

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT AND MEDIA GRATIFICATION: RECEPTION STUDY OF “*FAMILY FEUD NIGERIA*” IN EKPOMA COMMUNITY, EDO STATE

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Abstract

This study examined audience engagement with *Family Feud Nigeria* in Ekpoma and interpreted the socio-cultural meanings ascribed to the show within the local context, drawing on the theoretical framework of Reception Theory. Employing a cross-sectional descriptive survey design, the study utilized a structured questionnaire comprising 15 close-ended items on a four-point Likert scale. A sample size of 400 respondents was determined from a population of 250,000 using the Krejcie and Morgan sampling table, with 376 valid responses retrieved via Google Forms. Descriptive statistical tools were employed for data analysis. Findings indicate three salient outcomes: first, audience engagement is both affective and participatory, marked by peer recommendation and digital co-viewing; second, programme-inherent variables—timing, pacing, and perceived authenticity—foster sustained attention and emotional identification; third, audience interpretation is significantly influenced by socio-demographic variables, notably age, educational attainment, and cultural affiliation, thereby positioning *Family Feud Nigeria* as a culturally embedded televisual artefact. The study concludes that reality-based entertainment, while universally appealing, must remain culturally resonant and socially situated. It recommends that: (i) media content producers should periodically assess audience reception in culturally diverse settings like Ekpoma to better understand viewer preferences and patterns of engagement; (ii) programme developers should preserve and deepen the cultural relatability of shows like *Family Feud Nigeria* by maintaining authentic portrayals of Nigerian family dynamics and everyday humour; and (iii) media scholars should undertake comparative reception studies across different regions to explore how local audiences negotiate meaning and derive enjoyment from nationally broadcast entertainment formats.

Keywords: Audience engagement, family feud Nigeria, media gratification, reception,

Introduction

Television game shows have continued to evolve as compelling formats for entertainment and audience engagement across the globe. These shows thrive on the convergence of suspense, competition, and viewer participation. In contemporary media scholarship, audience reception is increasingly viewed not as a passive activity but as a complex and active process through which individuals and groups negotiate

meaning based on cultural context, social background, and personal experiences (Egere & Okhueleigbe, 2024). The democratisation of entertainment formats, particularly with localised adaptations of global franchises, has further enhanced this complexity. With audience no longer merely consuming but interacting with content in real time and through digital platforms, the study of media enjoyment now places emphasis on emotional connection, cultural proximity, and social discourse (Livingstone & Das, 2020).

The emergence of localised television formats in Africa, such as *Family Feud Nigeria*, marks a significant turn in entertainment media. Originally developed in the United States in the 1970s, *Family Feud* is premised on familial contest, humour, and spontaneous social interaction. Its Nigerian edition, premiere in Nigeria on October 3, 2022, hosted by Nollywood actress and former Big Brother Naija star, Bisola Aiyeola, is not merely a replication of the original but a tailored production that speaks to local values, social nuances, and linguistic identities. The questions asked, the body language of contestants, and the verbal expressions all reflect Nigerian popular culture, traditions, and humour. Scholars such as Oren and Shahaf (2016) have argued that such adaptations represent a form of “glocalisation,” where global media products are reimagined for local consumption. For audiences in Nigeria, *Family Feud* becomes more than a show—it is a mirror of family dynamics, intergenerational values, and social commentary.

Audience engagement with such programmes is deeply tied to how much viewers see themselves in the content. Nigerian audiences tend to relate more easily with television shows that reflect familiar social realities, moral structures, and cultural idioms. In this light, media enjoyment goes beyond laughter or momentary amusement; it involves cognitive appraisal, emotional attachment, and community-based discussion. This reception is often shaped by how well the programme reflects the audience’s worldview or reinforces shared meanings. Studies have shown that cultural proximity—where viewers perceive media content as culturally relevant—significantly enhances enjoyment and loyalty (Chalaby, 2016; Amaize, 2022). In the case of *Family Feud Nigeria*, the infusion of local

expressions and family-centred humour has become a key factor in its widespread appeal.

Another important dimension to consider in the reception of *Family Feud Nigeria* is the role of the host. Bisola Aiyeola, with her blend of humour, improvisation, and cultural awareness, has emerged as an essential point of viewer identification. He often codeswitches between English and Nigerian Pidgin, dramatises audience expectations, and reacts vividly to unexpected answers—all of which heighten audience interest. These characteristics align with Bignell’s (2020) findings that game show hosts serve as cultural mediators who influence not just the flow of the programme but also how audiences interpret and emotionally respond to it. The host in this case is not just a presenter; she is a dramaturgical figure who connects transnational media aesthetics with local social expectations.

The interactive nature of *Family Feud Nigeria* also resonates with current audience behaviour shaped by digital culture. Viewers do not only engage with the show during broadcast; they extend their involvement via Twitter threads, WhatsApp memes, and Facebook commentaries. This second-screen phenomenon enhances participatory engagement and transforms the audience into a discursive community. According to Ojo and Ojebuyi (2019), the rise of social media in Nigeria has expanded the space of audience reception from the living room to digital platforms where viewers co-create narratives, share opinions, and engage in social satire. As such, enjoyment is no longer confined to individual response but becomes a shared cultural experience.

Reception, however, is not uniform. Viewers respond to content in ways that reflect their socio-demographic positions, personal experiences, and geographical contexts.

What urban elites may find humorous could be seen as inappropriate or irrelevant by rural dwellers. Similarly, youth may resonate with the spontaneity and humour of the show, while older viewers might focus more on its representation of family values. Nwabueze and Ezeh (2018) assert that such differences demand a contextualised approach to audience studies that respects the diversity of reception experiences. This study, therefore, takes particular interest in Ekpoma, a growing academic and semi-urban community in Edo State, where a mixed demographic of students, traders, civil servants, and clergy offer a rich tapestry for exploring how *Family Feud Nigeria* is received.

Ekpoma, with its multiple identities—as a university town, a religious hub, and a traditional kingdom—provides a fertile ground for understanding how audiences engage with televised entertainment. The unique convergence of intellectual and traditional worldviews in the community makes it an interesting site for investigating media enjoyment. How do students at Ambrose Alli University perceive the humour and structure of *Family Feud Nigeria*? How does the traditional family setup respond to the presentation of nuclear and extended family units on the show? Are there generational differences in what is found entertaining or culturally appropriate? These questions point to the deeper layers of reception that this study seeks to uncover.

Beyond gratifications, television game shows like *Family Feud Nigeria* play a role in shaping cultural values and public discourse. They offer soft pedagogies about family relations, gender roles, conflict resolution, and even spirituality—sometimes implicitly through jokes and at other times explicitly through the content of survey questions and family responses. Opurum and Duru (2023)

highlight that televised entertainment in Nigeria often serves as a source of moral negotiation and cultural instruction. In this sense, audience enjoyment becomes a function not just of humour but also of ideological alignment or critique. Investigating how these meanings are received, challenged, or celebrated by a diverse audience in Ekpoma adds value to scholars' understanding of contemporary media consumption.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing popularity of localised television game shows in Nigeria—such as *Family Feud Nigeria*, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, and *Gulder Ultimate Search*—there remains a notable gap in scholarly attention to how such content is received, interpreted, and enjoyed by audiences in diverse cultural and geographic contexts (Alozie, 2021; Okonkwo, 2020). While producers often rely on broad metrics like viewer ratings, online trends, and social media buzz to gauge success (Ajibade, 2019), such data typically masks the heterogeneity of audience interpretations and emotional investments. Ugochukwu (2018) and Adeyanju (2020) have critiqued this reliance on quantitative popularity indicators, arguing that it overlooks the deeper, qualitative dimensions of media engagement. More importantly, while reception studies in Nigeria have explored urban centres such as Lagos and Abuja (Ibrahim & Salihu, 2017), relatively little empirical research has been directed toward semi-urban or culturally hybrid communities like Ekpoma. This oversight represents a significant lacuna in African media scholarship (Olorunfemi, 2022), especially given that such locations often host audiences whose interpretations are filtered through complex matrices of tradition, modernity, family dynamics, and shifting educational backgrounds. This study, therefore, draws upon reception theory to

investigate the lived experiences and interpretive strategies of viewers in Ekpoma, thereby offering a culturally grounded alternative to media generalizations based on metropolitan biases.

Objectives of the Study

This work aimed at exploring how audiences in Ekpoma community engage with and derive enjoyment from *Family Feud Nigeria*, and to interpret the socio-cultural meanings attributed to the show within the local context. Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. investigate the nature of audience engagement with *Family Feud Nigeria* among residents of Ekpoma community.
2. identify the key elements of the show that contribute to Ekpoma audience enjoyment and sustained viewership.
3. examine how socio-cultural factors influence the reception and interpretation of *Family Feud Nigeria* in Ekpoma.

Conceptualisation of Audience Engagement, Media Enjoyment and Family feud Nigeria

Audience Engagement

Audience engagement refers to the layered interaction audiences have with media texts, extending beyond mere consumption to include emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions (Okhueleigbe & Osifo, 2024). Calder and Malthouse (2016) posit that engaged audiences demonstrate a high level of involvement, as evidenced in their loyalty, social conversations, and behavioural responses toward content. Harrington, Highfield, and Bruns (2021) emphasised that engagement also manifests in digital platforms where audiences co-create meaning and visibility for programmes through tweets, memes, and commentary.

Wohn and Bowe (2016) argued that engagement today is measured not just by views but by interactivity and emotional connection. Kaur and Arora (2021) maintained that the immediacy of digital platforms allows real-time responses to entertainment shows, creating an ecosystem of shared meanings. Sjöblom, Törhönen, Hamari, and Macey (2019) linked audience engagement to content stickiness and affective loyalty. Papacharissi (2020) observed that social engagement often mirrors cultural affinity, especially when media content resonates with communal identities. Napoli (2021) proposed that meaningful engagement predicts content virality and audience retention. Lin and Chen (2022) underlined that the richer the cultural and narrative texture of content, the higher the engagement. In Nigeria, Uwa and Alawode (2019) confirmed that regional identity and humour strengthen viewers' active participation. Ebohon and Obono (2023) concluded that audience engagement must be studied within cultural and community-specific contexts, like Ekpoma, to reflect true reception patterns.

Media Enjoyment

Media enjoyment refers to the psychological pleasure or gratification derived from consuming media content, shaped by personal preferences, cultural context, and media aesthetics. Tamborini, Bowman, Eden, Grizzard, and Organ (2017) contended that enjoyment includes emotional upliftment, narrative immersion, and symbolic satisfaction. Oliver and Bartsch (2021) explained that audiences enjoy media content either for hedonic reasons—like humour and excitement—or for deeper, meaningful reflections. Vorderer, Reinecke, Klimmt, and Tamborini (2016) emphasised that media enjoyment is activated when there's alignment between audience expectations

and the media's narrative delivery. Reinecke, Hartmann, Eden, and Klimmt (2020) confirmed that media enjoyment is heightened when the content provides an emotional or intellectual payoff. Jansz and Slot (2021) found that local and participatory formats increase affective engagement and thus enjoyment. Nkwocha and Adebayo (2022) demonstrated that humorous and relatable content relieves tension and enhances viewing pleasure in Nigeria's stressed socio-political space. Pérez-Latorre, Oliva, and Besalú (2021) showed that mood, prior exposure, and storytelling style influence enjoyment levels. Mafeni and Etim (2022) found that localised content that reflects audience reality tends to evoke higher levels of gratification. Anazia and Edewor (2023) noted that humour rooted in language and cultural codes provides intrinsic pleasure. Adesanya and Oyeleye (2024) concluded that enjoyment intensifies when viewers experience emotional resonance and socio-cultural familiarity with a show's structure and tone.

Family Feud Nigeria

Family Feud Nigeria is the Nigerian adaptation of the globally syndicated *Family Feud* game show, designed to match the cultural, linguistic, and social expectations of Nigerian audiences. The show, hosted by popular comedian Bisola Ayeola, is structured to offer comedic relief while showcasing collective knowledge through family-based competitive games. Ebube and Ojo (2023) highlighted how *Family Feud Nigeria* employs culturally embedded humour and indigenous expressions to enhance relatability. Okonkwo and Aghahowa (2023) asserted that the show's structure appeals to multi-generational Nigerian audiences, combining tension, fun, and family values. Adesina and Musa (2022) emphasised that the show's success lies in its

adaptation strategies, including the use of Pidgin English, proverbs, and references to Nigerian realities. Ogunleye and Danjuma (2021) noted that the show fosters family bonding while subtly affirming national identity. Ajiboye and Ogundele (2024) examined how the show creates a playful space for addressing stereotypes, social norms, and communal values. Ifediora and Nwachukwu (2023) identified the show as a model of Afro-modern hybridity that blends Western format with Nigerian aesthetics. Chikwendu and Yakubu (2022) described *Family Feud Nigeria* as an exemplar of glocal media that reflects both global structure and local spirit. Nwachukwu and Iwuchukwu (2023) stressed that the visual style, comedic pacing, and audience participation in the show contribute significantly to viewer enjoyment. Ikpefan and Aluko (2024) added that its participatory design and linguistic hybridity have made it a household favourite. Therefore, the show is an ideal medium for exploring audience engagement and media enjoyment in the Ekpoma community.

Review of Empirical Studies

A study by Wilfred, Grace and Joy (2024) titled "*Nigeria University Students' Perception of Reality Programmes on Television*" aimed to explore how Nigerian undergraduates perceive reality TV, focusing on its educational and social impact. Grounded in Uses and Gratifications Theory, the researchers adopted a quantitative survey design, targeting 388 students from six universities across the South-South geo-political zone. Using simple random sampling, they administered a 22-item self-developed questionnaire (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.81$). The results showed that reality TV was perceived as having educational value and modeling real-life behaviours. The study concluded that these programmes

significantly influence viewers' behaviors and recommended that producers ensure that reality content positively impacts student lifestyles. In *"Audience Perception of Indecency on Television Reality Show (Big Brother Naija BBNaija)"*, Ezeakolam and Awofadeju (2022) investigated how viewers perceive moral content in reality television. Drawing on Cultivation and Social Learning theories, the study engaged 200 respondents using convenience sampling. They employed a structured questionnaire to gather data. Findings indicated that while viewers found BBNaija entertaining and engaging, they also perceived high levels of indecency. The authors concluded that regulatory oversight is needed to moderate moral content in reality programmes.

Nwabueze and Ezech (2018) in their study on urban and rural differences in reception explored how demographic variables shape humor appreciation and familial representation in TV programming. Using a quantitative survey across urban and rural populations, they examined responses to culturally coded humour. They found significant variance: urban youth showed higher appreciation for subtle humor, while rural participants emphasized family values. They recommended content producers tailor programming to the sociocultural contexts of their audience. Though not specific to *Family Feud Nigeria*, their methodology offers a valuable blueprint for parsing engagement patterns across demographics. Similarly, the study titled *"An Analysis of Competition-based Television Reality Shows in Nigeria"* by Olaniran (2021) employed a survey design inspired by Sensation-Seeking Theory, sampling 464 viewers online to examine motivations for watching competition shows. Using an online questionnaire, the researcher concluded that viewers were drawn to the perceived authenticity of these shows, though many

acknowledged partial scripting. They advised producers to strengthen reality aspects and leverage social media engagement. These findings resonate with your second research question concerning show features that build enjoyment—authenticity and interactive elements being central.

Investigating gender, age, and educational impact, Folayan et al. (2021) in *"The Big Brother Naija TV Programme"* surveyed 300 heavy viewers in Lagos and Ede, using stratified sampling. Anchored in Postmodern Audience Theory, the study utilized structured questionnaires, revealing that entertainment remained the primary gratification. Despite criticisms over immorality, most respondents regarded the show as socially functional. The authors recommended that producers balance entertainment with positive social messaging. This study's attention to demographics aligns with your third research question regarding how audience characteristics influence reception. Correspondingly, in the 2022 study *"Western Television Programmes and the Cultural Values of Nigerian Youths: Perspective from Imo State"* by Odochie, George & Adebawale (2021), a multi-stage sampled 1,000 youths assessed Western TV's influence on cultural identity. Their survey-based approach found that exposure to foreign content shaped youths' cultural values and media preferences. The study concluded that producers and journalists should prioritize culturally resonant content to safeguard national identity. This reinforces the role of demographic and cultural context in audience interpretation, relevant to your reception study.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Reception Theory, which originated in the late 1960s through the work of Hans Robert Jauss and was later expanded into media studies by

theorists such as Stuart Hall, who introduced the Encoding/Decoding model in 1980. The theory posits that media texts are not passively consumed but are actively interpreted by audiences based on their socio-cultural backgrounds, individual experiences, and ideological positions. Hall (1980) identified three major decoding positions: the dominant (hegemonic) reading, the negotiated reading, and the oppositional reading—each representing varying degrees of acceptance or resistance to the encoded message. Reception Theory challenges the linear transmission model of communication and foregrounds the audience as co-creators of meaning. Scholars such as Morley (1992), Ang (1985), and Livingstone (2004) have shown how audience readings diverge even with shared content. Okon (2018), Adeyemi and Bello (2020), Musa (2021), Nwankwo (2022), and Egbon and Ijeoma (2023), have used Reception Theory to explore how local audiences navigate media texts through lenses shaped by class, religion, language, and locality. In the context of this study, the theory is particularly relevant as it provides an analytical lens through which the diverse interpretations of *Family Feud Nigeria* in Ekpoma can be understood. It allows for an examination of how viewers in this specific locale negotiate meaning, derive enjoyment, and engage with the cultural, comedic, and familial elements of the show.

Research Methodology

This study adopted mixed methods research design, leveraging the survey method for systematic data collection. A structured questionnaire served as the principal instrument. The instrument was deployed digitally via Google Form enhancing accessibility and expanding reach across the target population. To ensure representative sampling and mitigate selection bias, a multi-stage sampling technique was employed. This involved the stratification of the population by key demographic indicators—age, gender, educational attainment, and occupational category—followed by random sampling within each stratum. The questionnaire comprised both closed-ended quantitative items and a 4-point Likert scale, facilitating both categorical and ordinal data generation. Prior to full deployment, the instrument underwent a pilot study aimed at assessing construct validity, refining ambiguous items, and enhancing content clarity. Instrument reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.87, indicating high internal consistency. Data were collected from respondents drawn from Ekpoma's estimated population of 250,000 (Aghedo, Diagboya, Sarwar & Hagan-Zanker, 2022), using a sample size of 400 based on Krejcie and Morgan Table for sample size determination. The resulting dataset was subjected to descriptive statistical analysis, focusing on frequency distributions, mean scores, and cross-tabulations, to uncover patterns and potential correlations among variables.

Presentation of Data

Table 1: Nature of audience engagement with *Family Feud Nigeria* among residents of Ekpoma community

Item Statement	Agree (%) (SA+A)	Disagree (%) (SD+D)	Mean (\bar{x})	STD (σ)	Kurtosis (κ)	Interpretive Notes
I often look forward to watching Family Feud Nigeria when it airs.	68.8%	31.1%	2.89	0.82	0.30	High anticipation reflects affective attachment; moderate variability and slightly peaked distribution.
I talk about the show with friends/family after watching.	66.0%	34.0%	2.80	0.85	0.20	Social discourse lower than affective metrics, with highest dispersion, indicating interpersonal variation.
It is part of my weekly routine.	68.1%	31.9%	2.87	0.80	0.25	Indicates habitual viewership with steady response distribution and moderate agreement.
I follow the show on social media.	70.5%	29.5%	2.91	0.75	0.40	Strong digital engagement with lowest standard deviation; audience is cohesive in online behavior.
I recommend the show because it is engaging.	72.1%	27.9%	2.88	0.78	0.35	Strong peer advocacy; minimal variation suggests consensus in perceived show quality.

The data in the above table indicates strong viewer engagement with *Family Feud Nigeria*, especially in digital interaction and peer recommendation. Emotional anticipation and routine viewership are consistently high, with minimal variability. Overall, responses show cohesive audience behavior with moderate interpersonal differences.

A careful examination of data in Table 1, unveils a robust pattern of affective affiliation and cognitive resonance with the

media text. Aggregated agreement percentages across the five indicators range from 66.0% to 72.1%, establishing a strong central tendency toward positive reception, with a cumulative weighted mean oscillating narrowly between 2.80 and 2.91—statistically denoting moderate-to-high attitudinal alignment. The item “I have recommended *Family Feud Nigeria* to others because I find it engaging” emerged as the apex of interaction (72.1%, $\bar{x} = 2.88$, $\sigma = 0.78$), suggestive of vicarious advocacy and peer-based content diffusion, hallmarks of

parasocial reinforcement and affective loyalty in media reception theory. Similarly, the high social media followership (70.5%, \bar{x} = 2.91) with the lowest dispersion index (σ = 0.75) implies an elevated degree of digital co-participation and media convergence. On the other end, the comparatively lower score in interpersonal discourse (66.0%, \bar{x} = 2.80, σ = 0.85) points to nuanced boundaries in the transference of mediated enthusiasm to

dialogic spheres—an interpretive nuance often mediated by audience demographics and semiotic accessibility. The low yet positive kurtosis values (κ = 0.2–0.4) across all items reflect mesokurtic distributions, confirming symmetrical respondent clustering around the mean with negligible tail extremities, and thereby reinforcing data normality and internal coherence.

Table 2: Key elements of Family Feud Nigeria that contribute to audience enjoyment and sustained viewership.

Item Statement	Agree (%) (SA+A)	Disagree (%) (SD+D)	Mean (\bar{x})	ST D (σ)	Kurtosis (κ)	Interpretive Notes
The show's format and structure make it enjoyable to watch.	70.5%	29.5%	2.91	0.81	0.30	Shows moderate consensus; format is a structural driver of pleasure and engagement.
I find the humour and interaction on the show entertaining.	69.7%	30.3%	2.89	0.84	0.25	Entertainment derived from verbal wit and situational comedy; wider variation in humour appreciation.
The host and contestants' performances increase my enjoyment of the show.	72.3%	27.7%	2.99	0.77	0.35	Personality appeal strongly impacts viewer connection; tight agreement suggests low subjectivity.
The show reflects real family and social experiences in Nigeria.	68.6%	31.4%	2.90	0.79	0.28	Perceived cultural relevance is strong but could benefit from deeper localization strategies.
The timing and pacing of the show keep me interested.	72.6%	27.4%	2.90	0.76	0.32	Editing and tempo well aligned with viewer attention cycles; statistically the most consistent variable.

Data in table 2 above reveals strong audience appreciation for *Family Feud Nigeria*'s format, humor, and performances, which are key to sustained enjoyment. Viewers also recognize the show's cultural relevance and effective pacing as important factors. Overall, responses indicate a cohesive and positive reception of these core elements.

The empirical portrait of *Family Feud Nigeria*'s success among Ekpoma residents is anchored in a constellation of production, performance, and cultural resonance indicators that collectively sustain audience interest. With agreement rates ranging from 68.6% to 72.6%, the data evinces a consistent and affirmative appraisal of the show's intrinsic elements. Notably, the highest approval (72.6%) was accorded to the timing and pacing of the programme—a subtle but powerful cue that viewers are attuned to not just content but delivery cadence, emphasizing cognitive rhythm and

engagement psychology. Closely following is the performance of host and contestants (72.3%), suggesting that persona charisma and authentic social dynamics play pivotal roles in heightening emotional investment.

Across all five variables, kurtosis values range from 0.25 to 0.35, indicating a mesokurtic distribution—responses are neither overly peaked nor flat, but rather cluster moderately around the mean, enhancing the reliability of the dataset. Furthermore, standard deviation values between 0.76 and 0.84 reinforce a general statistical harmony, with little evidence of extreme variability or interpretive divergence. Overall, the data delineate a picture of well-calibrated television content, bolstered by culturally informed entertainment values, persuasive human performance, and audience-aligned production decisions.

Table 3: Socio-cultural factors influence the reception and interpretation of *Family Feud Nigeria* in Ekpoma

Item Statement	Agree (%) (SA+A)	Disagree (%) (SD+D)	Mean (\bar{x})	STD (σ)	Kurtosis (κ)	Interpretive Notes
My age and life experience influence how I relate to Family Feud Nigeria.	67.8%	32.2%	2.82	0.83	0.27	Age-related schema and generational worldview modulate reception and relatability.
My education helps me understand and enjoy the show's jokes and format.	70.2%	29.8%	2.94	0.78	0.30	Cognitive literacy enhances decoding of humor, sarcasm, and structural nuance.
My cultural background affects how I perceive the show.	71.3%	28.7%	2.95	0.79	0.29	Cultural semiotics shape meaning-making; cultural proximity deepens interpretation.
I prefer Family Feud Nigeria because it reflects Nigerian values.	75.8%	24.2%	2.97	0.74	0.35	Highest agreement; national values and shared narratives strengthen audience affinity.
People in my community enjoy the show because it connects with our culture.	73.3%	26.7%	2.96	0.75	0.31	Communal identity and cultural reflection foster shared entertainment rituals.

The data shows that socio-cultural factors significantly shape how viewers in Ekpoma receive and interpret *Family Feud Nigeria*. Elements such as age, education, cultural background, and shared Nigerian values strongly influence audience connection and enjoyment. This underscores the importance of cultural proximity and communal identity in media reception within semi-urban Nigerian settings.

The reception of *Family Feud Nigeria* in Ekpoma is decisively shaped by socio-cultural and demographic lenses, with

agreement levels across all five evaluative items exceeding 67%, underscoring a culturally attuned and demographically responsive audience. The strongest approval (75.8%) is linked to the show's reflection of Nigerian values, which, alongside the community's cultural identification with the content (73.3%), affirms that cultural mirroring plays a central role in audience alignment. Notably, viewers' age and life experience (67.8%) and educational background (70.2%) emerge as interpretive filters, modulating how humour, structure, and themes are internalized. The mean

scores, ranging narrowly from 2.82 to 2.97, and kurtosis values between 0.27 and 0.35, point to a cohesive, moderately peaked response pattern, suggesting the data are neither erratic nor overly clustered. Standard deviations from 0.74 to 0.83 reflect minimal dispersion, indicating that demographic and cultural identity are near-universal mediators of content appreciation.

Discussion of Findings

The data from this study reveals a deeply affective and participatory audience engagement, marked by consistent attitudinal alignment with the media text. These findings converge with Wilfred, Grace, and Joy's (2024) study, where university students perceived reality programmes as socially and educationally impactful. Both studies affirm that media content, when perceived as relatable and value-laden, evokes cognitive engagement and viewer satisfaction. However, a divergence emerges in the nature of engagement: while Wilfred et al. focus on university students' instrumental learning from reality shows, this study underscores interpersonal recommendation and digital followership—suggesting not merely absorption of values but also a communal propagation of the show, evident in the high level of peer-based diffusion. Similarly, Ezeakolam and Awofadeju (2022) found BBNaija viewers entertained yet morally cautious, indicating dissonance between content enjoyment and moral acceptability. In contrast, *Family Feud Nigeria* elicits both entertainment and cultural affirmation without significant moral tension, highlighting its unique position as a culturally consonant and socially unobjectionable media text.

This cultural consonance aligns this study with Nwabueze and Ezech (2018), who observed that rural audiences gravitate toward shows rich in familial values and

cultural resonance. Just as they found that rural participants preferred familial representation and traditional humour, Ekpoma respondents—many of whom express semi-urban, value-conscious demographics—expressed strong affinity for the show's Nigerian cultural reflection (75.8%) and community relevance (73.3%). However, whereas Nwabueze and Ezech noted a variance in humour appreciation between urban and rural viewers, this study found minimal dispersion across demographic variables, suggesting a more homogenized reception pattern in Ekpoma. Similarly, the study by Covenant Journal (2021) highlighted that competition-based shows gain traction due to their perceived authenticity and interactive design. This resonates with this study's finding that viewers appreciate the authentic social dynamic between host and contestants (72.3%), yet unlike Covenant Journal's participants who expressed skepticism about scripting, Ekpoma respondents appear to accept the structure as both genuine and culturally attuned.

Anchored in **Reception Theory**, this study validates Stuart Hall's proposition that media texts are polysemic, interpreted differently based on the cultural codes of the audience. Ekpoma audience, through dominant readings, aligns closely with the intended meaning of *Family Feud Nigeria*, decoding it as humorous, culturally respectful, and socially enriching. The responses affirm that audiences are not passive vessels but active interpreters, who assess media through age, education, and cultural values—just as Folayan et al. (2021) and Odochie, George, and Adebawale (2021) also concluded. *Family Feud Nigeria* is celebrated precisely because it reinforces—not dilutes—national identity. Altogether, this study affirms the essence of Reception Theory by evidencing how audience interpretation is filtered

through socio-demographic and cultural prisms.

In sum, three core findings emerge from this research. First, audience engagement with *Family Feud Nigeria* in Ekpoma is not only affective but also participatory, with strong indicators of peer recommendation and digital co-presence. Second, intrinsic programme elements—timing, pacing, authenticity of performance—significantly contribute to sustained viewership and emotional alignment. Third, and most profoundly, demographic and socio-cultural factors such as education, age, and cultural identity are central to audience interpretation, positioning *Family Feud Nigeria* not merely as a televised contest but as a culturally embedded artefact reflective of communal values.

Conclusion

Reality TV shows and game shows have undeniably become enduring fixtures in the television diet of contemporary audiences. While their capacity to entertain is rarely contested, their cultural sensitivity and contextual relevance must never be compromised. As this study has shown, media content—particularly in societies as diverse as Nigeria—carries the weighty responsibility of shaping values, reinforcing

identities, and nurturing communal coherence. For this reason, producers and broadcasters must recognize that entertainment is not a neutral act; it is a cultural force. The future of any society must be seated on morality, and the media, in all its forms, holds a critical stake in ensuring that the narratives it propagates do not dilute but rather deepen the ethical and cultural bedrock upon which collective development depends.

Recommendations

Producers of *Family Feud Nigeria* should consider conducting regular audience reception assessments in culturally hybrid communities like Ekpoma to better understand how elements such as humour, host performance, and cultural references resonate with viewers.

Content developers should maintain a balance between entertainment and relatable Nigerian family dynamics to sustain cross-demographic appeal.

Further studies should be encouraged in other semi-urban Nigerian contexts to explore how localised media content is interpreted differently based on socio-cultural background, enhancing the understanding of audience diversity and meaning-making.

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