

# Social Reality and Cultural Propagation in Funke Akindele-Bello's *Jenifa's Diary*

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Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> BOWEN University, Department of Theatre Arts, 232101, Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria. ORCID: 0000-0002-6804-3395, Email: [stephen.okpadah@bowen.edu.ng](mailto:stephen.okpadah@bowen.edu.ng)

**ABSTRACT:** Apart from originating contemporary norms and cultures among its viewers, Nigerian television series portray new and emerging constructions and practices that the populace is able to identify with. Recently, one television series that has become popular in Nigeria is *Jenifa's Diary*. Its popularity stems from its incorporation of the Nigerian English, the British English and the indigenous Yoruba language, as well as the antics and codification(s) of the eponymous character, Jennifer. Her utility of a distinctive English language which deviates from the Nigerian Pidgin and the British English, has made this series popular among viewers. This has created a new linguistic culture and also appropriated what I term the *Jenifanlingua franca*. It is not a rarity to see children, teenagers and adults communicate in the same manner as Jennifer. Against this backdrop, this paper examines Funke Akindele-Bello's television series *Jenifa's Diary* as Nigerian social reality and a medium for cultural propagation. This study examines socio-cultural nuances in *Jenifas Diary*. The research is qualitative as it utilises the literary and content analysis methods. The study reveals that *Jenifa's Diary* captures the plight of the *African been to* in the Western world and that the television serial is rich with its incorporation of the Nigerian Pidgin English, the British English and some indigenous Nigerian languages such as the Yoruba language, as well as the antics and codification(s) of the eponymous character, Jennifer. While *Jenifa's Diary* and other Nigerian television series are products of social realities, they also create spaces for new socio-cultural landscapes. The study has been able to explain the imperative of television series on the Nigerian socio-cultural space. Cineastes should produce television serials that will educate and stimulate the populace towards becoming better people in the society.

**KEYWORDS:** Television series, *Jenifa's Diary*, Nigeria, Funke Akindele, Popular Culture, Social Construct

## INTRODUCTION

Postcolonial African drama was informed by the need to erase colonialism, and neocolonialism and also, to rewrite African historiography that had been distorted by Eurocentrics such as Ruth Finnegan, Joseph Conrad, Hugh Trevor Roper and others. The critical discourse of cultural reconstruction is captured in works of Bill Ashcroft, George Padmore, Gareth Griffith, Helen Tiffin and Edward Said. Postcolonial African dramas were also dramas of resistance and counterculture, ethnicity, sexuality, class, race, and the political debate. While African playwrights such as Athol Fugard, Ngugi WaThiong'o, and the Nobel Laureate for literature, Wole Soyinka capture the above processes, dramas on television also complemented the campaign of resistance against colonialism and neocolonialism. They also advocate the propagation of indigenous African cultural aesthetics. The influx of satellite television stations culminated into the proliferation of television dramas. The South African television dramas *Isidingo* and *Generations*, as well as popular Nigerian dramas like *SuperStory*, *Tinsel* and *White House* are paradigms of numerous television dramas that still continue to characterize the African broadcast space and air wave.

In Africa, and Nigeria in particular, television series are gradually creating new socio-cultural landscapes. Audiences now derive info-tainment and education and they are also being stimulated by the content of these series. Apart from creating contemporary norms and practices among its viewers, Nigerian television series also portray emerging constructions that the populace are able to identify with. From Wale Adenuga's *Papa Ajasco*, through Charles Inojie's *The Johnsons*, and Funke Akindele-Bello's *Jenifa's diary*, television series have become very popular. This has culminated into various linguistic constructions, such as *Ojigbijigbijigbi*, (in *Papa Ajasco*), *How is You?* (in *Jenifa's Diary*), among others. The above words and many others have become recurrent sayings among viewers of these television dramas. In fact, such parlances are spoken in Nigerian urban, sub-urban and rural areas.

One television serial that has become very popular in Nigeria and globally, is *Jenifa's Diary*. Its popularity stems from its incorporation of the Nigerian Pidgin English, the British English and some indigenous Nigerian languages such as the Yoruba language, as well as the antics and codification(s) of the eponymous character, Jennifer. Her utility of a distinctive English language which largely departs from the Nigerian Pidgin and the British English, has made this series popular among viewers. This has also created a new linguistic culture and appropriated what we term the Jenifan English. This language is a new linguistic culture among viewers. Therefore, it is not a rarity to see children, teenagers and adults communicate in the same manner as Jennifer. Against this backdrop, this paper examines Funke Akindele-Bello's television series *Jenifa's Diary* as Nigerian social reality and a medium for cultural propagation. In this study, I use the terms television drama and television serial interchangeably.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I anchor this paper on Michel Foucault's perspective on power, discourse and knowledge. Foucault's approach to power discourse and knowledge reveals that "a discourse

is an institutionalised way of speaking or writing about reality that defines what can be intelligibly thought and said about the world and what cannot. For example a new discourse of *sexuality* had fundamentally changed the way we think about desire, pleasure, and our innermost selves” (Foucault, 2006). He goes further to submit that “discourses about sexuality did not discover some pre-existing, core truth about human identity, but rather created it through particular practices of power/knowledge” (Foucault, 2006). Television dramas are discourses on power and knowledge. These dramas disseminate new dimension and processes to human living. Television narrative(s) affect the lifestyle of its audience, by revealing new cultural trends and thereby educating them on what to do and what they ought not to do. John Vivian (1991) in *The media of mass communication* submits that “when Clark Gable took away a shirt he wore in the movie, *It Happened One Night* produced in 1934, and revealed that he was not wearing anything underneath, American men in great numbers decided that they too would go without undershirts”. Vivian’s submission is apt in articulating that drama on film and television influences the thought pattern and behaviour of its consumers. What is televised “becomes diffused into secular culture” (Foucault, 2006). Whatever is churned out of television redefines the society. Michel Foucault’s perspective on power, discourse and knowledge is a suitable theoretical base for this paper since it focuses on the capacity of the media in engineering new social dimensions and processes.

### A CONCISE RETROSPECT ON CULTURAL PROPAGATION IN AFRICA

The practice of cultural propagation is not a recent phenomenon. The exercise known as the Berlin conference where European superpowers converged to engage in the sharing formula of the African continent was not only aimed at economic and environmental exploration and exploitation, it was also geared towards enforcing the way of life of the West-colonial masters on the colonized. The English, French and Portuguese languages were made to replace indigenous African medium of communication, the Western suits and hats took the place of well-designed traditional African couture and the Holy Bible and Quran replaced the Shaman, Chief Priest and Herbalist’s indigenous knowledge.

However, the attainment of independence by African nations led to the quest for cultural nationalism. This could easily be achieved with the propagation of African cultures, traditions values and norms that were erased by the colonist’s culture. This resistance of imperialist tradition(s) could easily be achieved by popular media which is apt in the facilitation of cultural propagation. Good paradigms of the global popular media are television and film. All of the above popular media have wide followership and are used to pass messages across to diverse audiences.

In Africa and Nigeria in particular, the television serials have wide audience followership. The digitization of television stations with the creation of television stations such as WAP Television, *Silverbird* Television, Orisun Television, African Independent Television and African Magic Yoruba in Nigeria, Zee World and B4U in India, television serials have become media of popular culture as millions of audiences engage in

viewership of narratives. Also, the emergence of the virtual and social spaces such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Youtube has also broadened the horizon of popular culture. All of these media of communication, education and entertainment transmit culture. In fact, television networks such as Orisun Television and African Magic Yoruba have been able to transmit Yoruba cultural ethos and values to the outside world with their dramas. Audiences in Europe, the Americas and Asia become conversant with the language, mode of dressing and culinary tradition of the Yoruba people of South Western Nigeria, with this medium. In the words of Jonathan Haynes and Onookome Okome (1997: 21), “nowhere else in Africa has a domestic market for audio-visual entertainment been captured successfully”.

Also, *Zarah's Nikah*, *Twist of Fate*, *Jodha and Akbar*, recurrent serials on Zee World, in India, are very popular among audiences in Africa. Cultural propagation can only be achieved with a popular language—a mode of communication that the audience can comprehend. This is a major strength of the Nigerian video. “The making of Nigerian videos in Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa and English constitutes one of the most vibrant sectors of Nigerian media production, based firmly on a grassroots popular audience” (Larkin 1997:105). Also, most of these television serials although incorporate indigenous languages, are subtitled in the English language to facilitate an understanding by non-indigenous audiences.

### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON TELEVISION DRAMA IN NIGERIA

Television drama is a product of television stations in Nigeria. The first television station, the Western Nigeria Television Ibadan was established in 1959 courtesy of the Chief Obafemi Awolowo led Action Group regional government. This emergence of television in Nigeria facilitated the production of Wole Soyinka's *My Father's Burden*, directed by Segun Olusola in August 1960. “Segun Olusola did not only become the first television drama producer in Africa” (Soyinka, 1994), one major factor that also led to the popularity of this television serial is that it featured the Nigerian born international actor, Orlando Martins.

The artistic engagement(s) of the Yoruba travelling theatre practitioners was also replicated on television. Theatre practitioners such as Duro Ladipo, Kola Ogunmola and Hubert Ogunde saw television drama as a medium of artistic expression. Although they did not fully discard live performances, television became a veritable tool for making their plays popular. Ladipo's *Oba Koso* and *Oba Waja*, two folk plays were adapted for the television.

Plays of Nigerian dramatists of the literary tradition (first generation playwrights), also became televisual products. One of such occasions was when J. P. Clark's plays, *Song of a goat* and *The Masquerade* were produced on television in 1965. In 1969, one of the most popular and successful television series in Nigeria came on air. This was the native-western *The Village Headmaster*. *The Village Headmaster* is a television drama series that is characterised of stock characters. This drama series turned out to be Africa longest serving television drama series. It ran for twelve years.

The 1970s and the 1980s were the golden age of Nigerian television drama. In fact,

“the 70s to the 90s saw a supreme reign of Nigerian TV programmes. Perhaps it was because there was no 24hour TV programming, limited and no access to Internet, and no DStvPay-TV platforms” (Abumere 2016: 1). Before now, the home video medium had not been popular. The only home medium of entertainment was the radio and television. With the presence of television drama, one need not encounter the rigours of going to the cinemas late in the night to see a film narrative. We must not forget that the easy acquisition of the television communication medium by the rich and middle class Nigerians made it easy for the citizenry to easily become acquainted with television dramas. The television audience was bigger and wider; besides, there were in addition, the attraction and prestige of the new medium itself” (Ogundele 1997: 49).

Drama series became innumerable in the 1970s due to the influx of television stations in Nigeria. By this time, the Nigerian Television Service (NTS), the Eastern Nigeria Television (ENTV) and the Radio Kaduna Television (RKTV) had been established. Later on, the deregionalisation of Nigeria and creation of states by the General Yakubu Gowon led administration, which led to the formation of more television stations, was germane to the influx of more drama series. Hence, *Basi and Company*, an adaptation of Ken Saro-Wiwa’s novel, *Basi and Company* was one of such. Others include Jonathan Thonde’s *Hotel de Jordan*, Duro Ladipo’s *Bode Wasimi*, *Jagua* and *Cock Crow at Dawn*. One man who contributed significantly to the enterprise of television drama is the novelist, dramatist and environmental martyr, Ken Saro-Wiwa. Before his environmental activism, he wrote plays for the television as evidenced in his *Basi and Company*, which still remains the best television drama in Nigeria ever. Below is the snapshot of a scene in *Basi and Company*.

In his study on television drama-soap opera in Nigeria, Barclays Ayakoroma(2014) articulates that Lola Fani-Kayode’s *Mirror in the Sun* revolutionised television drama in Nigeria. Apart from the social life that this television drama focuses on, it also popularised many artists. Such artists include “Barbara Soky (Yinka), Enebeli Elebuwa (Chike), Clarion Chukwura (Tina), Toma Mason (Patrick), Dela Williams (Soji)” (Omat-sola 1997:42), among others. In addition, one other popular television drama, was “*Tales by Moonlight*, created by Victoria and aired by the NTA” (Omat-sola 1997: 69). Stories such as *Ikpeama the Lazy Man*, *A festival of the maiden*, *Wisdom of the gods* among others are replete in the repertoire of *Tales By Moonlight*. The infotainment and education functions of the above moonlight tales cannot be overemphasised. Although the *Tales by Moonlight* television drama is still being aired on Nigerian Television Authority, it no longer attracts a mass audience as it did in its formative years.

The popularity of Nigerian television dramas stem from their utility of simple language which is dialectical to the grandiloquent and obscurantist language of the Nigerian cinema of English language expression, the simple plot structure, and others. Most of these dramas comprised of everyday happenings. They were social constructs. The 1990s and early 2000s saw television dramas which include *Domino*, “*Papa Ajasco*, *Family Circles*, *Fortune*, *Super Story*, *Tales by Moonlight*, *I Need To Know*, *Family Circle*, *Fuji House of Commotion* and *Everyday People*” (Okpadah 2016) among others.

Television dramas were well patronised by the Nigerian audience and its content was able to captivate its audience. However, like the Structural Adjustment Programme



which led to the near extinction of celluloid filmmaking and ushered in the home video medium, a similar financial constrain led to the television drama producers' opting for other media of communication as they complained that they were being exploited by the television broadcast stations that aired their television dramas. The money acquired by the producers was barely enough to pay the actors and crew members. Zeb Ejiro, well known for his tele-drama, *Ripples* which ran for five years in Nigerian Television Authority, delved into video film production with video films such as *Domitilla 1 & 2*. Seeing the financial prospect in video film productions and coupled with the meager sum of money being paid by the authorities of the television stations many television drama producers, resorted to engaging in home video film production.

Despite the challenges encountered by television drama producers, this narrative medium has come to stay. Today, the Nigerian television drama enterprise boasts of more than a dozen popular series which include *Tinsel*, *Hotel Majestic*, *Sons of The Caliphate*, *Do Good*, *Skinny Girl in Transit*, *Hush*, *Super Story*, *Papa Ajasco & Company*, *This Life*, *Jenifa's Diary*, *White House*, *Before 30*, *Taste of Love*, *The Johnsons*, *Do-Good*, *Taste of Love*, *Hotel Majestic*, among others.

With the competition in the television drama business, producers strive to make their products popular among audiences. One strategy used by them is the creation of stock characters that capture the fantasy of viewers. From the comic character of Papa Ajasco in *Papa Ajasco & Company*, through the lousy attitude of Jennifer in *Jenifa's Diary*, viewers have become attached to a character in a particular Series or the other. These characteristics portrayed on television series soon become part of popular culture as viewers become influenced by what they hear and see on the screen.

Although Wale Adenuga's *Papa Ajasco* is undoubtedly one of the most popular and viewed television sitcom in Nigeria and Africa, for half a decade, one television series that has taken the air by surprise is *Jenifa's Diary*. Produced by Funke Akindele-Bello, *Jenifa's Diary* was among the Top Six most popular TV series in the world by *Relaxnomiks* in 2016. It is only second behind the ABC sitcom, *Black-ish*. *Jenifa's Diary* has affected the lifestyle of its viewers. The language culture of Nigerians-especially the youths. It is against this backdrop that the next section of this paper examines Funke Akindele-Bello's television series *Jenifa's Diary* as Nigerian social reality and a medium for cultural propagation.

### **FUNKE AKINDELE-BELLO'S *JENIFA'S DIARY* AS POPULAR CULTURE**

In 2016, the television series *Jenifa's Diary* was rated among the Top Six world TV Series by *Relaxnomiks* (2016). The judges comment that:

For those nights when DSTV isn't showing anything you like, the virtual space becomes your companion. With hundreds of websites compiling libraries of the old and latest in the TV space, you can find great entertainment in the hands of your laptop. *Jenifa's Diary* is a well appreciated Nigerian comedy. The series fully captures the life of Suliati (performed by Funke Akindele), a loud but jovial school dropout who migrates to the city in search of greener pastures and perhaps a husband. This Nigerian show got a commendable 65% in rating.

To *Relaxnomics*, this television series is only second behind the ABC sit-com, *Black-ish*. The above quotation reveals the popularity of this television series which is aired on various television stations in Nigeria, sold in DVDs, and also streamed in online platforms such as *Youtube*. In this series, Suliati, a school dropout popularly known as Jennifer, strives to survive in a harsh and difficult society. Her migrating to the United Kingdom to seek greener pasture and her experience in this foreign land, is a metaphor for the travails of illegal immigrants in the American, British and some other European societies. Jennifer and Adaku, two illegal emigrants are poised towards securing permanent citizenship in Britain. While Adaku hopes to do this through marriage, Jennifer hopes to get work permit by every means. Jennifer picks up the job of house help while Adaku decides to stay with her boyfriend who promises to marry her. The above situation is paradigmatic of the travail(s) Nigerian illegal emigrants go through. With the poor economic situation, numerous Nigerians have managed to migrate to North African countries such as Morocco, Libya, Mali, Ghana and others, with the view to easily getting entry into European nations such as Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom and even the United States of America. While some of these people have become slaves and resorted to prostitution, a few others have died in the Mediterranean sea in an attempt to cross the African border to Europe. In South African, the case becomes pathetic as xenophobic attacks have almost become a daily occurrence.

All the characters in the series, *Jennifer's Diary* are given their distinctive personality traits. They are stereotypical characters. Jennifer is lousy, comic, garrulous, hardworking and friendly. Although she speaks the English language, it is different from what others speak. In episode eight, Jennifer is captured as the *African been to*. *African been to* is a term used to qualify an African who has gone beyond the shores of the African continent. Jennifer speaks her acclaimed UK accent to Cordelia her friend, whom she invites to her hotel room where she lodges in Lagos. Cordelia is surprised at Jennifer's change of language and accent. While she mentions rapist *raper*, she calls *rush* instead of *rust*. *Farted* is also replaced with *Mens*. *Mens* is the popular parlance for fart in Nigeria. Below is Jennifer's conversation with a taxi driver:

**Jennifer:** Why don't you shut up and drive?

**Driver:** Ah! I nor hear you o (I didn't hear you clearly)

**Jennifer:** You don't hear me? It is UK accent.

Jennifer also uses the phrase, *Pepper them gang* which is in vogue in major Nigerian cities such as Warri, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Ughelli and Yenagoa. This phrase connotes a gang or a group of people—a brotherhood (especially the women folk) whose association is prominent and well known. *Pepper them gang* is a subculture. On the use of popular language in this television Series, Gabby speaks the Warri version of the English language. The Warri version is a blend of indigenous Urhobo and English, Izon and English, and Itsekiri and English languages. This language is common among the uneducated class and inhabitants of the slums and ghettos. It is popular among market women, public school students, delinquents, low lives, touts popularly called *Agberos* among others. A good example of this is *This woman fine die*. This statement is used to

express that a woman is very beautiful.

The two major characters in this Series are the eponymous characters, Jennifer and her diary. Jennifer has a diary into which she documents whatever happens to her and whatever project she intends to embark on. He is so attached to the diary that it becomes a character in the drama. As a school dropout, she is a woman who is poised towards succeeding in every facet of life. She is a metaphor for the average Nigerian hustler. At some point, Jennifer is a hairstylist before she becomes an entrepreneur on her return to Nigeria. She later becomes an apprentice to a popular Nigerian Disc Jockey, DJ Spinall. There is also her transformation into a taxi driver. The hustling culture holds sway in Nigeria and other third world countries. With the high spate/rate of unemployment, it becomes imperative to indulge in numerous trades in order to make ends meet. Jennifer is an embodiment of various challenges. She is not educated, still single despite the fact that she has come of age, has her parents and younger brother, to cater for, ambitious and impatient.

Cultural propagation and documentation is salient in *Jenifa's Diary*. Beyond the entertainment function of this Series, it also defines and propagates Nigerian cultures-especially that of the Yoruba people in Western Nigeria. Jennifer who gets a job as a house help in the United Kingdom, also doubles as someone who teaches the children at her place of work, Yoruba culture, mores, tradition and norms. Below is one of the songs she teaches the children.

#### **Yoruba Language**

#### **English Language**

*IseAgbenise Ile Wa*

*farming is our profession*

*EnikoSise a ma Jale*

*Anybody that refuses to work will steal*

*Iwekiko la isioko*

*learning without hoe*

*Atiada koi pe o koinpe o*

*and cutlass is incomplete*

Farming is a major profession in Nigeria. The song valorises the farming occupation. Although one is educated in the Western tradition, one must also indulge in farming. It is explicit that *Jenifa's Diary* is geared towards promoting the Nigerian lifestyle and cultures. In this television series, Lucy asks Elizabeth, her daughter what she ate at her friend's house, and she tells her that she ate jollof rice cooked by Aunt Jennifer. Jollof rice is one of the most popular delicacies in Nigeria. Apart from being cooked in various homes, restaurants, fast food joints also attract customers with this food. Lucy is shocked when her daughter, Elizabeth sings the Yoruba song Jennifer taught her. She flares at Elizabeth at this and goes back to warn Jennifer to desist from teaching her daughter anything pertaining to the African way of life. Jennifer defends her teaching Elizabeth the Yoruba song. Below is the conversation that ensues:

**Jennifer:** Africa is a noble place, Indians, Chinese, Turkish, speak their languages proudly in public

**Baby:** Mummy, it is okay...



**Lucy:** (turns to baby) It is not okay. You are British, you act British, you talk like the British. No vernacular, no Yoruba, no African nonsense, you hear me now?

Because she has British work permit and citizenship, Lucy thinks she must erase every trace of Africa in her. But she is mistaken. An armed robbery attack a few days later proves her wrong. With the encroachment of the house by armed robbers, Jennifer shouts at Elizabeth (who is in the room, which the armed robbers are oblivious of) to call the *Olopa*. The word *Olopais* a Yoruba word for Policeman. Having taught Elizabeth this term a few days ago, the little girl decodes the terminology and calls the police with her phone. The armed robbers are arrested by the police with the fact that they do not know the meaning of the word *Olopa*. This galvanises Lucy into pleading with Jennifer to teach the daughter to speak Yoruba. The crescendo of this scene is when Lucy begins to communicate in Yoruba to the surprise of Jennifer. Like Birago Diop in the poem *Vanity*, Gabriel Okara in *Piano and Drums*, *Jenifa's Diary* is a warning to renegades and *African been to* who discard their cultural norms and practices at the expense of Western values and cultures.

Indigenous Nigerian societies create the platform for the child to totally respect the parents and conform to whatever advice they are being given. But it is unfortunate that this aspect of African culture has been jettisoned. Hence, *Jenifa's Diary* interrogates the question of respect of wards for their parents. Jennifer teaches Laide the importance of respect for elders when she (Laide) has a confrontation with her mother on her choice of University to attend. Laide's mother wants her daughter to attend a school in London, while the daughter prefers Birmingham University. Jennifer tells Laide how imperative it is to respect ones parents. In fact, according to Jennifer, ones parents come next to God in a child's life.

Episode eight of the drama Series explores the anticipation of the relatives of the *African been to*, back at home. They expect their people in Europe and America to cater for them. The Nigerian in the diaspora ought to send money back home for the upkeep of their parents, friends and siblings. Majority of them are the bread winners of their home. This is fully captured in this Series where Jennifer's father and mother debate that is more entitled to their daughter's wealth. Her mother holds all the aces as she refuses to divulge Jennifer's telephone number to the father. She becomes the intermediary between her daughter and her husband. Mothers especially in Nigeria want to be associated with the success of their children, instead of their fathers.

The series further highlights the plight of Africans and citizens of other third world countries in the Western and American countries, and the stringent conditions attached to acquiring new visas or renewing them. Jennifer is advised by Collins to return to Nigeria since her papers are expired, to avert deportation by immigration. Jennifer, sees going back to Nigeria as a nightmare. But she finally returns to Nigeria.

Other numerous local constructions and practices are revealed in the series. One of such is the *Agbero* praxis in Nigeria. *Agberos* "are a group of people (usually hoodlums) who extort money from motorists for every passenger conveyed by the motorists" (Okam & Idebe 2020: 170). They are present in Nigerian motor-parks. Furthermore, apart from the portrayal of the witty lifestyle of the eponymous character,

other characters with lousy and non-challant attitude are also portrayed. Bruno, one of Cordelia's neighbors is one of such characters. He secretly taps electric voltage from Cordelia's generator into his house, in order to watch a program on his television and get his phone charged. This is the attitude of people in some Nigerian cities, especially Lagos, Warri and Sapele where cyber criminals (popularly known as Yahoo boys), pickpockets, prostitution, among other deviants reside. While these people think they are very smart, they sometimes meet their waterloo. In the case of Bruno, he is caught with the help of Jennifer as he irons his clothes with the generator.

Television series are a portrayal of social realities. They explore issues that are prevalent in the society, with the view to instilling discipline in individuals. Social reformation also comes to play in the process. The theme of individual discipline and reformation comes to the fore in episode nine where a young man fakes his kidnap with his friends in order to extort money from his mother when the ransom is paid. The mother agrees to pay for her son to be released by the perceived kidnapper. However, the ground plan is busted with the collaboration of Jennifer and the police. The boy and his gang are arrested.

In episode nine, a woman is a victim of a hit and run accident. While Jennifer and other passersby struggle to rush the dying victim to the hospital, a young passerby begins to record the event with pictorial depiction and video. *Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Nairaland* and other virtual spaces have created new cultures-especially among youths. On *Nairaland*, it is not new to see most recent photos of accident victims, cheating couples who get stuck in the sexual act, and other odd news. These are recurrent processes on these social media sites. The Selfie culture is predominant among smart and android phone users in Nigeria and across the world. This norm is as a result of media convergence, increase in the utilisation of the internet, the proliferation of social networking sites, among others. This has culminated into the manufacturing of Selfie sticks meant for placing the phones in good angles. This culture could also be used to evaluate ones level of civility. The Selfie tradition is projected in this television Series. Beautiful backdrops are also used by Jennifer, to reveal the beautiful places she has been to.

It is pertinent to note that the *Runs* praxis is also explored in episodes eight and nine of the series. *Runs* is a popular term in Nigeria. It is a practice whereby, beautiful young ladies satisfy the sexual appetite of men, women (lesbianism), and animals (bestiality) in return for gratification-especially money. Most times, pimps and sex cartels are in charge of this business. These *Runs Babes* register under an agent who introduces them to clients (rich business tycoons, politicians, musicians, actors etc.). It is the norm for *Runs Babes* to live in luxurious apartments and drive expensive cars. Young and handsome men also indulge in it to satisfy the sexual urge of sex starved rich women in return for money. Pelumi and Vero do not only indulge in this *Runs* business, Pelumi also serves as an agent who recruits gigolos for married women. In fact, Jennifer catches Pelumi, a *Runs* babe, seducing Kiki, her friend's dad. She confronts and warns her to desist from seducing her friend's father.

There is also the exploration of native intelligence in this Series. Cordelia and her fiancée visit her mother. Despite the mother's insistence on serving them food, the

fiancée tells her that it is imperative they have some basic discussions on the reason for their visit before eating. Cordelia's mother is impressed at the young man's native intelligence. She states that only a few young men still adhere to such an important cultural practice. Unfortunately, most young people would prefer to eat, drink and forsake salient issues that would make positive impacts in their lives. The filmmaker also makes a statement with the use of evangelion shot to capture the locale at the beginning of every situation. He communicates the standard of living in London and Nigeria. Evangelion shot shows the dominance of a process/subject over the other. With this shot, he depicts the disparity between the economies of the two countries. While the old and dirty roofs of houses are representative of Nigeria, the viewer decodes that there is a transition to London whenever beautiful roofs with well-arranged and planned houses and environments are captured.

### CONCLUSION

Television Series get their themes from events that are prevalent in the society. They are also media of cultural propagation. The issues treated in them are ones that are relevant to audience's taste. Audiences are also info-tained, educated and stimulated by the contents of these Series. Apart from originating contemporary norms and cultures among its viewers, Nigerian television series have portrayed new and emerging constructions and practices that the populace is able to identify with. The popularity of *Jenifa's Diary* stems from its incorporation of the Nigerian Pidgin English, the British English and some indigenous Nigerian languages such as the Yoruba language, as well as the antics and codification(s) of the eponymous character, Jennifer. While *Jenifa's Diary* and other Nigerian television series are products of social realities, they also create spaces for new socio-cultural landscapes.

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