DOI 10.7603/s40874-014-0018-1

Excessive Game-Playing and Children's Academic Performance in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Titilayo Osuagwu

Received 19 Jun 2015 Accepted 22 Jul 2015

ABSTRACTPeople are uncertain about the role of excessive electronic game-playing on children's academic performance. It is on this premise that this study examines the effects of excessive electronic game-playing on children's academic performance in Port Harcourt. The study use survey and quasi-experiment to sample 371 students of Junior Secondary school 1-3 who are within the age brackets of 10-12. Based on the problem and objectives of the study, research questions were formulated. Research question one to know the extent of excessive game-playing among the children, while research question two sought ascertain the relationship between excessive game-playing and the academic performance of children. A null hypothesis was also formulated and tested with the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the level of significance tested at 0.5 level of significance. The findings showed that a proportion of the sampled population met the criterion of addiction and the majority of the children were still non-frequent gamers. The result also showed that there is a negative correlation between excessive game-playing and academic performance as the majority of the very high scorers in tests administered on the children were from the category labelled as non-frequent and low frequent gamers. The null hypothesis that said 'there is no significant relationship between extent of excessive play and academic performance was rejected, as the r-value was -0.27. Based on these findings, it was recommended that parents should monitor their children's gaming habits and that governments should control the importation of entertainment games and encourage more of educational games.

Keywords: Excessive game playing, academic performance, electronic games and Children

I. INTRODUCTION

People are uncertain about the role of electronic games especially, excessive game play, in children's academic performance. This is against the backdrop of assumptions and speculations of its anti-social or pro-social value to children's learning.

Article 13 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, no doubt, grants children access to information through any media of their preferences and also advocates children's participation in media (United Nations, 2003). The proliferation of the media, caused by digital technologies and the heavy profit drives of the global media conglomerates have helped in giving people, particularly children, a wide range of media offerings. However, article 17 of the same Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates the guidelines for the protection of the child against injurious information, material and exploitation. The African Charter on Children's Television (1995) also re-echoes this position by maintaining that children's media offerings should empower them to meet their developmental needs and wants. (Nyamnjo, 2008).

Osei-Hwere & Pecora (2008), note that the media in Africa seem not to have been channeled towards the peculiar cognitive needs of the African children. This is obvious in the fact that little is known about their experiences either as audiences or creators. Okoye, (1993); Popoola, (2008); Ozolu(2008); Nyamnjo, (2008) and Fehintola & Audu (2012), state that the western media offerings through the Internet, VCR, Computer, Video Games, Radio and even the Television are some offerings that are available to the Nigerian children. They argued that such media offerings are alien to the children and constitute a source of distraction, rather than meeting the social, cultural and pedagogical needs of children in the developing world.

A. Statement Of The Problem

Parents often complain that owing to their addictive nature, electronic games, take away the substantial amount of time children ought to invest in cognitive activities that are beneficial to their academic performance. (Gentile, 2009 & Jatau, 2012). Jatau (2012) in noting the dearth of reading culture in Nigerian children, observes that children prefer electronic gadgets and toys to books for. Children play

DOI: 10.5176/2335-6618_2.2.40

Published online: 23 November 2015

electronic games without time limit to the detriment of their homework, study time and even class attendance.

Opinions are, however, divided about the role of electronic games in children's learning. Some scholars have argued that rather than see electronic games as a villain to learning, they should be seen as a pro-social offering that helps children's academic performance.(Greenfield,1984; Singer,1993; Murray 1994).They claim that kids are developing interest in a world of exploding technological opportunities, learning through computers and a busting array of cable options.

Being a new media activity, electronic games and their role in children's academic performance, unlike television or home video, lack enough empirical backing to support the claim of benefit or harm. Although some studies are evolving in other climes, there are no many studies focusing on electronic games in Nigeria. In the light of the above, this study investigated the influence of excessive games use on the academic performance of children in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

B. Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of excessive game use on the academic performance of children in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

1. Determine the extent of excessive electronic games use among the children in Port Harcourt.
2. Establish the relationship between excessive electronic games use and the academic performance of children in Port Harcourt.

C. Research Questions

Based on the problem and the objectives already stated in this study, the following research questions have been posed:

1. What is extent of excessive electronic games use among Port Harcourt?
2. What is the relationship between excessive electronic games use and the academic performance of children in Port Harcourt metropolis?

D. Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis shall be tested:

H_{01} There is no significant relationship between excessive electronic game use and the academic performance of children in Port Harcourt.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A number of theories that have to do with effects are relevant to this work. The theories range from the magic bullet theory, the uses and gratifications theory, the technological determinist theory the play theory, the social learning theory and the new media theory. However, the play, the social learning and the new media theories shall be the focal points of this study.

A. The Play Theory

The play theory, propounded by Williams Stephenson in 1967, posits that the media audience uses the media more for entertainment and play than for work. Asemah (2011) aptly captures the assumption of the theory in stating that "people use the media more (specially) as a play than work, more for pleasure and entertainment than for information and (self) improvement" (p.112).

The theory broadly identifies two media situations in life: Play and work. It further argues that the preponderance of media experiences are play related rather than work. The play situation ranges from pleasure, relaxation to entertainment. In contrast, the work situation includes reality, self development/improvement and productivity (Anaeto, Onabafo & Osifeso, 2008; Asemah, 2011).

Robin's (1994) classifications of media use dimensions into ritualised (diversionary or escapist) dimension and instrumental (utilitarian) dimension are consistent with Stephenson's (1967) classifications of 'play' and work. Ritualized media use has to do with habitual media consumption for diversion or escapism from realities and daily stress. It suggests a less goal-directed use of a medium, but a close affinity, due to frequent exposure. Emphasis of the ritualized media use is on the satisfaction of the sender or receiver. In contrast, instrumental media use implies information and goal-directed media usage. (Robins, 1994; McQuails; 2005).

However, despite the fact that Stephenson empirically demonstrated his theory, it is not free of criticisms. The play theory has been criticised for being too general in claiming that the preponderance of media use are in the realm of play. Rogers (1999) points out this flaw and argues that the new media technologies have blurred the boundaries between play and seriousness (work), because some plays can teach skills, thereby, enhancing cognition. The theory is also said not to have a working model of play and does not have convincing examples to validate it (Kuclin & Fellow; 2009).

Warsfold (2007) defended the play theory and said it was a work in progress. Nevertheless, if this theory is seen as

work in progress in the light of the new media, the present work might be an effort to prove or disprove it. If disproved, there may be a need for the modification of the play theory to reflect the realities of the new media and globalisation of information. For instance, it is often argued that electronic games serve both education and entertainment functions.

The criticisms of the play theory, as mentioned above, do not in any way limit its relevance to this study. We can utilise the play theory to understand the motive for playing video games, given that one of our objectives is to establish whether electronic games solely belong to the realm of play or the realm of work. The play theory may also lend credence to the general supposition that new media (for example, games) are often regarded as a sub-system of play and entertainment and not an outlet for information and self-improvement. Situating games within the traditional notion of play, Rogers (1991) submits that "we play on the net, down loading games, role-taking, role-making with other players not known to us, except through the characteristics they take as allies or opponents in electronic space" (p. 60). In a similar vein, Zimmerman & Salen (2003) describe game as an 'autonomous system' within the realm of play.

B. Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory, propounded by Albert Bandura in 1977, has been widely applied in the area of media effects on children and young people (McQuail, 2011). This theory argues that the media do have cognitive effects on people and they can be a source of observational learning. According to the social learning theory, people learn through direct learning or through observation (Bandura, 1994; Anaeto, Onabanjo and Osifeso, 2008). People also learn through indirect sources like the media (McQuail, 2011). That is to say that people can learn through television, movies or video games.

The theory also argues that people are likely to imitate rewarded behaviours that they have witnessed than the behaviours that are punished (Buckley & Anderson, 2006). McQuail (2011) stated that the theory identified four basic processes of learning to include Attention, Retention, Production and Motivation. Attention has to do with concentrating on media content that have potential relevance to our lives' interests and needs. Retention has to do with preserving and recalling what has been learnt and adding it to the stock of prior knowledge. Production is the actual application of what has been learnt to situation where it can either be rewarded or punished, leading to increased or decreased motivation.

Bandura demonstrates the social learning of aggressive behaviours by showing a group of children a film of an adult behaving aggressively toward an inflatable toy, bobo doll. Some of the children saw the aggressive adult being reinforced by another adult, while another group saw them being punished. A control group saw the model behaving without any positive or negative consequence. Afterwards, the children were given the opportunity to play with a variety of toys including bobo dolls. It was found that those that saw the aggressive behavior being punished were less likely to imitate aggression as opposed to those who saw the behavior being reinforced. (Sammons, 2009).

Although the theory has been variously used in explaining the possible effects of television on aggression, it can also be applied to other areas of media effects that include everyday matter like clothing, appearance, style, eating and drinking, modes of interaction, personal consumption and long-term trends. (Harris, 1993; Anaeto, Onabanjo & Osifeso, 2008 and McQuail, 2011). Hence, the theory can be applied in contemporary researches in games and education.

C. Excessive Electronic Game- Playing

Excessive electronic game-playing has been used synonymously with terms like electronic game overuse, pathological or compulsive use. Excessive electronic game-playing means spending too many hours or length of time on game- playing to the extent that it interferes with other activities. Dewar (2009) describes excessive gaming as the dominance of gaming in someone's life. It goes beyond length of time, it includes gaming taking over someone's life.

D. Technology and Learning

Proponents of technology in education, (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2007; Buckingham, 2007; & McQuail 2006), insist that the characteristics of technology, especially the new media, hold a lot of promises for learning and high academic attainment. Those attributes they claim include interactivity, opportunity for personalised learning, multiple intelligences, edutainment, among others. Gasher & Lorimer (2007) explain that the rationales for the introduction of communications technologies are their potentials for improvement in education and other facets of life. They further explain that "In education the availability of better information, designed more effectively for the learner, with the possibility of interactivity and supplemented by motivational devices and work place relevancy is just the beginning" (p. 95).

However, opponents of the use of technology in education argue that it makes the children to become slaves to the machine and overwhelms the human capacity for critical thinking. Melody (1998) describes it as a "state of wallowing in incomprehensible information" p.267. Littlejohn (2007) comments on the acquisition of knowledge

and say that knowledge in the electronic age changes rapidly. He explains further that we become aware of different versions of truth which by implication leaves us confused and unsettled. Earlier, Damac (1990), expressed doubt about whether the introduction of new technology equals progress, since according to him, new technologies benefit the powers that be than the ordinary citizens. Lorimer (2007) agrees with Damac's view and states that as mundane as it sounds, the number of hours spent with a particular medium may have considerable negative consequences when multiplied throughout the society. In the same vein, Belanger (2007) succinctly stated that the youth segment is exhibiting a media consumption behaviour that is raising many questions.

E. Negative Effects of Electronic Games Addiction on Learning

The negative effects of video games addiction range from violence/aggression, social isolation, confusion of reality and fantasy, stifled creativity, vision and eye problems, bones and joint problems, attention problems and displacement of work and school related activities (Barry etal., 2008; Russel, 2010; Sequire, 2010 and the National Institute for Media and Family, 2008).The concern of this study is the effect that pertains school or academic performance, an area Barry, et al., (2008) earlier describe as "an untouched area of research" (p.713).

Buckley & Anderson (2007), claim that "unfortunately video games are associated with negative outcomes. For example, some research has linked high level of video game playing with – poorer academic performance" (P. 366). This is in turn the impact of the number of hours spent on playing video games, preference of entertainment content of games, and preference of other means of information. (Buckingham, 2007).

The number of hours children spend on video games has been a source of concern to all stake holders. As Sparks (2002), observes "children spend time playing the latest computer games, the potential effects that we could discuss might easily turn into a separate, book-length volume" (p. 186). In consequence, scholars are asking new questions as well as designing new research paradigms. One of such questions is the impact of frequency of exposure to electronic games on academic performance, since as noted earlier; this area of research seems sparse, compared to the questions that relate to the impacts of electronic games on violence or aggression among others.

When children engage in so much video game, other productive activities that are school related are displaced. (Sparks, 2002; Buckingham 2007). Such school related activities range from school attendance, homework and personal studying. This argument tallies with Dominick's (2002) submission that television (which has a lot of similar attribute with video games), has little to benefit cognition, as it has been linked to decrease in academic performance. This is because it is uncertain whether the number of hour, children invests in engaging in media activities; pay off in better academic performance.

The second argument put forward by the critics of video games is that children prefer entertainment content/genre to educational ones. For instance, educational games are less engaging, as they are "single-player games, with unsophisticated graphics and limited interactivity" (Buckingham 2007, P. 114). Also, children do not consider video games as a serious learning tools, thus, they trivialise their educational values. This is evident in Nyamnjoh's (2008), claim that the education, games and other entertainment burgers, served in Africa, are for the commercial advancement of the corporate media.

More so, children are said to prefer other media forms like books and television when it comes to learning. For instance, Buckingham (2007) claims that children prefer books to video games when it comes to seeking for information. The reason adduced for this is that books are often previewed prior to purchase. As regards television, it has been argued that television enhances children's reading skills. An example of this is Sesame Street. (Sparks, 2002; Harris, 1994; Buckhingham, 2007).

In addition, it is often stated that the school curriculum, the so called video game tailor are highly unknown. Presently, children are not interested in educational video games because they do not fully tally with the traditional school curricular that the children are used to. Boniface (1990), notes that for a child to learn from the media, the material should be appropriate to the child's level of thinking and be related to the child's acquired knowledge, experience and interest" (P. 122).

As implied above, the stages of development of children determine their cognitive structures at any stage. This in turn determines children's processing strategies and learning outcomes. Video games designers, therefore, are yet to clear the ambiguities surrounding curricular focus and cognitive stages of development. For instance, in television, 'Sesame Street' is often cited as an instructional programme that targets the reading and the mathematical skills of preschool children. Baran, (2004); Kail & Cavanangh, (2007). Kail & Cavanaugh explain that " Sesame Street has helped educate generations of preschoolers….Sesame street was to use the power of video and animation to foster skills like recognising letters and numbers, counting and vocabulary in preschool

children" (p. 295).

In sum, the claim that video games are relevant to children's learning seems unsubstantiated yet. Buckingham (2007) supports this and said that "evidence that using games results in significant increases in students learning – and that this learning transfers to other areas – is far from adequate" (p. 118).This argument seems plausible, considering the fact that there is no consensus on whether children learn anything new from the media and the lack of a general theory that conceptualizes how children learn from the media. (Singer,1993; Harris, 1994).

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted survey and quasi-experiment as its designs. The survey was to enable the researcher elicit the opinions of the respondents on the subject matter. A quasi-experiment where the students were made to write tests in 3 subjects that included Maths, English and Basic Science was conducted. The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. The population of the study was all the junior secondary school students in public and private schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The population figure was 24,945. The sample size for this study was 372 students, as determined through the Taro Yamene's formular of S=N/1+N (e) 2. The students were drawn from Junior Secondary 1 to 3 and their ages fall within 10-12 age brackets. The multistage sampling procedure was used to select the schools. Quota sampling method was used in the selection 93 samples from each school. The data generated in this study were tabulated in frequency tables. The Pearson's Product Moment statistical tool was used to determine the relationship between extent of electronic games play and academic performance.

A. Data Presentation and Analysis

I) Research Question 1: What is the extent of electronic games usage among Children in Port Harcourt?

Table 1 Extent of Electronic Games Addiction

Variables	Rating	Score	Category	Frequency (f)	%	sf	sp
Play for more than 5 hours	Very High	5	Excessive Usage/Addicted	52	14%	260	70
Play for more than 2 hours	High	4	More Frequent	63	17%	252	68
Daily	Average	3	Frequent	81	22%	243	66
Twice A Week	Low	2	Low Frequent	84	23%	336	46
Once A Week	Very Low	1	Non Frequent	92	24%	92	24
Total		N=5		372	100	1183	174

Rating=$\sum sp/N$=64percent; Average Score = $\sum sf\ /f$= 2.8

The table 1 above shows that only 52(14%) students met the criterion of excessive usage. More frequent gamers were 64(17/%). Average players 81(22/%) played daily. Low gamers 84(23%) played twice a week, while the majority 84 (24%) were in the category of low gamers.

II) Research Question 2: What is the Relationship between Video Games Addiction and Children's Academic Performance in Port Harcourt? The academic performance of the students as determined through the tests administered was compared with extent of play.

Table 2. Academic Performance of Children

S/N	Test Score	Rating	Low FR	Non FR	FR	More FR	ADD	F	%	SF	SP
1	70-100	Very High (5)	20	18	20	9	5	72	19%	360	95
2	60-69	High (4)	15	28	17	14	10	84	23%	336	92
3	50-59	Average (3)	30	32	19	12	7	100	27%	300	81
4	40-49	Low (2)	17	4	10	13	12	56	15%	112	30
5	0-39	Very Low (1)	10	2	15	15	18	60	16%	60	16
Total		**N=5**	**92**	**84**	**81**	**63**	**52**	**372**	**100**	**1168**	**314**

Rating=$\sum sp/N$= 63/; Average score =$\sum sf\ /f$=3.1

The table 2 shows that the children recorded an average performance of 63% and an average score of 3.1. This results from the fact that 72(19/%) had very high scores plus 84(2%) that had high scores totaling 156(42%). Their performance was considered high when compared to the sum of 62(17%) low and 67(18%) very low performance, totalling129 (35%). The table also indicates that the highest number of students that ranked very high in their academic performance was within the group labeled as non-frequent gamers. H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between electronic games addiction and academic performance of children in Port Harcourt.

III) Hypothesis Testing

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between excessive electronic games playing and academic performance of children in Port Harcourt.

Table 3. **Correlation of Electronic Usage (X) and Academic Performance (Y)**

Rating	**score**	**X**	**Y**	**X^2**	**Y^2**	**XY**
Very High	5	52	72	2704	5184	3744
High	4	63	84	3969	7056	5292
Average	3	81	100	6561	10000	8100
Low	2	84	56	7056	3136	4704
Very Low	1	92	60	8464	3600	5520
Total	**N=5**	**372**	**372**	**28754**	27176	**27360**

$$\text{Correlation= r = -0.27}\frac{n(\sum xy)-(\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2-(\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2-(\sum y)^2]}}$$

The result is -0.27 showing that there is a negative relationship between excessive video game playing and academic performance. This implies that excessive game playing negatively affects academic performance. This led to the rejection of the research null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis that states that "there is a significant relationship between extent of electronic games usage and academic performance." Furthermore, the relationship between the two variables is not much 0.27 is not close to -1. Also the r- value was found not to be significant because the two-tailed test, Using df 3 at 0.5 level of significance, the calculated t- value of 0.488 is less than the table t-value of 3.182.

B. Discussion of Findings

Analysis of findings reveals that only 14% and 17% of the sample met the criteria of excessive and more frequent gamers. The majority 24% were non frequent gamers, while 22% and 23% were average and low frequent gamers. These data show that some children are becoming excessive gamers. This finding confirms the submission of other scholars (eg.Gentile 2009 and Li, et al; 2012)

Besides, it was found that there's a negative correlation between excessive use of electronic games and academic performance. The fact that the majority of those who made very high and High grades came from the category labeled as nonfrequent users and the r-value of 0.27 attests to this, though the value was found not to be significant. This finding corroborates previous research efforts in games addiction as seeing in Li et al; (2012). It however, disproves the claim of the media having cognitive effects on their users as argued in Bandura's social learning theory.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study has shown that some children are using electronic games excessively. However, there is no too much cause for alarm or worry as seeing in parents and educators because the majority of children gamers are still nonfrequent users. Also, excessive electronic gaming negatively affects academic performance. Further studies should broaden the scope of this study by considering a larger population in addition to looking into why children do not play the kinds of games that can enhance academic performance.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Parents should check mate the gaming habits of their children by monitoring the number of hours they spend on gaming. They can also make conscious efforts at ensuring that children play educational games all the time. Teachers and educators can also help in this same manner.
- Parents should be aware of the gaming habits of their children in order to discern the children's status vis-à-vis their academic performance.
- Governments at all level can help check the negative effects of electronic gaming on children's academic

performance by checking the influx of entertainment games that have no educational potentials on children.

REFERENCES

[1] Anaeto, S.G., Onabajo, O.S & Osifeso, J.B. (2008). *Models and theories of communication.* Lagos: Nigeria African Renaissance book incorporated.

[2] Anderson, J.A., & Ploghoff, M.E. (1993). Children & media in education. in G.L berry & J.K Asamen (eds.), *children and television images in a changing cultural world*. in G.L. Berry & J.K. Asamen (Eds.), *children and television images in a changing sociocultural world.* (pp.89-101). London: sage publications.

[3] Asamen, J.K. (1993).What children learn from television and how they learn it. in G.L. Berry & J.K. Asamen (eds.), *children and television images in a changing sociocultural world.* (pp.308-311). London: sage publications. Sparks

[4] Asemah, E.S. (2011). *Selected mass media themes.* Jos: University Press.

[5] Bandura, A. (1994). Social cognitive theory of mass communication. in J. Briant and d. Zilmerman (eds.), *media effects advances in theory and research. (pp. 61-90.).* hillside, new jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

[6] Baran, S.J. (2004). *Introduction to mass communication* (3rd ed.). Boston: Mcgraw hill.

[7] Barry, I.P & Gabriel, J.B. (2008). Gaming frequency and academic performance. Australian journal of education technology. 24 (4). 355-373.

[8] Berry, G.L. (1994). The medium of television and the school curriculum: turning research into classroom practice. in G.L. Berry & J.K. Asamen (eds.), *children and television images in a changing sociocultural world.* (pp.103-104). London: sage publications.

[9] Chuan, T.Y., & Chen, W.F. (2009). Effect of computer-based video games on children: an experimental study. *Journal of educational technology and society,* 12 (2), 1-10.

[10] Dewar, G. (2009) Video games addiction: A parent's evidence based guide. Retrieved April 15 from Parenting Science.com.

[11] Editorial, Saturday sun newspaper. (2012, august 25). *recurring failure in Waec examinations.* p.11.

[12] Gentile, D.A. (2009). Pathological video game use among youth 8-18: a national study. *psychological science,* 20. 594-602.

[13] Gentile, D.H. (2012). *The effects of video games on children: What parents need to know.* retrieved from www.pedsforparents.com

[14] Greenfield, P. (1984). *Mind and media: the effects of tv, video games and computers.* Cambridge: Havard university press.

[15] Hans, D. (2012). 5 warning signs of gaming. Retrieved from addiction,http://addiction.cnn.com

[16] Harris, R.J. (1994). *A cognitive psychology of mass communication.* (2nd Ed.). New Jersy, London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

[17] Li, D., Khoo, A., Cho, H. & Liau, A.K(2012).Effects of digital game play among young Singaporean gamers: A two- wave longitudinal study. Retrieved April 14, from http://journalstdl.org

[18] Melody, W. (1998). Electronic networks, social relations and the changing structure of knowledge. in D. Crawley & D. Mitchel (Eds.), *communication s theory today.* (pp. 254-273).Uk: polity press.

[19] Nyamnjoh, F.B. (2008). Children, media and globalisation: a research agenda for Africa. in Pecora, n., Osei-Hwere, e. & Carlson, u. (eds.), *African media, African children.(pp.29-47).* sweden: the international clearing house on children, youth and media.

[20] Okorie, N., & Tunji, O. (2011). Facebook & online relating: computer mediated relationship among young Nigerian. In D. Wilson (ed.), *the Nigerian journal of communication*. 9(1) 112-128.

[21] Ozolu, S.Y. (2008). Scanning the interface of new communication technologies and the new world information and communication order. in *journal of media and communication. Vol. (1). no. 1.*

[22] Popoola, M. *(*2008*). Journalism*, democracy stability and national integration. In journal of media and communication (1) vol.1 (pp.43-59).

[23] Rogers, E.M. (1994). *A history of communication study: A biographical approach.* New York: the Free Press.

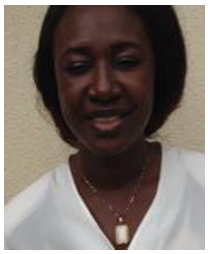
[24] Singer, D.G. (1993). Creativity of children in a television world. In G.L. Berry & J.K. Asamen (eds.), *children and television images in a changing sociocultural world.* (pp.73-86). London: sage publications.

[25] Sparks, G.G. (2002). *Media effects research.* Canada: Wardsworth.

[26] United Nations convention on the right of the child, (2003).

[27] Wimmer, R.D. & Dominick, J.R. (1997). *Mass media research: an introduction.* (5th ed.). Belmont: Wardworth publishing.

AUTHOR'S PROFILE



Titilayo Osuagwu is a Lecturer II at the Department of Linguistics & Communication Studies, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. She began her career in 2011 and she's currently studying for a PhD degree in communication studies, with a particular interest in New Media. Her research activities cover Development Communication, Child Language Development, Communication Disorders and Communication & Culture