

ASSESSING INFLUENCE OF AREWA 24 TELEVISION ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN GDSS GURIN, ADAMAWA STATE

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Abstract

Television remains a powerful medium of communication with significant influence on the behavior, attitudes, and academic engagement of young audiences. This study examined the influence of Arewa 24 Television on the study habits and academic engagement of secondary school students at Government Day Secondary School (GDSS) Gurin, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Anchored on Social Learning Theory, the study adopted a quantitative survey design to explore patterns of television consumption, program preferences, and perceived academic effects. A sample of 300 students was selected using stratified sampling techniques to ensure gender representation. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that while Arewa 24 contributes positively to cultural awareness and social learning, its predominant use for entertainment purposes negatively affects students' study time, concentration, and academic engagement. The study concluded that although the channel has educational potential, its current consumption patterns among students are largely detrimental to academic focus. Recommendations includes increased promotion of educational content, parental regulation of viewing habits, and strategic collaboration between broadcasters and educational institutions.

Keywords: Television influence, Arewa 24, academic engagement, study habits, youth media consumption

Introduction

In projecting the importance of communication, Usman (2026) argued that societies can develop and advance only as fast as they can develop the means of acquiring, recording and disseminating information, and that the progression from the earliest communities to the highly organized information and knowledge based society of today is a result of a long history of improved means of communication. Usman (2026) further stressed that since communication is essential in life, the idea of establishing broadcast media outfits can be considered as a reliable choice and, therefore, adopted by even the developing nations to enhance and popularize their ideas and programs to their audience.

Television has long been recognized as one of the most influential mass media platforms, particularly in shaping the attitudes, behaviors, and learning patterns of young audiences. With its audio-visual appeal and accessibility, television has become deeply embedded in the daily lives of adolescents. In recent decades, the expansion of satellite broadcasting and digital technologies has further increased television's reach and influence. Since television involves communication with a mass audience which multiplies messages and takes it to a large number of people simultaneously. Hasan (2013) stated that the audience of mass communication must be large, heterogeneous and anonymous in character and also physically separated from the communicator both in terms of space and time, which television rightly projects.

In Nigeria, regional television channels play a significant role in cultural representation and information dissemination. One such channel is Arewa 24, a Hausa-language satellite television station established in 2014. The channel provides a wide range of programming, including entertainment, cultural content, documentaries, and limited educational broadcasts, primarily targeting Hausa-speaking audiences across Nigeria and beyond.

While television can serve as an educational resource, excessive exposure, particularly to entertainment content, may negatively impact students' academic engagement. This study, therefore, investigates how Arewa 24 influences the study habits and academic engagement of secondary school students in GDSS Gurin, Adamawa State.

The historical context surrounding the establishment of Arewa 24 is deeply rooted in the socio-cultural dynamics of Northern Nigeria, where the Hausa language serves as a unifying force among diverse ethnic groups. Despite the linguistic prominence of Hausa, mainstream media outlets often

failed to adequately represent the interests and perspectives of Hausa speakers, leading to a sense of marginalization in youth interests and cultural under-representation.

Recognizing this gap, Arewa 24 was conceived as more than a conventional television channel; it was designed as a multifaceted media platform dedicated to celebrating Hausa culture, promoting linguistic diversity, and contributing to youth de-radicalization while fostering social cohesion within the Hausa-speaking community. The name “Arewa,” meaning “north” in the Hausa language, not only reflects the channel’s geographical orientation but also embodies its commitment to preserving and projecting the cultural identity and values of Northern Nigeria and the wider Hausa-speaking world.

Over the years, Arewa 24 has emerged as a leading voice in Hausa media, gaining widespread popularity and influence across Nigeria and West Africa. Its impact extends beyond the realm of broadcasting, shaping perceptions, fostering cultural pride, and empowering individuals within the Hausa-speaking community. In doing so, Arewa 24 has played a pivotal role in enriching Nigeria's media landscape, promoting inclusivity, and advancing the cause of linguistic and cultural diversity in the region.

Arewa 24, channel’s mission to provide culturally relevant programs that resonates with the local audience, while addressing key social, economic, and educational issues, highlights its significance. Understanding how Arewa 24 influences the academic performance of its viewers, particularly secondary school students, is therefore a matter of considerable importance.

It is within these contexts that this study seeks to examine the frequency and patterns of Arewa 24 viewership among students; identify the types of programs most preferred by students; assess the

perceived influence of Arewa 24 on students' study habits and determine whether television viewing affects students' academic engagement.

Literature Review

The relevance of this investigation is further underscored by the Social Learning Theory, as explained by Firmansyah and Saepuloh (2022) that Social learning theory (SLT) and social cognitive theory (SCT), identify learning as a dynamic interaction between people, environment, and behavior. Engagement in a social context involves a dual process of making meaning. Where individuals, especially young people, learn behaviors and acquire knowledge by observing others, including characters and scenarios depicted on television. Given Arewa 24's diverse programs, it has the potential to influence students' attitudes towards education, their study habits, and even their social behaviors—all of which can impact on their academic performance. However, this influence is not one-dimensional; while certain programs may inspire and motivate students, others might lead to decreased focus on studies or the adoption of less productive behaviors

The global expansion of television points out the need to study its influence in specific regions, such as Nigeria, where channels such as Arewa 24 play a prominent role. In Europe and the United States, television has become the dominant leisure activity for most people (Casey, Calvert, French, & Lewis, (2002), as cited in Siraj, (2021). Similarly, Africa, Asia, and Latin America seems to be the new targets for major growth areas for the global television industry in the 21st century. This expansion into new markets makes it even more pertinent to examine the impact of television on the academic performance of young viewers in these regions. The study also asserts that there is an evidence that Islamic channels have gained acceptance, as significant percentage of the respondents reported watching them for a considerable length of time from their inception in 2010, and that they are watching the station several times a week. Various research findings have

shown that the content viewed on television significantly affects viewers' behavior and performance. For instance, A study by Merrill Jr. and Rubenking (2019) showed that binge watching frequency and duration are predicted by two non-overlapping sets of variables. Binge watching frequency was predicted by low self-regulation, greater tendency to use binge watching as both a reward and a form of procrastination, and less regret; while binge watching duration was associated with being female and experiencing greater enjoyment while bingeing. Self-control did not predict either binge watching frequency or duration, suggesting that alternative theoretical models should be explored. These findings suggests that the type and amount of content consumed on Arewa 24 could similarly influence the academic achievements of secondary school students. While educational programs can enhance learning and foster positive attitude towards education, entertainment content can sometimes distract students from their studies, leading to poor academic outcomes. Despite the significant viewership of Arewa24 among students, the specific impact of its programs on their academic performance is not well understood.

In their study aimed at examining the relationship between parental beliefs about child television viewing, Bekar, P, Altuntaş, D, and Efe. E. (2025) highlighted that Parental beliefs about child television viewing can shape a child's television viewing and that Parents have an important role in their children's television viewing behavior. They suggest that Parents should be aware of their children's beliefs about television viewing. Consequently, children of well-educated parents are more inclined to watch educational programming and less likely to consume adult-oriented content.

It can be argued that heavy television viewing often blur the lines between dramatized television life and real life, with television values appearing closer to reality. This blurring of boundaries

further justifies the need to assess how Arewa 24, as a television channel, influences the behavior and academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria.

It is important to mention some of the popular programs aired by Arewa 24 that attract youth viewership which in turn influence their behavior, they includes *Zafafa Goma* (Top Ten music selection), *Gari ya Waye* (Good Morning Show), *Mata a Yau* (Today's Women), *Sharhin Finai* (Films review), and *Rayuwar Musulunci* (Life of a Muslim). The channel also features drama series such as *Dadin Kowa* (A Soap Opera), *Kwana Chasa'in* (90 Days), *Labarina* (My Story), *Gidan Badamasi* (Badamasi's house), and *Dan Jarida* (The Journalist), which are directly or indirectly relevant to the lives of the viewers. These programs expose students to content that often captures their attention, causing them to spend significant and valuable time watching television as a form of relaxation.

Arewa 24's cultural content is also a significant impact for 'O' Level students. The channel showcases the rich cultural heritage of Northern Nigeria through its programs, which include documentaries, cultural shows, and traditional music and dance performances. This cultural content helps to instill a sense of pride and identity among young viewers, which can have a positive impact on their overall well-being and academic performance.

Despite the rapid rise of the internet, television remains a powerful means of mass communication globally. A study by Sharma S, Rathore, H. S.(2024) examined the influence of Television on the adoption of new cultural practices and lifestyles, offering insights into how different aspects of viewers' lives are shaped by televised content. Utilizing an interview schedule approach with 160 participants from rural areas of Tonk district, Rajasthan, the research quantitatively assesses how television impacts language use, fashion trends, dietary habits, moral perceptions, and interpersonal relationships. The results underscore a selective adoption of televised content, with

viewers integrating certain cultural elements while resisting others, depending on individual and contextual factors. The study highlights the role of television as a powerful medium for cultural transmission yet calls attention to its complex and varied effects on different sociocultural domains. Extensive literature on television highlights its significant impact on human societies and individual behavior, particularly among children and youth. With appropriate parental supervision, it can enhance students' academic achievements and reinforce positive behaviors.

Studies have shown a minor relationship between television viewing and educational achievement. A study by Barwise, Bellman, and Beal, (2019) revealed that television and video watching over the past 25 years has increased while other media consumption has declined. Research suggests that viewing helps people relax and escape their worries. In the current research, electroencephalography (EEG) and reaction-time. The studies further confirmed these findings. Watching TV and video generated brainwaves associated with pleasant, wakeful relaxation and absorbed cognitive capacity, taking viewers' minds off other things. These findings will relax the mind and improve the capacity of educational achievement

A study conducted by Smith and Johnson (2021) examined how the proliferation of streaming services has influenced traditional television viewership. Findings suggests a significant shift in audience behavior, with many viewers opting for on-demand streaming platforms over traditional linear television. The study compares viewership trends across different demographics and regions, highlighting variations in adoption rates and preferences for streaming services.

Nwabueze and Ezeani (2021) conducted a content analysis of gender representation in Nigerian television programming. The study found that gender stereotypes and unequal representation persist in Nigerian television content, with women often portrayed in traditional roles and

marginalized from leadership positions. These findings highlight the need for greater gender diversity and inclusion in Nigerian media representations.

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research approach, employing a survey research design to collect data on students' media consumption patterns and academic engagement. The survey design was considered appropriate as it facilitates the systematic collection of data from a defined population regarding their opinions, behaviors, and experiences.

The population of the study comprised 704 students of Government Day Secondary School (GDSS) Gurin, Adamawa State, (430 males and 274 female). A stratified sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate gender representation. From this population, a sample size of 300 students was selected, consisting of 170 male and 130 female students drawn from the senior secondary section.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. The instrument was administered directly to the respondents to ensure a high response rate. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, specifically frequency counts and percentages, which enabled clear interpretation of patterns and trends in the responses.

Results and Discussions

The data from Table 1 indicates that the study achieved a balanced gender representation, which is a critical strength in ensuring the validity and credibility of the findings. By including relatively equal proportions of male and female respondents, the study minimizes the risk of gender bias influencing the results. The balanced gender representation strengthens the study's reliability, reduces bias, and enhances the overall robustness of the research findings.

From the data presented, a majority of respondents (54%) reported watching Arewa 24 on a daily basis. This finding goes beyond mere frequency of exposure; it suggests that television viewing is deeply embedded in the daily routines of these students. Such habitual and consistent exposure increases the potential for the channel to function not just as a source of entertainment, but as a significant agent of socialization and behavioral influence.

From a theoretical standpoint, this aligns with the assumptions of Social Learning Theory, which posits that repeated exposure to media content enhances the likelihood of imitation and internalization of observed behaviors. In this context, students who watch Arewa 24 daily are more likely to absorb the values, attitudes, and lifestyle patterns portrayed in its programming. Given that entertainment content dominates the channel's offerings, this may reinforce leisure-oriented habits over academically productive behaviors. Furthermore, the high rate of daily viewership raises concerns about time displacement. Time spent watching television, especially on a daily basis, inevitably competes with time allocated for academic activities such as homework, reading, and revision. This is particularly significant if viewing occurs during peak study periods (e.g., evenings), which are typically reserved for independent learning. Over time, this displacement effect can lead to reduced study hours, weakened academic discipline, and diminished concentration.

The research result reveals a clear imbalance in students' media consumption patterns, with entertainment content dominating at 56% compared to only 12% for educational content. This disparity is not merely descriptive; it carries important implications for students' academic engagement, cognitive development, and overall learning outcomes.

First, the dominance of entertainment content suggests that students are primarily engaging with media for leisure, relaxation, and escapism rather than for intellectual or academic enrichment. While entertainment media can serve useful psychosocial functions such as stress relief and social connection, its excessive consumption often displaces time that could be devoted to reading, research, or other academically productive activities. This aligns with the “time displacement effect,” where increased engagement with non-educational media reduces exposure to learning-oriented content.

Second, the relatively low consumption of educational content (12%) indicates limited voluntary academic engagement outside formal classroom settings. In contemporary learning environments, especially in digital contexts, self-directed learning through online platforms, educational videos, and academic resources is crucial for reinforcing classroom instruction. The low percentage suggests that students may not be leveraging these opportunities effectively, which could weaken their independent learning skills and critical thinking development.

Third, the imbalance may also reflect motivational and contextual factors. Students may perceive educational content as less engaging or more demanding compared to entertainment media, which is often designed to be visually stimulating and emotionally rewarding. This points to a possible “attention economy” effect, where algorithm-driven platforms prioritize entertainment content, thereby shaping user preferences and reinforcing passive consumption habits.

The research result further indicates that a significant proportion of students (60%) spend three hours or more daily on the activity under study, which is a substantial amount of time in the context of a student’s daily schedule. This pattern has important implications for academic engagement and overall time management.

Firstly, spending three or more hours daily on non-academic or supplementary media-related activities suggests a strong potential for *time displacement*, where time that should ordinarily be allocated to academic tasks—such as reading, assignments, revision, and research—is instead redirected. Given that students operate within a limited time budget, prolonged engagement of this nature can reduce study efficiency and consistency, particularly when it becomes a habitual daily practice.

Secondly, this level of time investment may contribute to reduced concentration and fragmented attention. Extended screen or media exposure has been associated with shorter attention spans and increased difficulty in sustaining focus on complex academic tasks. As a result, students may find it more challenging to engage in deep learning processes that require sustained cognitive effort, such as critical analysis and problem-solving.

Thirdly, the figure suggests a possible shift toward dependency or habitual usage patterns. When students consistently spend several hours daily on a single activity, it may indicate that the activity has moved beyond recreational use into a routine behavior that structures part of their daily life. This can have broader implications, including reduced sleep time if usage extends into late hours, increased fatigue, and lower academic productivity during school-related activities.

Finally, the association between this high usage level and academic performance is particularly important. When a majority of students allocate such a significant portion of their daily time to non-academic engagement, it increases the likelihood of poor academic outcomes, as less time is available for preparation, revision, and engagement with educational materials. This finding therefore reinforces the need for balanced time management and intentional regulation of media or related usage among students.

Further findings, showed that a combined 72% of respondents reported negative effects on their study habits, indicate a strong and widespread perception that the phenomenon under study is adversely influencing students' academic behavior. This high proportion suggests that the impact is not isolated or marginal but rather systemic and commonly experienced across the respondent group.

The result implies that a majority of students are consciously aware of a decline in their study discipline, such as reduced consistency in reading, delayed completion of assignments, or difficulty maintaining structured study schedules. When such a large proportion reports negative effects, it strengthens the argument that the observed behavioural change is not accidental but likely linked to sustained exposure to the influencing factor identified in the study. The perception of negative influence on study habits may also reflect issues of self-regulation and time management. Students who acknowledge these effects may already be experiencing challenges in balancing academic responsibilities with other competing activities. This often manifests in procrastination, irregular study routines, and reduced engagement with academic materials, all of which can undermine learning effectiveness over time.

Further, the data highlights a critical psychological dimension: awareness of negative impact does not necessarily translate into behavioural change. Even though students recognize that their study habits are being affected, the continued prevalence of the behavior suggests possible dependency, habit formation, or lack of alternative constructive engagement strategies. This gap between awareness and action is important in understanding why the problem persists despite recognition of its consequences.

Finally, the magnitude of the percentage (72%) indicates that the issue may have broader implications for overall academic performance within the population studied. Poor study habits are strongly associated with reduced comprehension, lower retention of information, and ultimately weaker academic outcomes. Therefore, this finding provides empirical support for concerns about declining academic discipline.

The data from the table above shows that reduced study time (46%) is the most commonly reported issue, followed by poor concentration (30%). This suggests that Arewa 24 has a direct and measurable impact on students' academic engagement in the study area. The high rate of reduced study time clearly indicates that time spent watching programmes on Arewa 24 is replacing time that should be used for academic activities, reinforcing the idea of time displacement. In addition, the significant proportion reporting poor concentration highlights that the impact goes beyond time loss to affect students' cognitive focus. Arewa 24 content, often designed to be fast-paced and highly engaging, can make it difficult for students to maintain attention on academic tasks that require sustained mental effort.

Overall, these findings confirm that television not only reduces the time available for studying but also weakens students' ability to concentrate, thereby negatively influencing their academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study provide a coherent and interrelated picture of how television viewing—specifically *Arewa 24*—influences students' academic behavior and study habits.

In Table 2, the finding that 54% of respondents watch Arewa 24 daily indicates a high level of habitual exposure. This aligns strongly with Social Learning Theory as proposed by Albert Bandura, which posits that repeated exposure to media content increases the likelihood of imitation and internalization of behaviors. In this case, continuous exposure to entertainment-driven programming may reinforce leisure-oriented lifestyles at the expense of academic discipline. Furthermore, the finding supports cultivation perspectives (e.g., George Gerbner), suggesting that prolonged television exposure can shape perceptions of reality and priorities over time.

The results in Table 3 reveal that entertainment dominates viewing preferences (56%), while educational content is significantly under-consumed (12%). This imbalance supports existing media studies literature on the time displacement hypothesis, which argues that time spent on entertainment media reduces engagement with cognitively enriching activities. Scholars such as Neil Postman have long warned that excessive entertainment consumption can transform learning cultures into amusement-oriented environments. In this study, the low engagement with educational content suggests weak self-directed learning practices, which are crucial in modern academic settings.

The study revealed a further deepening this concern, showing that 60% of respondents spend three or more hours daily watching television. This level of exposure is substantial and consistent with research linking prolonged screen time to reduced academic performance and attention difficulties. Studies in educational psychology indicate that excessive media use fragments attention and reduces deep cognitive processing. This supports the argument that heavy television consumption not only displaces study time but also weakens students' ability to concentrate effectively during learning tasks.

The perception-based findings are particularly revealing. With 72% of respondents reporting negative effects on their study habits, the data suggests a widespread awareness of the problem. This aligns with self-regulation theories, which emphasize that awareness alone does not guarantee behavioural change. Many students may recognize the negative impact yet struggle to control their viewing habits due to routine, habit formation, or lack of structured alternatives.

Finally, the study provided concrete evidence of academic consequences. Reduced study time (46%) and poor concentration (30%) emerge as the most significant effects. These findings empirically validate the earlier theoretical assumptions. The dominance of reduced study time directly confirms the time displacement effect, while poor concentration reflects cognitive overload and attention fragmentation—issues widely discussed in media effects research.

Taken together, the findings across all tables are mutually reinforcing: high exposure (Table 2), entertainment preference (Table 3), extended viewing time (Table 4), perceived negative impact (Table 5), and measurable academic effects (Table 6) all point to a consistent pattern of media influence that is detrimental to students' academic engagement.

Conclusion

This study concludes that television viewing, particularly through Arewa 24, has a significant and predominantly negative influence on students' study habits and academic engagement. While the channel serves important cultural and entertainment functions, its high consumption among students contributes to reduced study time, weakened concentration, and poor academic discipline.

The findings confirmed that television acts both as a time competitor and a cognitive distractor, limiting not only the quantity of time available for academic work but also the quality of students'

engagement with learning tasks. The dominance of entertainment content and the relatively low consumption of educational programming further exacerbate this challenge.

Overall, the study establishes that without proper regulation and balance, television viewing can undermine students' academic performance and long-term educational development.

Based on the earlier set research questions such as 1. How frequently do students watch Arewa 24?. 2. What are the purposes for which Government Day Secondary School Gurin students watch Arewa 24? And 3. How does exposure to programs on Arewa 24 influence the academic performance of Government Day Secondary School Gurin students?

The following recommendations are hereby made

Having determined the influence of Arewa 24 on academic performance of secondary school students in GDSS Gurin, Adamawa state. The result stands out as a sample reflecting the likely outcome on other Secondary Schools. The following recommendations are, therefore, made:

1. Arewa 24 should enhance the quality and appeal of its educational programs by incorporating engaging formats and aligning them with school curricula to attract more student viewers for academic purposes.
2. Arewa 24 should consider scheduling educational programs during times that do not conflict with students' study schedules, making it easier for students to benefit from such content.
3. Schools and media stakeholders should organize awareness programs to educate students on the importance of balanced media consumption and the potential benefits of utilizing educational content of Arewa 24 by integrating media literacy programs to help students critically evaluate and consciously regulate their media consumption habits.

4. Educational authorities and policymakers should partner with Arewa 24 to design programs that specifically target educational goals, thereby maximizing the channel's role as a learning tool.
5. Finally, parents and school authorities should encourage structured viewing schedules, particularly limiting television exposure during peak study periods (e.g., evenings). They should also be in control of television viewing of their children, identifying the type of programs their children watch and how much they watch it. This should be done from their tender age, so that students get used to watching good programs, encouraging them to study and perform school assignments as at when due.

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