledge. They inculcate moral virtues and attributes for molding responsible members of society. C. Okezie affirms that folktales may entertain or condemn certain social vices and immoral life; the lesson is either implicit or explicit" (30). Though in stage folktale performance, the audience may be few individuals who sit in front of the narrator and maintain eye contact with him; there are spontaneous reactions from the audience as they are physically present with the performers. However, in the electronic version, there is wider coverage as it cuts across the length and breadth of the entire nation and beyond. Never the less that Eucharistic celebration experienced in the stage version is absent.

The traditional folkloric performance takes place in the open spaces sometimes in natural settings like under a tree, on moonlight nights or fire place depending on the weather, while the setting of an electronic performance is still done outside the house but it is electronically recorded and aired to the millions of viewers at home. There is audience participation in the two versions. Though audience participation in the stage version may appear more interjectory and disruptive, they are all part of the folkloric staging techniques. Tracie Uto-Ezeajuh affirms that;

...in telling a story, the narrator advances the plot, but participants typically interrupt, in order to reinforce a point, savour a moment or

delay the onset of an action. During the performance, the audience acts as both audience and chorus. (54)

Giving these similarities in staging techniques, theme, plot and goals of the stage and electronic folktale performances; difference in space cannot hinder the service of Ukala's folkism to both stage and media practitioners.

Conclusion

The researchers noted that apart from change in medium, the producer harnessed the impact of the new medium and used it to modernize the electronic folktale productions, by using dramatic language in telling the stories including the use of idiomatic expressions and proverbs. Language, humour and imagery were creatively used by the narrator in the new medium. He also employed studio facilities like lighting, the use of microphones and props. The languages used in the performances were English and Hausa. This enabled the audience particularly the children and even those at home to understand the stories properly. The actors employed their dialects in their expressions in the dramatizations and this bilingual approach added glamour to the productions. There is law of free enactment as the narrator breaks off from narration to engage the performers in the dramatizations.

The study reveals that the programme has promoted the use of local language as the actors always act in English and Hausa languages interchangeably. English has become the major language for most children in the contemporary society. Eventually, these children are the future generation so one of the aims of the programme is to teach children and even people who are not from the north basic Hausa language. This approach has helped to promote the local languages against foreign languages like English and French languages, which are being forced on children these days.

The researchers also deduced that even though, the contemporary Nigerian society is over whelmed by the craze of the moment like the Internet, Telephone, Computer, Satellite Television, Radio and other electronic media, the programme has helped to revive traditional values through folkloric stories and pass them on to the next generation, to inculcate in them sound judgment and need to choose good over evil.

The study also revealed that the audience was actively involved in the two versions (the stage and the electronic versions) by paying attention to the

narrator as the stories unfold they also interject, ask questions and answer questions. This conforms to the law of joint performance as stated by Ukala since the audiences co-performed with the narrator by listening attentively, joining the performance and answering questions when asked. However, it was also observed that the electronic version transmitted through television reaches millions of people at the same time, the audience at home and in the set of the production. But the audiences were emotionally and physically involved in the performances as they expressed their emotions through clapping, laughing, cheering and so on.

The stories selected from "Tales by Moonlight" have reduced crime and social vices among the younger generation. It is even more effective in the electronic media because unlike the stage medium, it appeals more to children and has wider coverage. Therefore, acceptable cultural norms and virtues incorporated into the plots and themes of the performance are being inculcated on the minds of the youth; to check the moral laxity of the present generation. These programmes have fostered sound moral virtues and acceptance of sound judgments. All these were achievable through the electronic transmission of these programmes across the length and breadth of the entire nation and even beyond. The programme enhances cultural transmission as its major target and is realized as a modernized folkloric performance. The myths, legends, folklores and other genre's of African oral literature are being passed on to the younger generation through the electronic medium which the youths now identify with.

Furthermore, aside cartoons, children are encouraged to watch these programmes in television instead of the craze of the moment paraded in different stations across the country. The programs have served as agents of change and character mounding for the younger generation through television.

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