

CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON: ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN CULTURE ON CHINESE AND NIGERIAN STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study explores the influence of Western culture on students from China and Nigeria, examining both the similarities and differences in their cultural adaptation and integration through the lens of globalization theory. By employing quantitative research methods, the study investigates how Western cultural elements, disseminated through global networks, are perceived and adopted by Chinese and Nigerian students in educational and social contexts. It assesses the extent to which Western culture, as a globalizing force, affects their values, behaviours, and identity formation. The findings reveal distinct patterns of cultural assimilation, highlighting the role of educational institutions, global media, and peer interactions in shaping these students' cultural experiences. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural dynamics in a globalized world, offering insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers interested in the cultural integration of international students within the framework of globalization.

Introduction

According to Ekeh (2018), culture is a construct used in an attempt to analyse and integrate events and ideals in a broad spectrum of areas of society. Jakayinka (2018) states that from a wider perspective, culture includes the total repertoire of human actions which are socially transmitted from generation to generation. Obiora (2018), says that the transformation of culture is gradual and not sudden. Culture is a continuous process of change. It changes exactly the same way as the human being changes. It is dynamic, learned, acquired, transmitted or diffused through contact or means of communication flow from generation to generation. The Nigeria culture is observed to be fading out as a result of the acceptance and adaptation of the mode mist's solution to underdevelopment.

Africa is endowed with very rich traditional art forms and cultural practices. The creation of these art forms in the African traditional societies, including present Nigeria, are inspired by ideas and thoughts, which are common to societal life (Fosu, 2018). One of such art forms is the ancient artifacts. These artistic and cultural expressions form the basis of cultural knowledge that must be protected and preserved. However, the traditional Nigerian arts and cultural practices are stuck in between the need to embrace and promote the country's unique artistic tradition and the adoption of western contemporary life styles and practices. The traditional art forms of Africa are prominent and very much noticeable as the visual vocabularies of African cultural expressions. These artistic and cultural practices have come to be frameworks of the customary visual languages that serve to identify African general and Nigeria in particular (Ross, 2018; Wolff, 2018). Demonstrations and exhibitions of Nigeria's indigenous arts are seen and exhibited in lavish performances of cultural pageantry which is carried out occasionally to mark special events and to display Nigeria's rich traditional art and cultural practices.

However, the penetration of western culture into Nigerian society has influenced many artistic and cultural practices. These western influences have one way or the other affected the very philosophical foundations upon which these cultural practices had been established. Based on these suppositions, there is a danger of indigenous cultural extinction if conscious efforts are not made to preserve these indigenous art forms and cultural practices in the future. As protectors of these treasured cultures, it is the responsibility of Africans for that matter Nigerians, the penetration to not turn away from their valuable artistic expressions but rather work towards preserving and promoting this distinctive and unique culture. Africa has remained underdeveloped regardless of being endowed with natural resources. Perhaps, this is the reason why Nigeria is one of the poorest in terms of economic development. We often follow the blueprint development models of the west thinking there is a solution to the economic ills the country has faced over many years now. This is a difficult issue that begs a very honest answer exactly from the policy makers. Many scholars have expressed different thoughts as to why this is so. The challenges of Africa being underdeveloped are a matter of concern among many of its inhabitants (Rodney, 2018).

Some theorists argue that Nigeria has on several times copied development theories from the West at the expense of their traditions and cultural identity. On the contrary, other theorists do argue that our underdevelopment is as result of exploitation of the natural resources by the West. However, there are divergent views on the notion of the dimension of development Rodney (2018). According to critics of neo-colonialism, they argued that the western culture expresses itself in the form of capitalism or globalization which advocates for liberalization and

market economy of forces of demand and supply (Amin, 2017). Global capitalism thrives on cultural imperialism overtime. This is a system of making the culture and taste of the indigenous people to look inferior to the imperialist. In the developing countries, colonial administrators, Christian Missionaries as well as Anthropologists were the main instruments of changing the ways of the indigenous people and enthronement of the Western culture which in essence was to create the desire for food, clothing, education, religion and other aspects of western culture (Igwe, 2020). The creation of this desire transformed into the demand for western products which empirically is the backbone for the expansion of markets for the finished products of these countries; and indeed the basis for the lopsided trade relationship between the west and the developing world; and the fabrication of dependency syndrome (Igwe, 2020).

The fallout of this is the internationalization of western culture, as Africans and other indigenous values were trampled upon as irrelevant, unprogressive, backward primitive, conservation, traditional and unscientific; compared to the assumed modern, civilized dynamic and scientific values of the Europeans and her allies (Igwe, 2020). This was concretized by the western education which further indoctrinates Nigeria and other developing nations to the point of unquestionable preference for the western culture as evidence in the adoption of Jewish/European names, religions, languages and the craze for western music, dances, dresses, housing, household appliances as well as diet. The situation is more pathetic in this era of globalization when information and communication technology has eliminated the national boundaries which would have reduced the domination of the local values by the predatory western values through internet, satellite television and radio (Sida, 2017). Western influence and westernization have led to the extinction of indigenous languages and cultures of many societies in the world. Nigerian cultures and native languages have suffered based on the adoption of western language (English) and values. The Chinese people have been a culturally sensitive people and they have done wonderfully well in preserving their language and cultures from going into extinction more than any country in the world.

During the past century China has undergone great changes. It could be described as a country that is balancing between preserving the past and building the future. It is “a land curiously both in the throes of dramatic transition yet somehow eternally the same” (Lonely Planet 2017: 33). An important part of this dramatic transition is the changes that the Chinese culture is going through, and how they affect the lives and minds of the Chinese people. Thus, the focus of this study is the changing cultural identity in China. More precisely, the purpose is to find out if and how the influence of the English language and the Western culture affects the cultural identity of Chinese people, as perceived by Chinese university students with knowledge of the English language. The subject of this study arose from the present world situation. The ceaselessly rising position of China on the international (economical) arena has brought forth increasing need for commerce and communication between China and the West. While Mandarin Chinese is the most spoken mother tongue in the world, with approximately 873 million native and 178 second language speakers (Vistawide, 2019), English has established a strong position as the lingua franca of the world, with only 1/3 of all English users (or 1/4, depending on who are qualified as English users) in the world being native speakers of the language (Crystal, 2016). This situation is not likely to change overnight to benefit the 1.5 billion people fluent in Chinese, and therefore the need for English-speaking capability has become evident for China as well. In fact, nowadays Mainland China holds the biggest English-learning population in the world (He & Li, 2019).

The increasing globalization of education has led to a significant exchange of cultural values and practices, particularly among international students. While the spread of Western culture has been pervasive, its impact on students from diverse backgrounds remains underexplored. Specifically, the ways in which Western cultural norms and values influence students from China and Nigeria, who come from distinct and rich cultural heritages, require detailed examination. There is a need to understand how these students navigate their cultural identities, adapt to new cultural environments, and integrate Western cultural elements into their daily lives. This study aims to fill the gap in existing research by comparing the cultural adaptation processes of Chinese and Nigerian students, identifying the challenges they face, and analyzing the role of globalization in shaping their educational and social experiences. The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide a nuanced understanding of the cultural adaptation and integration processes of Chinese and Nigerian students in the context of globalization. By exploring how these students perceive and incorporate Western cultural elements, the study offers valuable insights into the dynamics of cultural exchange and assimilation.

Literature Review

Culture

Agha, (2008) defines culture as “totality of how people live and behave”. Akama (2008) states that culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, society”. Kluchohn and Kelly (2008) described culture “as all those historically created designs for living, explicit and impact, rational, irrational, which existed anytime as potential guide for behaviours of men”. According to Otite and Oginwo (2006) culture is “the complex whole of man's acquisition of knowledge, morals, beliefs, arts, customs and technology, which are shared and transmitted from generation to generation”. Sibani (2018) posits that “culture is the entity that incorporates the totality and is synonymous with the people's way of life, transmitted from age to age, generation to generation”. Onwuekwe (2016) posits that culture is “The sum total of human creations, intellectual, technical, artistic, physical and moral. Culture is the complex part of living that directs human social life. The things each generation must learn and to which they eventually may add”. Culture distinguishes human beings from other animals, in that humans are able to construct patterns of behaviours for themselves, and are able to transmit this from person to person and through generations. The study of culture is the key component of sociology along with the associated notion of socialisation and of social anthropology.

Western Culture

Western civilization and culture began to creep into the African socio-cultural milieu, first, with the contact of Europeans with Africa, a consequence of the Berlin conference in the quest for imperial pilfering of African resources and, later, consolidated by the unstoppable wave of globalisation. It is important to stress that colonialism distorted and retarded the pace and tempo of cultural growth and trend of civilisation in Africa. One of the most profound consequences of colonization has been how the political and economic rape of the colonies has also led to what sometimes seem to be an unbridgeable cultural gap between the nations that were the beneficiaries of colonization and those that were the victims of the colonial assault. The era of colonial pillage and plunder led to the relative stagnation and often precipitous decline of traditional cultural pursuits in the colonies. With Africa subjugated and dominated, the Western culture and European mode of civilisation began to thrive and outgrow African cultural heritage. Traditional African cultural practices paved the way for foreign ways of doing things as Africans became fully ‘westernised’. The western culture now is regarded as a frontline civilisation. African ways of doing things became primitive, archaic and regrettably unacceptable in the public domain. Not only were certain aspects of the material culture in the colonies lost or destroyed, colonial societies also lost the power and sense of cultural continuity, such that it became practically impossible to recover the ability to strive for cultural progress on their own terms (Mimiko, 2010).

The social fabric was completely devastated and a new culture of violence was implanted. Traditional African systems of conflict resolution were destroyed and, in their places, nothing was given. The democratic process, rudimentary though it was, but with great potential as accompanies every human institution, was brutally uprooted and replaced by the authoritarianism of colonialism. A new crop of elites was created, nurtured, and weaned on the altar of violence and colonialism armed with the structures of the modern state to continue to carry out the art and act of subjugation of the mass of the people in the service of colonialism. Kasongo (2020) opined that “one could infer that when westernisation was imported to African countries, the hidden side of modernism was materialist interests. It is important to emphasise fundamentally that urgent and more decisive steps need to be taken in order to reorder and reverse this evanescent trend of cultural emptiness, without which Africa may experience seasons of cultural extinction and drought of African values. It is appalling to note that two hundred years or so of colonisation were not only destructive in terms of cultural heritage and values for which Africa was famous before colonialism but also precariously retrogressive as the continent was robbed of decades of opportunities of self-development, opportunities of self-government and, indeed, opportunities of self-styled technological developmental pace.

Conceptualising civilisation will facilitate grasp of western civilisation. Civilisation is a conceptual term. It is a totality of people's history, way of life, their expectations, their frustration, their desire, and their aspirations. It is proper in this context to talk of Chinese Civilisation, African civilisation. Civilisation is a term used to describe a particular level of improvement on the development continuum. It is also more often used as a synonym of culture. Culture, defined as “the arts, customs, habits, beliefs, values, behaviour and material appreciation that constitute a people's way of life”, is more general, more loose than civilization (Standage, 2015). Whereas civilization tends to dwell on a particular lifestyle, a peculiar way of life but culture is perceived as holistically inclusive, comprising the way of life and people's philosophy of life, the ideas they share and general attitude including creativity and production pattern. However, in its most widely used definition, civilization is a descriptive term for a relatively complex agricultural and urban culture. Civilizations can be distinguished from other cultures by their high level

of social complexity and organisation, and by their diverse economic and cultural activities. Civilization can also be used in a normative way to indicate cultural superiority of one group of countries over another. In a similar sense, civilization can mean “refinement of thought, manners, or taste” (Roger, 2019). This normative notion of civilization is heavily rooted in the thought that urbanised environments provide a higher living standard, encompassed by both nutritional benefits and mental potentialities.

Civilization requires advanced knowledge of science, trade, art, government, and farming, within a society. Western civilization, therefore, is a particular way of life, considered as superior and advanced identifiable with the people of the West. In the context of this paper, civilization can be used as a complementary concept to culture. The historical context of Westernization in Africa is the contact with Europe through Atlantic slave trade, missionary and imperialism. The forced acculturation of the black populations in the New World, already in full swing by the mid-eighteenth century, represents the first sustained assimilation of Western culture by Africans. It is significant to note the contribution that Diaspora blacks were later to make to the process of Westernization in Africa, notably through their role in Christian evangelization and education (Standage, 2015).

Western Influence and Impacts on Contemporary Chinese Culture

Westernization could also be referred to as part of globalisation; many countries believe that globalisation depicts western culture because globalisation naturally originates from them. Many western technologies, cultures and customs like dress codes, hair styles, vehicles, buildings, music, language, fashion and materialism are introduced to different parts of the world. In the 21st century, there had been so many changes in the different areas of the Chinese traditional culture and one good thing about these changes is that the Chinese people allow their cultures to exist alongside with western cultures (Otite and Ogionwo 2006).

China re-opened its door to the west in 1979; after closing it for 30 years. It is not so surprising that western style of materialism and capitalism entered China again in the 21st century. The new generation of Chinese youths sees traditional Chinese culture as being old fashioned or obsolete while western culture is accepted as the modern fashion. The American modes of doing things becomes a model to the young generation of Chinese society, and this brings a lot of transformation in the Chinese economy and lifestyle because they adopt the western values with Chinese modification. Though China has emerged as one of the strongest economies of the world and has been developing fast, it has never adopted western language to replace the mandarin. China has been very conservative about their cultural traditions and has maintained the fact that culture could be preserved using language. This leads to the fact that the Chinese language would not go into extinction due to its regular usage. However, there are some areas where western influence affects China such as:

- a) Chinese Buildings: The Chinese people adopt the American style skyscrapers with western modern architecture which signifies that they have followed the trend of modernity. Today, many cities in China could boast of a city skyline with modern designs for comfort.
- b) Chinese Weddings: Many Chinese have adopted the western form of white wedding ceremony. They see the western wedding as the modern form of wedding; while the traditional Chinese wedding is seen as the old fashion. This explains the reason why the bride uses two wedding dresses, white (formal/western dress) and red (Chinese traditional dress) on her wedding day.
- c) Language: English Language has been a major concern to the Chinese citizens; everyone desperately wants to learn and speak English in order to be associated with western modernity.
- d) Western Hair Style: Instead of the Chinese Manchu queue (pigtailed) they have adopted western hair styles and also dye hair colours.
- e) Western Dress Code: Most of the dress codes in China have been adopted from the western styles with Chinese designs.
- d) Technology: Western techniques have been adopted with Chinese characteristics.

Western Influence and impacts on Nigerian Contemporary Cultures

In Nigeria, westernization is seen as the effects of western invasion and colonization on some native societies of the world which had both positive and negative impacts. Nigerians have been westernized due to their past British colonial influence and leadership which relegated the Nigerian cultures to the background. There have been different levels of western cultural domination and destruction of Nigeria’s local customs yet there was also resistance and modification of the native Nigerian cultures (Roger, 2019). However, some of Nigeria's traditional cultures have gone into extinction as a result of western influence and impacts. There are some good and bad effects of western influence; and their influence could be traced from Nigerian colonial past. During the colonial era, the British used western education as a tool in cultivating their western religion and cultural hegemony in Nigerians. They oppressed the indigenous natives by subjecting them to western values, so Nigerian natives were forced to accept the superiority of western cultures over their own unique Nigerian culture.

Amongst the good effects of westernization are the abolition of some Nigerian cultures, like the killing of twins, slave trade businesses, the cast system and burying of people alive in the evil forest. Though western influence and British colonial rule had put Nigerian some languages and cultures into extinction; yet they have saved the lives of many people who belonged to the above mentioned categories. In the contemporary Nigerian society, western values and influences have affected almost every part of the Nigerian cultures such as:

a) Language: Many Nigerian languages have gone into extinction and are no longer in use. The English language has been adopted as the official language and has been used in educating Nigerian citizens. Many people in Nigeria are ashamed of speaking their native languages and as result of this; the new generation of Nigerian youths could not speak their languages fluently.

b) Weddings and Traditions: Many Nigerians have been converted to Christianity and some do not value their traditional values again as a result of their belief in Christianity. The western wedding has been fashioned by many people in Nigeria as the modern type of wedding and they believe that marriage is not complete without the western type of wedding. So they combine the western and the traditional wedding together.

c) Dress Codes: Western fashions and styles have been adopted as a model although some people still wear Nigerian clothes. Western wedding dresses and men's suits have been adopted for church weddings.

d) Buildings: western designs and skylines had been adopted and seen as a model for modernity.

e) Music: pop music, acrobatic movements, fashion style, dyed hair etc have been emulated from the western culture and at the same time seen as the real trend of modernity in Nigeria; anybody that is not associated with all these does not belong to the modern generation.

Causes of Culture Change

Change is an inherent aspect of culture. No culture remains static. Currently, we are experiencing social and cultural changes on a global scale. According to Uwandu and Nwankwor (2016), culture change must be distinguished from culture dynamism, which refers to just the susceptibility of culture to receive and add to itself certain other cultural values. Culture in itself grows and changes. This occurs over a period of time. Over the years, western culture has indeed accounted for a lot of changes in our culture. There has been such intense Western effort to change the status of women all over the world, most especially in Africa where it is obvious that women are lowly placed in the scheme of things when compared with their male counterparts. Western style of education has been entrenched in our African constitutions, styles of dispensing justice and politics. However, according to Christie (2014), there are diverse factors that lead to cultural change which includes:

Invention: This is a process whereby new cultural elements are created, often out of previously existing elements such as the radio, the computers, or the microchips, the telephone, each of which has had a tremendous impact on our way of life.

Discovery: It is a means whereby we recognize or gain a better understanding of already existing elements present in the environment, usually through scientific research. Recent scientific discovery involves the identification of another planet beyond Pluto and amazing discoveries.

Diffusion: It is the process through which the cultural traits of culture are transmitted to another. This can take place through trade and other forms of economic exchanges, migration, or wars. Cultural diffusion is more likely to take place and is more intense at border areas where populations of neighboring cultures are more likely to interact.

Environment: Environment is the surrounding in which a person, animal or plants lives or operates. Basically, we as people have to change to adapt to our environment. As a result, we have to change the way we react to certain situations in our culture. Popoola (2016) says that culture changes because the environment changes. When the environment is stable and does not shift, then the culture stays and is same. Culture also changes because of new found ideas that may seem more beneficial for that way of life. When a culture feels that a way of life is better than the current way then it is likely the culture will adapt to those better ways and incorporate that way into their lifestyle.

Acculturation: According to Suarez, (2013), "acculturation is a process in which members of one cultural group adopt the beliefs and behaviour of another group" (p. 92). Although acculturation is usually in the direction of minority groups adopting habits and languages, patterns of the dominant group. Acculturation can be reciprocal, that is, the dominant group also adopts patterns typical of the minority group. Assimilation of one cultural group into another may be evidenced by changes in language preferences, adoption of common attitudes and values, loss of separate political or ethnic identification. Also when alien cultural traits diffuse into a society on a massive scale, acculturation frequently is the result. The culture of the reliving society has significantly changed.

However, Onwuekwe (2016) states that acculturation does not necessarily result in a new, alien culture trait completely replacing old ones. An example of acculturation is an immigrant to America eating peanut butter, and

pumpkin pie and picking up a southern accent within a day or two. Also, when a large number of immigrants from the same country settle into a new neighbourhood. One might witness a change in the way that the people who were original residents dress or speak. Conversely, the new inhabitants may also alter their dress or speech to blend in with their new environment. According to Akama (2018), it also connotes “the constant communication between two or more distinct culture groups during which our group takes on element of the culture of the other group” (p. 18).

Shared Understanding of Western Culture

“Personal freedom, individuality, and objective thought” are highly valued in Western culture (Nisbett, as cited in Merriam, 2017, p. 22). This focus on individual has been extensively discussed and documented in the literature (Bassey, 2019; Beckloff, 2018; Chen & Mashhadi, 2018; Gunawardena, Nolla, Wilson, & Lopez-Isias, 2019; Hofstede, 2016; McGee, 2018; Walker-Fernandez, 2019).

The relationships between individuals within a society are weak and individuals are expected to look after themselves and their immediate families (Tylee, 2017). Personal interests are valued above that of a group. If there is a conflict, it is left to the individual to decide whose interests to meet first. Similar to Confucius culture, Western culture values personal achievements as well but the essential interest is still placed on individuals. To accomplish personal achievements, Western culture appreciates assertive behaviours and attempts at excelling. Not all individuals living in Western culture represent Western views, however. Euro-Americans and minorities with a high degree of acculturation from Western European and North American seem to be the ones that mostly possess Western cultural values (Anderson, Sanchez & Gunawardena, 2018); (Szilagyi, 2016). Applying Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede & Minkov, 2020), Western culture fits the description of individualism and masculinity, exhibits low power distance and weak uncertainty avoidance, fosters “pragmatic virtues oriented towards future rewards”, and is characterized as an indulgence culture that “allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun” (Hofstede 2020). Sanchez and Gunawardena, (2020) in their study of culturally diverse distance learners, highlighted the fundamental dimensions of Western culture as follows: “Emphasize individual competition; Achievement for the individual; Must master and control nature; Adhere to rigid time schedule; Limit affective expression; Nuclear family; Dualistic thinking; Religion is distinct from other parts of culture; Feel their world view is superior; and Task-oriented.

Theoretical Framework: Globalization Theory

The theory was propounded by Roland Robertson in 1992 Globalization theory explores the interconnectedness of societies, economies, and cultures on a global scale. It posits that advancements in technology, communication, and transportation have led to increased interdependence among nations. This theory is particularly relevant when examining the impact of Western culture on Chinese and Nigerian students in a comparative study. In the context of Western culture influencing Chinese students, globalization has facilitated the spread of Western values, media, and educational systems. The influx of Western ideas, often associated with individualism and consumerism, has led to cultural hybridization. Chinese students, exposed to Western ideals through international education and media, may experience shifts in their cultural identity and perspectives. Conversely, in Nigeria, globalization has opened avenues for the transmission of Western cultural elements, primarily through media and education. The influence is evident in language adoption, lifestyle changes, and the acceptance of Western norms. Nigerian students, navigating a globalized world, may find themselves incorporating Western values into their cultural framework, leading to a blend of traditional and Western perspectives. The comparative study of Western culture's impact on Chinese and Nigerian students highlights both convergences and divergences. While globalization fosters a shared global culture, local nuances and historical contexts play a crucial role in shaping how this integration occurs. Chinese and Nigerian students may selectively adopt Western elements based on their cultural backgrounds, societal norms, and personal experiences. In conclusion, globalization theory provides a framework for understanding the intricate web of connections shaping cultures worldwide. The comparative study of Western culture's influence on Chinese and Nigerian students illustrates the complexity of cultural interactions in a globalized context. It underscores the need for nuanced analyses that consider local factors, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play in the evolving landscape of global cultural exchange.

Empirical Studies

Cifuentes and Shih conducted two studies, using Chinese university students in Taiwan paired with pre-service students in the U.S. so the Americans could tutor the Chinese students to improve their English writing skills (Cifuentes & Shih, 2001) (Shih & Cifuentes, 2003). They identified some intercultural issues and phenomena in one-on-one email exchanges: the need for visual images, bewilderment of the Taiwanese students, excessive expressions of gratitude by Taiwanese students, disparate expectations, direct versus indirect writing, misinterpretations, and Chinese students' consideration of their online tutors as knowledgeable authorities,

whereas many of the American students refused to take on this role and preferred to correspond in the role as a friend. In addition, Tu (2019) also identified a few cultural factors that could affect Chinese students' perceptions of CMC, such as: the text colour used by the instructor, social relationships with the instructor and peers, face-saving and selective image, anxiety over unexpected chatting invitations (especially from the instructor), and paralanguage techniques such as emoticons and acronyms.

From the review of these few studies of Chinese students' online learning in Western universities, we can find that, although there are a few studies about Chinese students' perceptions of online learning in Western universities, research about Chinese students' participation in online learning and the cultural factors that affect their online learning in the West is still lacking. Additionally, in the two studies conducted by Cifuentes and Shih, one-on-one email exchange was the main communication method and the discussion forums in the second study were not fully used by Chinese students. Thus, these two studies could not investigate the Chinese students' participation in online group discussions. Also, the Chinese students participated in online learning from their home university in Taiwan, and the numbers of Chinese and American students were equal. Therefore, Western cultural influences were less obvious than Chinese cultural influences. As a result, these studies failed to identify cultural factors that might affect Chinese students' participation in online learning where Western culture dominates.

Gao (2015) has studied the “Self identity changes and English learning among Chinese undergraduates”. While the topic of the study is very similar to that of this study, there are some notable differences in the execution and nature of the two. The study by Gao et al. (2005) is a quantitative research, the subjects of which were 2,278 university students from 30 universities all around China. The study was conducted by a questionnaire in which self-identity changes were measured by a 5-point Likert scale (Gao, 2015). The focus of the study is, as can be detected, the subjects' identities as language learners and multilingual individuals, not their cultural identities. The effects of the English language are therefore not perceived from a cultural point of view, but from an individual point of view. The reason for their choice of focus is explained by Gao (2015) as follows:

The prominence of self-confidence change as a learning outcome might reflect characteristics of Chinese EFL context, as distinguished from ESL contexts: limited exposure to the target culture, yet very high value attached to the target language. In such a context, the impact of language learning on learners' perception of their own competence was greater than that on their cultural identities. (Gao, 2015). Nevertheless, the study offers some interesting views on how the English language affects the Chinese learners. The measured types of self-identity changes in the study were self-confidence change, additive change, subtractive change, productive change, split change, and zero change (Gao, 2015). Without further explanation of the categories, the results of the study reported the most significant change in the self-confidence of the participants (Gao, 2005). Unlike previous studies tackling similar issues, Gao et al. (2015) “viewed self-confidence as an outcome of English learning”, and not the other way around. As their major findings Gao (2015) reported that “learners' perception of their own competence was the part of identity affected most by English learning”, and that “productive bilingualism” was possible for an ordinary student to reach. The latter finding meant that “the command of the target language and that of the native language positively reinforce each other” (Gao 2015). As a factor in the shaping of the self-identity of the Chinese students, it seems that learning the English language can work as an enabling and empowering tool.

John Flowerdew, David Li and Lindsay Miller at the City University of Hong Kong in (2017) conducted a study on “Attitudes towards English and Cantonese among Hong Kong Chinese university lecturers”, the study tackles the sociolinguistic tensions created by the former British colonial regime in Hong Kong. Flowerdew et al (2017) interviewed several university lecturers to find out their attitudes towards English teaching policies in Hong Kong, and more specifically their attitudes towards using English as a medium of teaching instead of Cantonese. Cantonese is a spoken variety of Chinese that differs from Mandarin Chinese (Putonghua), the standard used on the mainland (Flowerdew, 2017). The same character-based writing system, Modern Standard Chinese, is used in both Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese. However, in Hong Kong the same traditional characters are used as in Taiwan, while in mainland China a system of simplified characters is in use (Flowerdew, 2017). In their study Flowerdew (2017) mentions that while English is the language mostly used in business, government and education in Hong Kong, Cantonese is the one used in informal social situations and is “the language of ethnic solidarity”. At the City University of Hong Kong the official language of instruction is English, although a great majority of the students speak Cantonese as their mother tongue. In their study Flowerdew (2018) found out that while most of the lecturers are in favour of the English-medium policy, they think that it should be applied flexibly and with the students' language capabilities in mind. They also stressed that English in Hong Kong is perceived as being very important for Hong Kong's international affairs, but that the language connected with the culture and ethnicity of the Hong Kong people is indisputably Cantonese.

Research Methodology

This section presents the method that will be adopted in this study, this is discussed under the following sub-headings; research design, area of the study, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, instrument for data collection, validation of instrument, method of data collection and method of data analyses. The study engaged the descriptive survey design in building up the study. The application of descriptive survey design does not involve manipulation of any variable, it has the advantage of identifying attributes or variables of a large population from a group of individuals Rahman (2012). The researchers distributed the copies of the questionnaire to the respondents at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria and Xiamen University, China with the help of 3 research assistants. The respondents were required to tick any of the options provided on each items.

Data Presentation and Findings

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the demographic characteristics of the 100 respondents involved in the study. Understanding the demographic composition is essential for contextualizing and interpreting the subsequent findings. The respondents were categorized into different age groups, shedding light on the generational representation in the study.

Table 4.2.1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage
16 years - 24 years	40	40%
25 years - 34 years	60	60%
Total	100	100%

The age distribution of respondents reflects a well-balanced sample, encompassing both younger and older individuals. This diversity is crucial for capturing a comprehensive understanding of how Western culture influences students across different age brackets. The inclusion of respondents from 16 to 34 years ensures a nuanced exploration of the impact of Western civilization on individuals at various stages of their academic and personal development. This demographic variety enhances the generalizability of the study's findings to a broader student population, contributing to the robustness and reliability of the research outcomes.

Marital Status

The marital status of respondents offers insights into the study's participants' diverse life experiences.

Table 4.2.2: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Single	90	90%
Married	10	10%
Total	100	100%

The marital status distribution among respondents indicates a predominantly single population participating in the study. This observation is significant as it suggests that the majority of respondents are in a phase of life where they may be more susceptible to external influences, such as Western culture. The emphasis on single individuals provides valuable insights into the impact of Western civilization on students who may be more open to diverse cultural influences and global perspectives. However, it's essential to acknowledge that the study's findings may be more reflective of the experiences and perceptions of single individuals, and caution should be exercised in generalizing these results to married individuals. Nonetheless, the concentration of single respondents contributes a focused lens on the specific demographic most relevant to the study's objectives, enriching the depth of analysis within this context.

Gender Representation

Gender diversity among the respondents is presented in this section.

Table 4.2.3: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	40	40%
Female	60	60%
Total	100	100%

The gender distribution among respondents is notably equitable, with an equal representation of male and female participants. This balance is pivotal in investigating whether there are gender-specific variations in the influence of Western culture on students. By including diverse perspectives from both genders, the study aims to uncover any potential variations in attitudes, perceptions, or experiences related to the impact of Western civilization. This gender-inclusive approach strengthens the study's validity and ensures that findings are more broadly applicable, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon across diverse gender identities.

Analysis of research question (Cluster I): Impact of Western Civilization

In this section, we delve into the respondents' perspectives regarding the impact of Western civilization on students, focusing on technological, political, and philosophical aspects. The findings are presented in Table 4.3.1, accompanied by total counts, percentages, and mean scores for a comprehensive understanding.

Table 4.3.1: Impact of Western Civilization on Students

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	MEAN
1	Western civilization contributed to technological advancement of the student	55	30	10	5	100	3.45
2	Western civilization contributed to political development of the student	50	35	10	5	100	3.40
3	Western civilization contributed to philosophical development of the student	45	40	10	5	100	3.35
4	Western civilization contributed to philosophical development of the student	40	45	10	5	100	3.30

The mean scores for each item were all above the cutoff point of 2.5, indicating a general agreement among respondents on the positive impact of Western civilization. Specifically, the mean scores ranged from 3.30 to 3.45, reflecting a consensus that Western civilization contributes significantly to technological advancement, political development, philosophical growth, and social integration among students. The respondents, on average, leaned towards agreement, suggesting a prevailing positive perception regarding the influence of Western civilization on these aspects of students' lives.

Analysis of research question (Cluster II): Media Influence on Student Behaviour

This table presents the analysis of the impact of media influence on the behaviour of Chinese and Nigerian students. The mean scores serve as a quantitative measure of the degree of agreement or disagreement among the participants regarding the influence of the media on various aspects of student behaviour. The interpretation of the mean scores is guided by the criterion that a mean above 2.5 signifies agreement, while a mean below 2.5 indicates disagreement.

Table 4.4.1: Media Influence on Students' Behaviour

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	MEAN
1	Heavy use of media bustudent can contribute feelings of anxiety in school	35	45	15	5	100	3.25
2	Heavy use of media by student can affect the way student talk and interact with other student	30	50	15	5	100	3.20
3	Heavy use of media can contribute to feelings of depression on student	40	40	15	5	100	3.30
4	Heavy use of media contribute to inferiority complex on the student	25	55	15	5	100	3.15

The mean scores for each item in Cluster II were above the cutoff point of 2.5, suggesting a general agreement among respondents on the impact of heavy media use. Specifically, the mean scores ranged from 3.15 to 3.30, indicating that students, on average, agreed that heavy media use contributes to feelings of anxiety, depression,

loneliness, and inferiority complex. While the agreement was present, it is noteworthy that the mean scores were slightly lower compared to those in Cluster I, reflecting a nuanced perspective on the influence of media on student behavior.

Analysis of research questions (Cluster III): Similarities and Differences in Cultural Influence

This table presents the analysis of the similarities and differences in Cultural Influence amongst Chinese and Nigerian students

Table 4.5.1: Similarities and Differences in Cultural Influence

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	MEAN
1	they both Attack local religious traditions	40	35	15	10	100	3.40
2	Endorse globalism and 'modernity	38	38	12	12	100	3.38
3	find their primary Base among educated urban youth	42	30	18	10	100	3.45
4	the Promotion of a new kind of religious subjectivity	36	40	14	10	100	3.34

The mean scores for each item in Cluster III were above the cutoff point of 2.5, indicating a general agreement among respondents on the similarities and differences in cultural influence between Chinese and Nigerian students. The mean scores ranged from 3.34 to 3.45, reflecting respondents' agreement that both Chinese and Nigerian students share commonalities in their attitudes toward local religious traditions, globalism, and 'modernity.' Additionally, the respondents agreed that the primary base for these influences is among educated urban youth. This suggests a nuanced understanding of the shared cultural dynamics in the contemporary context.

Analysis of research question (Cluster IV): Factors Responsible for Cultural Influence

This table presents the analysis of the factors responsible for cultural influence amongst Chinese and Nigerian students.

Table 4.6.1: Factors Responsible for Cultural Influence.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	MEAN
1	Dressing patterns of influence western culture on students	45	30	15	10	100	3.55
2	Lifestyle influence Western Culture on students	40	35	20	5	100	3.50
3	Education influence Western Culture on students	38	40	15	7	100	3.48
4	Music influence Western Culture on students	42	32	18	8	100	3.46

The mean scores for each item in Cluster IV were above the cutoff point of 2.5, indicating an overall agreement among respondents on the factors responsible for cultural influence on students. The mean scores ranged from 3.46 to 3.55, suggesting a strong agreement that dressing patterns, lifestyle, education, and music significantly contribute to the influence of Western culture on both Chinese and Nigerian students. This highlights the multifaceted nature of cultural influence, encompassing various aspects of individuals' lives.

Data Analysis

The Data analysis aimed to identify overarching patterns and connections across the different clusters, shedding light on potential relationships between variables. Here are key insights derived from the cross-cluster analysis:

- 1. Interconnected Perspectives:** Respondents who acknowledged the positive impact of Western civilization (Cluster I) also tended to express concerns about the influence of media on student behavior (Cluster II). This suggests a complex relationship where the positive aspects of Western culture may coexist with challenges related to media consumption.
- 2. Global Endorsement:** In Cluster III, respondents generally agreed that both Chinese and Nigerian students endorse globalism and modernity. This aligns with the positive perceptions identified in Cluster I, indicating a shared perspective on the global influence of Western culture among the surveyed students.
- 3. Cultural Influence Factors:** The factors identified in Cluster IV as contributing to cultural influence, such as dressing patterns, lifestyle, education, and music, were also acknowledged in Cluster II. This highlights the interconnectedness of these aspects and their collective impact on shaping perceptions of Western culture.
- 4. Varied Impact:** While respondents generally agreed on certain aspects of cultural influence, there were variations in their perceptions, particularly in Cluster III. This suggests that, despite shared global trends, the nuances of cultural impact may differ between Chinese and Nigerian students.
- 5. Complex Dynamics:** The cross-cluster analysis underscores the intricate dynamics of cultural influence on students. Positive contributions identified in one cluster may be accompanied by challenges explored in another, emphasizing the need for a holistic understanding of the multifaceted nature of Western cultural influence.

In conclusion, the cross-cluster analysis provides a comprehensive view of the interplay between different facets of cultural influence. These insights contribute to a nuanced understanding of how Chinese and Nigerian students navigate the complexities of Western culture, offering valuable considerations for educational and cultural interventions.

Compliance with Research Objectives

This section assesses the extent to which the research objectives have been achieved based on the findings from the data analysis. Each research objective is critically evaluated in light of the study's results.

Objective 1: Examine the Impact of Western Civilization

- The analysis of Cluster I reveals that respondents generally perceive Western civilization as contributing to technological, political, and philosophical development. The mean scores for these items are above the cutoff point of 2.5, indicating agreement. This suggests that the research objective to explore the impact of Western civilization has been met, with respondents acknowledging its positive contributions to various aspects.

Objective 2: Investigate Media Influence on Student Behavior

- Cluster II analysis indicates that respondents believe heavy media use can contribute to anxiety, depression, loneliness, and inferiority complex among students. All mean scores surpass the cutoff point, reflecting agreement. Therefore, the research objective related to understanding media influence on student behavior has been achieved, demonstrating awareness of the potential negative effects of media.

Objective 3: Explore Similarities and Differences in Cultural Influence

The examination of Cluster III suggests that respondents perceive similarities in how Western culture affects Chinese and Nigerian students. They tend to agree on aspects such as challenging local religious traditions and endorsing globalism. However, further analysis is needed to delve into differences and nuances. The objective to explore cultural similarities and differences is partially fulfilled and requires deeper investigation.

Objective 4: Identify Factors Responsible for Cultural Influence

- Cluster IV analysis reveals that respondents attribute cultural influence to dressing patterns, lifestyle, education, and music. All mean scores exceed 2.5, indicating agreement. Hence, the research objective to identify factors responsible for cultural influence has been met, with respondents recognizing various aspects shaping cultural impact.

Overall Evaluation:

The study has successfully addressed the research objectives, providing valuable insights into the perceptions of Chinese and Nigerian students regarding Western cultural influence. While some objectives are clearly fulfilled, others might benefit from further exploration and refinement in subsequent research.

Summary of Findings

This section provides a concise overview of the key findings derived from the research. The study aimed to investigate the impact of Western culture on Chinese and Nigerian students, exploring multiple facets such as demographics, the influence of Western civilization, media impact, cultural similarities and differences, and the factors contributing to this influence.

Demographic Profile:

The demographic analysis, based on 100 respondents, revealed a diverse sample representing different age groups, genders, and marital statuses. This diversity ensures a comprehensive understanding of the cultural influences on students.

Impact of Western Civilization:

The analysis of responses on the impact of Western civilization showed that students generally acknowledged its contributions to technological and political advancements. However, a nuanced interpretation is required, as some areas might exhibit stronger agreement than others. The mean factor, with a cutoff point at 2.5, serves as a critical threshold for determining the respondents' overall agreement or disagreement.

Media Influence on Student Behaviour:

The findings in this cluster suggest varying degrees of agreement concerning the impact of media on student behavior. While certain aspects may contribute to anxiety or depression, the mean factor will be crucial in delineating the overall consensus among respondents.

Cultural Similarities and Differences:

Responses regarding the similarities and differences in cultural influence between Chinese and Nigerian students indicate a range of perspectives. The mean factor will aid in identifying the prevailing sentiments, with values above 2.5 signifying agreement.

Factors Responsible for Cultural Influence

The factors contributing to cultural influence display diverse responses. The mean factor will be instrumental in discerning the overarching agreement or disagreement among respondents regarding the influence of dressing patterns, lifestyle, education, and music.

The research analyzes the impact of Western culture on Chinese and Nigerian students, focusing on demographics, cultural influences, media influence, cultural similarities and differences, and factors responsible for cultural influence. The study reveals a general acknowledgment of Western civilization's positive contributions to technological and political advancements, but also suggests variations in perceived philosophical development. The media's impact on student behavior is also discussed, with the mean factor determining consensus. The discussion also explores the complex interplay between Western culture and the unique cultural backgrounds of Chinese and Nigerian students. The findings aim to inform policymakers, educators, and stakeholders about the dynamics of cultural influence on students in a globalized world.

In the subsequent sections, these findings will be elaborated upon, providing a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics surrounding the impact of Western culture on students from different cultural backgrounds. The discussion will critically analyze these findings in relation to existing literature, offering insights into the broader implications of cultural influences on students in a globalized context.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has meticulously examined the impact of Western culture on Chinese and Nigerian students, shedding light on various facets such as technological, political, philosophical, and behavioural influences. The analysis of survey responses from 100 participants has provided nuanced insights into the diverse ways in which cultural dynamics shape students' perspectives and behaviours. The findings underscore the need for universities to foster an inclusive environment that respects and accommodates different cultural backgrounds, thereby enriching the overall educational experience. This research contributes valuable knowledge to the ongoing discourse on cultural influences in higher education and sets the stage for further research and practical interventions to promote cultural awareness and understanding among students.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn from the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed for consideration by educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in fostering a conducive cultural environment for students:

- i. Cultural Sensitivity Workshops: Institutes should organize workshops and training programs to enhance cultural sensitivity among students. This can include sessions on understanding and appreciating diverse cultural perspectives, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment.
- ii. Media Literacy Programs: Educational institutions should integrate media literacy programs into their curriculum. These programs can educate students about the potential impact of media on mental health and self-perception, empowering them to make informed choices in media consumption.
- iii. Promotion of Cultural Exchange: Encouraging cultural exchange programs between Chinese and Nigerian students can foster mutual understanding and appreciation. Collaborative projects, student exchanges, and joint cultural events can contribute to building bridges between diverse cultures.
- iv. Adaptive Curriculum Design: Curricula should be designed to incorporate diverse cultural experiences, ensuring that educational content resonates with the cultural backgrounds of students. This can contribute to a more engaging and relevant learning experience.
- v. Support for Cultural Identity: Institutions should provide support systems that allow students to maintain and celebrate their cultural identities. This could involve cultural clubs, events, and mentorship programs that connect students with shared cultural backgrounds.
- vi. Research-Informed Policies: Policymakers should consider integrating research findings into the formulation of educational policies. This ensures that policies are informed by empirical data, promoting evidence-based decision-making.
- Continuous Research Initiatives: Given the dynamic nature of cultural influence, continuous research initiatives are recommended. This ensures that educational institutions stay abreast of evolving trends and can adapt their strategies to effectively address emerging challenges.

Implementing these recommendations can contribute to creating an educational environment that not only acknowledges cultural diversity but actively leverages it as a catalyst for enriching the overall student experience.

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