



The Impact of Digital Satellite Television (DSTV) on Local Football in Africa: A Case of Premier Soccer League (PSL) in Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT

The proliferation of digital technology has taken the world by storm. Digital cameras, sport application software's, social media platforms, Google, and digital satellite television to mention just a few have globalised the communities and world over. Sport in African has suffered a dramatic shift from the norm. Issues of digital satellite television viewing have found their way in football matches; satellite fans and virtual stadia are becoming a norm. In sport, the most globally televised football competition or tournaments worldwide includes European Premier League, Spanish La Liga, Italian Serie A, French League 1, and Germany Bundesliga. The study interrogates the impact of digital satellite television viewing on local premier football league in Zimbabwe. Media imperialism theory forms the theoretical background for this study. Interviews and questionnaires were used to determine areas of controversy in the study. Expert purposive, clustering, volunteer and convenient sampling techniques were used to recruit participants from a population of premier league clubs' members in Bulawayo and Hwange. Data collected using interviews and questionnaire schedules indicate that digital satellite television has both positive and negative effects. Findings indicate that digital satellite television has taken over people's lives, virtual stadiums, satellite fans and availability of decoders are now the norm. A figure of 86% of participants applauded the availability of digital satellite viewing as they enjoy watching sport at the comfort of their homes while 75% point at watching quality soccer matches from different leagues. Meanwhile 30% highlighted issues of attendance, popularity and revenues generation affected. Based on the findings, recommendations put forward are that of having a thorough outreach programme on the strategies of improving local football so that it attracts spectators. The use of digital technology is highly recommended for the betterment of football in Zimbabwe and Africa as a whole.

Key words: mass media, digital satellite, digital technology, satellite fans.

Introduction

Football popularly called soccer has a great following worldwide. In Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Football Association (ZIFA) was formed in 1965 and became an affiliate of Confederation of African Football (CAF) as well global governing body, Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) (Dube, 2020). For easy management and access, ZIFA football was regionalised in the following manner, central (Midlands), eastern (Manicaland, Masvingo and Mashonaland East), northern (Harare, Mashonaland Central and West) and southern (Bulawayo, Matabeleland South, and North) regions. This was done to allow easy viewing when Premier Soccer League (PSL) matches are played. PSL is responsible for top league matches composed of eighteen teams and the matches run from March to end of November. Division one matches are run separately (Dube, 2020). PSL matches house oldest teams such as Highlanders, Dynamos and Caps United, and these were formed in 1926, 1963 and 1973, respectively. In the past, whenever these three teams clashed a large crowd was drawn. Like all other countries in the world, the emergence of digital satellite television has brought a drastic shift from the norm, football stadia are no longer the same. The invention of digital satellite television and sport channels viewing has created a dependency syndrome for many viewers though for different reason at the same time affecting local PSL football (Dube, 2020; Daimon, 2010).

Literature review

The globalisation that the world is experiencing through digital technology has dominated all spheres making it one with easy access and sharing of information. According to Dogari et al. (2018) the world is now a global village characterised by speed flow of information. Supportively, Okunna (2012) contends that information is now shared freely among people regardless of distance. The globalisation and interconnectedness' through world wide web (www) and satellite television is now the norm. Dogari et al. (2018) allude to media corporations and satellite enabling affiliates such as DSTV, CNN, and Sky sport to make their products available in many African countries such as Nigeria. Digital television is one mass media that has been used to reach out to many people. Similarly, Orji & Nzeaku (2020) reiterate that mass media is one of the technologies that have redefined society through television. The latter add that TV has become part of peoples' lives and a globally powerful of all media. Supportively, Zia (2007) opines that the affordability of satellite television gadgets has made it possible for every household to acquire it. According to Orji & Nzeaku (2020) there is an alarming influence posed by use of television in societies.

Mass media propaganda and transmission has affected African culture and football has suffered greatly (Mavrinac, 2019). Colonisation of the mind through western domination has forcibly changed the way Africans do their things. Orji & Nzeaku (2020) reiterate that colonisation has migrated from occupying physical space but the human mind. Suggestively, McPhail (2006) posits that electronic imperialism has also impacted negatively on the human mind changing the way we do, think and act, and eventually becoming slaves of mass media. Mass media is a term that is used to describe the application of a technical devices (media) that transmit heterogeneous information to a wider audience or populace (Saragih, 2020). The information can be disseminated in the form of print and electronic media. Electronic include use of television, internet, and its associates.

Television as an electronic medium has undoubtedly transformed the media and its functions. According to Signoriello and Michael (2001), television has become popular, occupying a considerable proportion of people lives with an approximate of 15.5hours per week spent on viewing by diverse groups. Moreover, television became part of people' lives when it was invented in 1920 gaining popularity until around 1960s (Cashmore, 2000). Subsequently, in sport the 1936 Summer Olympics games in Berlin were the first to be televised where a programme was established to transmit signals for not more than ten miles (Nazemi & Khoshemehr, 2012). Suggestively, this became a breakthrough in the history of satellite sports viewing (Sage, 1998). The latter further expand to say that live matches became popular on Zambian television as far back as 1950 where millions of people sat to watch sporting activities. This, however, shows the influence of television as a medium in the context of sports thus, becoming an inescapable part of modern culture.

This breakthrough of television into sport has affected local football matches through satellite digital television viewing and satellite fans in Africa as a whole and Zimbabwe included. Through digital satellite television, football viewing and broadcasting has spread in many African countries inclusive of Zimbabwe (Onwumehidi et al., 2014). Dogari et al. (2018) maintain that football viewing and support has been reshaped and changed drastically due to the infiltration of mass media technology through digital satellite television. Harbi (1996) cited in Zadeh (2014) notes a correlation of satellite viewing and adoption of western values while undermining own culture. Satellite television is a modern digital technology that transmits signal to people in any part of the world with the aid of an antenna or decoder to access information from DSTV, Supersport then viewed on television (Dogari et al., 2018, Nice & Harris, 2005). Of importance is the fact that viewing on satellite is not free, information is compressed to allow those who have subscribed to have viewership on their television through decoders (Domminick, 2006). The latter add that through decrypting, information is sent to many viewers. Conversely, Katz (1993) notes a dependency of developing countries to the rich and industrialised who can produce these programmes and latter transmit through the television. Subsequently, the African continent has been viewed as at the receiving end of digital technology followed by colonisation, stereotypes, and racism as major players (Orji & Nzeaku, 2020). In Spain Liga Football Professional (LFP) league generated a revenue of 34million pounds between 1992-1993 through sport market rights that direct- to- home (DTH) service provider offered to pay television and pay per- view (Buraimo & Simmons, 2007).

The evolution of digital satellite television technology has affected media environment, foreign culture has found permanent space in the way people dress and choice of entertainment. Notably, in Nigeria, people are fans of football club such as Chelsea, Manchester United and City, Real Madrid, Liverpool, and others (Sajjad et al., 2019). Television viewing has affected gate attendance of live matches at the stadia, in Spain a decrease of 45% was recorded (Garcia & Rodrigue, 2002; Buraimo & Simmons, 2007). This is supported by the use and gratification theory which deals with an understanding of why people opt for certain entertainment at the expense of the other. According to Wang et al. (2016) this theory is very crucial in decision -making and directing audiences. Individuals make informed decisions based on their priorities and goals and subsequently, choose what to watch to fulfil their interest and desires. In Nigeria, a study conducted established that 70% of Nigerians prefer English Premier League (EPL) against 30% who opt for Nigeria Premier League (NPL) (Dogari et al., 2020). Kombol & Kombo (2015) allude to satellite television viewing as the best means of capturing viewers' interest. Football is however, the most popular sport that is screened on television especially the English Premier League (EPL), Spanish La Liga, Germany Bundesliga, Union of European Football Association (UEFA), French League 1, and Italian Seria A leagues (Dogari et al., 2020). Sajjad et al. (2019) postulate that youths watch sports channel daily and this is the trend globally.

Males, tertiary students, businesspeople, mechanics, and artisans are strong television viewers of EPL matches while women show little or no interest and only sell refreshments to the viewers (Kombol & Kombo, 2015; Orji & Nzeaku, 2020). The viewership of football consists of people aged between 18-30 years and amongst the group are digital natives those born between 1980-1990 (Orji & Nzeaku, 2020; Dogari et al., 2020). Tertiary students are common viewers and Orji & Nzeaku (2020) describe that generation as born in the internet world thereby able to operate any mass media technology development effectively. The digital satellite television matches or tournaments have large followers, and some are die- hard supporters while other are not. The viewing centres are enclosed virtual stadiums that are found in food outlets, beer gardens and dwelling places that are likened to 'nooks and crannies' (Dogari et al., 2020).

According Bidet et al. (2013) satellite fans are influenced by the quality of soccer that is on offer which is likened to consumers' choice of a certain brand. Moreover, the latter add that teams like Manchester United, Chelsea and many others are a brand in every home, and more so regalia, calendars and other materials are visible as club identities amongst followers. Subsequently, Adagun (2013) postulates that fan identity is an indicator of the level of commitment one has with the supported team. In the same vein, there is an observation that people know foreign players better than the local ones, and more so, it is the wish of all African players to play abroad (Dogari et al, 2020; Sajjad et al., 2019). Similarly, African players are making efforts to facilitate movement of players abroad making EPL and other leagues attractive and competitive to all supporters as well as players (Dogari et al., 2020, Kombol & Kombo, 2015; Mavrinac, 2019; Adagun, 2013). This then shows the degree of influence of digital television. Quality and uniqueness of a product or service attracts clientele. In a study conducted in Nigeria, findings indicate that people opt for EPL matches because of quality soccer that is skilful and when watching it you always expect to see innovative ideas unlike local Nigerian League (Bodet et al., 2013; Buraimo & Simmons, 2007).

Besides, being quality and entertaining, the other reasons proffered include pleasure and escapism, peer pressure, it has become part of life and a second religion (Dogari et al., 2020; Kombol & Kombo, 2015). Orji & Nzeaku (2020) buttress the points by alluding to EPL as the best league globally and

watching it is like staring painting of Leonardo da Vinci. The latter add to say it is high quality, standardised and entertaining and has greatest coverage and highly publicised compared to most local leagues. The challenges of local football are that of poor signals and quality of picture when televised and nothing compared to digital satellite television and besides watching matches on DSTV has afforded many with the opportunity to be part of the global world (Adagun, 2013; Orji & Nzeaku, 2020). In Nigeria, local league matches are rated 'second hand' and nobody craves to watch it (Orji & Nzeaku, 2020). Football betting is now an industry for most die-hard satellite fans that follow top clubs (Anyianuka, 2014).

Theoretical framework

The Media imperialism theory

The theory by Boyd (1977) and Schiller (1969) argues that an increase in technology development and availability of information has led to an influx of western culture to the underdeveloped countries. The flow of information is one way and more so undermines local cultures, morals, and values (Banerjee, 2002). Media imperialism claims that western culture has displaced local production and creativity changing peoples 'lifestyle and relying more on foreign ideas (Kuruc, 2021). Schiller (1969) alludes to media imperialism as an American power dominance that is supported by their economic strength and innovativeness of technology development capability. The latter add that Americans have the best television programmes worldwide, there are role models and above all their programmes are affordable compared to local production. The aim is to destroy and submerge other cultures that lag with development, entertainment is one area that has been affected (Thompson, 1995). Kuruc (2021) laments the existence of media imperialism in underdeveloped countries as a way of strengthening economic and cultural development by developed countries. Put clearly, media imperialism is rooted on colonist mentality which helps explain an understanding of cultural and political economy globalisation (Boyd, 2014). The affordability of such technology puts underdeveloped countries on the receiving end thereby discouraging their own locally available product. Information distribution is centralised pushing the underdeveloped countries at the periphery with no input but that of consumers only (Thompson, 1995). Hali (2000) observes that information flow from developed countries is in the ratio of 5:1 making receivers incompetent and passive. Moreover, there is an observation that 80% of information comes from the west while developing countries contribute 20-30% resulting in defacto monopoly (Hali, 2000). In the same vein, satellite viewing has dominated many countries and households thus, this has become controversial as put by Hali (2000:5)

When a government allows news importation, it is in fact importing a piece of another country's politics.

Osakue & Elo (2010) connote that the underdeveloped countries are not contributing anything at all in return leading to defacto hegemony and will to dominate by the west globally (Boyd, 2014; Hali, 2000). To add on, Schiller (1969) and Noam (1993) contend that financial constraints are a prohibitive factor to most underdeveloped countries.

Aim of the study

The study aims at establishing the impact of digital satellite television viewing on local football in Zimbabwe.

Research questions.

- 1) What are the viewership patterns of football programmes on DSTV by the Zimbabwean audience?
- 2) How does the viewership of football programmes on DSTV affect the popularity of Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (PSL)?
- 3) To what extent does the viewership of football programmes on DSTV affect the development of Zimbabwean football?

Methodology

The study utilised a mixed methods approach in which data was collected qualitatively and quantitatively using interviews and questionnaires, respectively. The choice of mixed methods enabled research questions to be answered adequately while findings and implications were generalised to the entire population (Enosh, Tzafirir, & Stolovy, 2014). Moreover, while qualitative approach, provides a deeper understanding of issues being investigated, quantitative broadens the study (Dawadi et al., 2021; Taylor & Bogdan, 2016). The methods allowed for a better understanding of the topic under study. Interview schedules were used to solicit information on views and opinions of club management, coaches, and players on effects of digital satellite television on PSL football matches. The use of interview guide as a data collection instrument assumes that selected participants have a certain degree of knowledge that is of interest to the researcher (Taylor & Bogdan, 2016). Questions for data collection instruments were compiled using literature review, theoretical framework and adopted and adapted from Sajjad et al., (2016). The interview questions addressed issues of effects, factors, and challenges posed by digital satellite television. The questionnaire had two sections, section A looked at the demographic information of participants where age, gender, current occupation, and club preferences was sought. Section B covered issues to do with viewing trends, attendance, and fan preferences. An online questionnaire was used collect data on digital satellite television and later collated for use by the researcher. Likert scale with the following ratings: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used for questionnaire responses. Likert scale is assumable dependable when dealing with issues of attitudes in research (Stocker, 2019). Permission to conduct research was sought from responsible authorities in charge of teams. Research begun when permission was granted by management of selected teams thereafter instruments for data collection were distributed. Prior to commencing the study, ethical clearance was sought from participants. Interviewing process and answering of questionnaire begun

after consent was granted by individual participants who were old enough to make such a decision. Thereafter participants voluntarily became part of the group. No recording of information was done.

Population and sampling procedures

The population of this study comprised of fans, spectators, coaches, players, and club managers/ administrators of selected PSL teams in Zimbabwe. Four sampling techniques namely clustering, convenient, purposive, and volunteer were used in the study. Clustering technique allowed for the selection of PSL teams in Matabeleland North and Bulawayo Metropolitan provinces, respectively. Convenient sampling allowed for the recruitment of a sample of ten satellite television fans, ten spectators, five coaches, ten players and five club managers/administrators of selected PSL teams. According to Yin (2003), in descriptive research, anything from 10-20% of the population is representative enough to warrant generalisation of results. Moreover, volunteer sampling technique selected online respondents for the questionnaire while purposive was used for interview participants (Stockmer, 2019). Volunteer sampling technique relies on participants' willingness to respond to the instrument for data collection (Stockmer, 2019). Fans and spectators answered online questionnaire while coaches, and team managers/administrators were interviewed. Participants answered the same questions despite distinct roles.

Data analysis

Analysis of questionnaire responses involved collating and coding online responses before aggregating data. SPSS version 27 and descriptive statistics techniques analysed data. The views and opinions of respondents on the effects of digital satellite television matches and emerging themes were further grouped under effects, factors and viewing trends locally and globally. In vivo coded interview questions and analysis were narratively done. The use of in vivo coding allows for maintenance of participants language (Leavy, 2017; Strauss., 1987).

Findings

Demographic information

Table 1: Age, gender, and occupation

	Percentage (%)
Gender	
Male	64.7
Female	35.3
Total	100
Age range	
15-20years	0
21-25 years	5.9
26-30 years	17.6
>30 years	76.5
Total	100
Occupation	
Student	23.5
Employed	52.9
Self-employed	11.8
Unemployed	11.8
Total	100

Collated data indicate that there were 64.7% and 35.3% males and females respondents respectively who answered the online questionnaire. Amongst the group, 5.9 % were in the age range of 21-25 years, 17.6 % are within 26-30 while >30 years constitute 76.5%. From table one above, 23.5% of participants were students while employed, self-employed and unemployed had 52.9%, 11.8% and 11.8 % respectively. It would seem that the composition of the respondents is from diverse backgrounds with the potential of getting rich information on the topic under study.

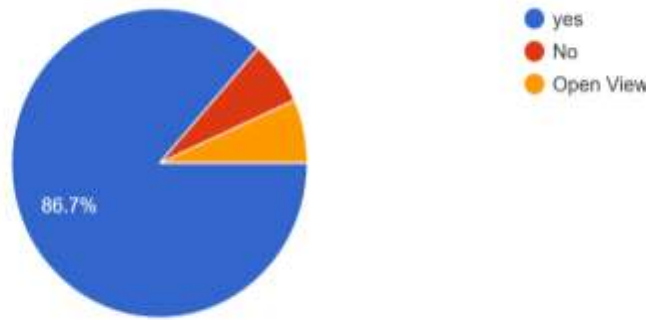
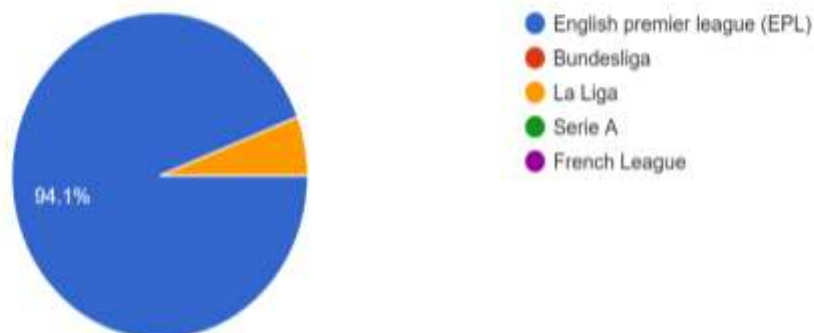
Figure 1: Availability of DSTV or any other service provider at home

Figure 1 above illustrates the breakdown of respondents' choices in which 86.7 % have DSTVs at home, 6.7% have none and the other 6.7% use OpenView service provider. It would appear that most participants have access to either DSTV or Open view at their homes. The above findings are in line with what Zia (2007) established where each household could afford satellite television gadgets. Open view is a decoder that offers free services once acquired and installed with limited sport viewership channels. This could, however, be the reason of the unpopularity of Open view, especially for those who have a sporting background.

Table 2: Do you have a favourite /support PSL team?

Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	88.2
No	11.8
Not sure	0
Never	0
Total	100

From table 2 above, there were 88.2% respondents who agreed that they do have or support a local PSL team, while 11.8% thought otherwise. It would seem that the majority of respondents do have a local team that they support and follow. The information collected is likely to assist in the understanding of the impact of digital satellite television on local sport.

Figure 2: Indicate favourite European League

The figure 2 above shows that 94.1% of the respondents favour the English Premier League (EPL) while La Liga is being supported by 5.9%. Bundesliga, French league, and Serie A had no followers. This study produced results which corroborate the findings of a great deal of the previous work in this field. In a similar study conducted in Nigeria, 70% of Nigerians prefer EPL against 30% who opt for Nigeria Premier League (NPL) (Dogari et al., 2020). Moreover, Dogari et al. (2020) observed that English Premier League (EPL), Spanish La Liga, Germany Bundesliga, UEFA, French League 1, and Italian Serie A leagues are the mostly screened football matches on digital satellite television. There is a likelihood that the infiltration of digital satellite viewing has made EPL the most favoured league.

Table 3: Indicate favourite European League club/team.

European league club/team	Percentage (%)
Chelsea	11.8
Manchester United	11.8
Manchester City	11.8
Arsenal	5.9
Liverpool	41.2
Real Madrid	5.9
Barcelona	5.9
AC Milan	0
PSG	0
Others	11.8
Total	100

As can be seen from the table 4 (above), Liverpool had 41.2%, Chelsea, Manchester United and Manchester City football clubs had 11.8% each, while Arsenal, Real Madrid and Barcelona is at 5.9% fans each, respectively. From the data collected, it would appear that Liverpool, is a common team amongst respondents followed by Manchester City and United as well as Chelsea who are at par with 11.8% people favouring or supporting it. Interestingly, it looks like PSG and AC Milan are not common teams amongst respondents. Notably, Sajjad et al. (2019) had the same establishment where in Nigeria, people are fans of football club such as Chelsea, Manchester United and City, Real Madrid, Liverpool, and others.

Questionnaire analysis

Table 4: Viewership trend of respondents

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comments
8.I watch football games on digital satellite television at home	47.1	47.1	-	5.8	-	Agree
9.I like the social aspect of watching football at home with friends and family	41.2	41.2	11.8	5.6	-	Agree
10. There are places that have access to football viewing on digital satellite TV	41.2	41.2	17.6	-	-	Agree
11.I watch football matches on satellite TV everyday	11.8	52.9	23.5	11.8		Agree
12. I enjoy watching multiple games on DSTV	11.8	35.3	-	11.8	41.2	Agree
13.I can watch PSL matches on ZTV anytime anywhere in the country	-	11.6	29.6	29.4	29.4	Disagree
14.ZTV has sport channels set for football broadcasting	17.6	23.5	23.5	17.6	17.8	Agree

In the table 4 above collected data indicate that 94.2% respondents enjoy watching football at home while 5.8% thought otherwise. It would appear watching football home is favourable to the majority of respondents in this study. The findings of this study reflect what Signoriello and Michael (2001) found out where people spend about 15.5 hours watching television at home. Question 11 had 64.7% people enjoying watching football daily on digital satellite television while 23.5% and 5.9% were neutral and disagreed, respectively. The observation could be possible because of the availability of digital satellite television programmes that offer full bouquet of varied sports channels that could be competitive and attractive to all. The findings of question 11 though without an age specification tally with what Sajjad et al., (2019) established where youths watch sports channel daily globally. Moreover, there is a widely held belief that watching matches on digital satellite television is likened to Leonardo da Vinci paintings and more so keeps one craving for

more (Orji & Nzeaku, 2020). Similarly, the findings match that of Bodet et al., (2013) and Buraimo & Simmons (2007). To add on, 82.4% of respondents agreed on the social aspect of watching football with friends and family while 11.8% remained neutral and 5.6% disagreed. Zia (2007) and Sage (1998) had the same establishment of availability of gadgets and social aspect of watching television as a family, respectively.

There were 82.4% respondents who indicated the availability of centres where they could have access to digital satellite television and 17.6% thought otherwise. There is a likelihood of centres offering digital satellite viewership to people. This, however, has a possibility of attracting viewers and thus local football suffering as a result. According to the Media Imperialism theory, this move while appreciated by many has a potential of destroying and submerging other cultures that lag with development (Thompson, 1995) and local football is one area that has suffered drastically.

Watching multiple channels on digital satellite television had 17.6% and 35.4% of respondents strongly agreeing and agreeing, respectively. Neutral, disagree and strongly disagree had 17.6%, 5.9% and 23.5% respectively. It would seem there were mixed reaction about watching many channels on digital satellite television. There is an observation that 53% of respondents agreed while the other 17.6% seems to have some reservations on DSTV multiple channels 29.4% disagree. However, this is in line with what Dogari et al., (2018) observed where influx of information reaching to people through many service providers.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they can watch PSL matches on ZTV anytime and anywhere. There were 11.6% respondents who agreed to that, 29.6% were neutral while disagree and strongly disagree had 29.4 %each, respectively. Comparing agree and disagree results that is (11.8% and 58.8%), it would appear that ZTV is not accessible to some people in certain areas, and this is likely to encourage and increase DSTV match viewership. The question on ZTV having channels set for PSL matches, the responses were varied. Of the respondents who answered the question 17.6% and 23.5% strongly agreed and agreed respectively, the other 23.5% remained neutral, while disagree and strongly disagree had 17.6% and 17.8. There is a possibility to suggest that respondents to this item felt that there are no channels set aside for PSL matches on ZTV. A figure of 41.1% agree against 35.4% disagree and 23.5% neutral might suggest otherwise.

Table 5: Reasons for watching football matches on digital satellite television.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comments
15. There are quality matches that are entertaining with skilled players	18.8	31.2	12.5	12.5	25	Agree
16. The viewing centres are enclosed with a friendly environment	25	37.4	25	6.3	6.3	Agree
17. Digital satellite TV has quality picture	50	37.5	6.3	6.2	-	Agree
18. EPL matches on DSTV and others is business and full-time employment	43.8	31.2	25	-	-	Agree
19. The gadgets and subscription fees for satellite TV are affordable	-	25	25	37.5	12.5	Disagree

Five items on the questionnaire measured the extent to which why people prefer watching football on DSTV. From table 6 above, quality matches with skilled entertaining players had 18.8% and 31.2% respondents who strongly agreed and agreed, respectively. Of the remaining 50%, neutral had 12.5% while those who disagreed were 12.5% and 25% strongly disagreed. Interestingly, half of the respondents feel DSTV matches are of excellent quality while the other half are either not sure of what to say or disagree completely. Further results from the table show that 50% of the respondents strongly agree that DSTV has quality picture and 37.5% agreed as well. Those who chose to be neutral were 6.3% while 6.2% disagreed. Dogari et al. (2020) and Kombol & Kombo (2015) also noted the same about quality picture of DSTV screened matches. The question on the friendly environment of enclosed viewing centres had positive answers from respondents, 25% strongly supporting the idea while 37.4% agreed to the idea. Those who did not want to commit themselves were 25% and 12.6% thought otherwise. What is interesting about the data collected is the fact that respondents appear to favour enclosed DSTV viewing centres. There is a widely held view that these centres also known as virtual stadiums are found in friendly environment (Dogari et al., 2020).

There were 43.8% respondents strongly indicating that EPL matches are business-like while 31.2% agreed and 25% remained neutral. The collected information has a bearing on PSL matches and attendance, to some its business full time while others could be entertainment. Some authors have speculated that sport is an industry and full-time employment (Anyianuka, 2014). This however, might be the reason a figure of 75% of are in support of the idea. It would seem sport betting is now an industry and for one to stay connected with current trends in sport, watching DSTV multiple channels daily becomes viable.

In table 5 above affordability of DSTV gadgets had 25% of the respondents in support of that, the other 25% were neutral while disagree and strongly disagree had 37.5% and 12.5% respectively. While some authors have speculated that the gadgets are affordable making each household own it (Zia,

2007), this study has established otherwise, 50% of the respondents disagree. There is a possibility to say that those who are able to buy these gadgets could have done so not because of affordability but other reasons.

Table 6: Reasons for supporting and watching PSL matches.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comments
20.PSL is the only league available locally	12.5	18.8	37.5	6.2	25	Mixed reactions
21.I enjoy watching PSL matches that are screened live on TV	13.8	12.5	18.8	43.8	11.1	Disagree
22.Screened matches are of excellent quality picture	6.2	25	18	18.8	25	Disagree
23. I prefer going to the stadium for PSL games	37.5	18.8	12.5	18.8	12.5	Agree
24.Entry fees are affordable	25	43.8	12.5	18.7	-	Agree
25. The stadia environment is friendly for all.	12.5	6.3	25	37.5	19.7	Disagree

The question on PSL as the only league locally recorded 12.5% and 18.8% responses strongly agree and agree, respectively. The neutral group had 37.5% while disagree and strongly respondents were 6.3% and 25% as well. The implication of data collected could be that while people agree that PSL is the only league available locally, there are some who could be having other forms of entertainment hence the figures 31.3% agree and 31.2% disagree. The question on respondents enjoying live PSL screened matches on ZTV elicited the following, 13.8% strongly agree, agree 12.5%, neutral 18.8% while 54.9% (disagree 43.8 and 11.1% strongly disagree) thought otherwise. It would appear screened matches are not attractive to its own people. Adagun (2013) noted the same with Nigerian populace. The table 6 above provides information on quality of screened matches. There were 31.2% respondents agreeing on the excellent quality picture, 18% neutral and 43.8% disagreed. It would seem quality of picture is not as per expectation hence the high figures inclusive of the group that did not want to commit themselves. In Nigeria Orji & Nzeaku (2020) found a comparable situation. The question on preference to attend live matches had a positive response. Fifty-six-point six percent (56.6%) respondent felt going for matches at the stadium was preferred, 31.3% thought otherwise and 12.5% were neutral. These results suggest that there are some people who prefer live matches, and this could have an implication of either having poor TV reception or are strong supporters of that team. A positive response was elicited from the question of affordability of entry fees. The table above indicate 68.5% of respondents in favour of entry fees, neutral had 12.5% while disagree was at 18.7%. It would appear that people are comfortable with entry fees charged for local matches. The implication could be that of having many people attending live matches because of reasonable entry fees. Respondents were further asked to rate the environment at local stadium for PSL matches. The result indicates that 18.8% agreed, 25% remained neutral and 57.2% did not agree that the friendly environment for PSL matches. There is a likelihood that stadia environment is not friendly at all. This however could imply that people are not comfortable going to the stadium to watch live matches and might therefore, force them to pursue other avenues hence popularity of digital satellite television.

Table 7: Allegiance to another team

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comments
26.I prefer watching football matches on DSTV other than PSL	18.8	31.3	12.1	18.8	18.8	Agree
27. I am a fan of a football league other than the local PSL	40	20	20	20	-	Agree
28. I know players from other teams other than the local PSL players	43.6	37.5	6.3	6.3	6.3	Agree
29. I have regalia for teams other than local PS clubs	37.5	37.5	-	18.8	6.2	Agree

The response rate for the area of allegiance to another team had 18.8% and 31.3% respectively respondents strongly agreeing and agreeing that they prefer watching football matches on DSTV other local PSL matches. Neutral had 12.1% while disagree and strongly had 18.8% each. A comparison of

agree and disagree might suggest that DSTV is mostly preferred by many as indicated by 50.1% against 37.6% respectively. Taken together these results provide an important insight into challenges that the country is likely to be facing. There is a possibility that people could be watching DSTV matches not that they shun their own local product but for other reasons that are likely to be forcing their behaviour, as highlighted in gratification theory and choice of brand (Bodet et al., 2018). Adagun (2013) and Orji & Nzeaku (2020) had a similar establishment in which good picture quality of screened DSTV matches attracts viewers compared to local. Sixty percent (60%) of respondents are fans of teams other than local PSL the other 20% did not commit themselves while disagree had 20% as well. Nigeria had a similar scenario (Bodet et al., 2018; Sajjad et al., 2019). In the table above, respondents know players other than the ones from local clubs, figures of 43.6% strongly agree and 37.5% agree were recorded. Neutral, disagree and strongly disagree had 6.3% each. This could imply that virtual fans have a record of their supported team activities and more so watch matches regularly. Regalia for teams other than local had 37.5% and 37.5% for strongly agree and agree respectively while disagree had 18.8%, strongly disagree was at 6.2%. There is a widely held view that fan identity indicates level of commitment of the supported team (Adagun, 2013).

Interview analysis.

The interview targeted coaches and administrators of selected teams with the aim of finding their views and opinions on the impact of digital satellite television on PSL matches. Five coaches and five administrators of selected teams participated in the study. The responses from participants were coded using in vivo which allowed for verbatim responses to be used for analysis.

In response to question 1 which sought to find participants' understanding of digital satellite television, a number of views were elicited. All interviewees were able to state what digital satellite television is. Put clearly one interviewee reiterated that it is a broadcasting network which uses satellite dishes, decoders to transmit signals. The other informant viewed digital satellite television as a modern technology with multiple viewing and known for sporting broadcasting. Some interviewees expressed a belief that digital satellite signals can also be transmitted through computers, radios as well as television. One participant commented that digital satellite television allows viewers access to a wide range of international channels. Overall, there was a positive response on this question and participants seem to have knowledge on digital satellite television. Moreover, one informant expressed that it is a sport television, and the other commented that it is about satellite broadcasting of events for viewing in high quality across the globe. A number of issues were identified about digital satellite television. Firstly, it requires gadgets that enable transmission of signals, secondly there is multiple viewing, thirdly computer and radios can be used, lastly high quality across the globe. There is a likelihood to suggest that this type of technology is supported by advanced gadgets that are able to sync information for multiple viewing with quality picture regardless of one's location. Akunna (2019), Dogari et al. (2018), and Zia (2007) had a similar establishment.

Informants were further asked to suggest reasons on how digital satellite television has affected local football. There were varied reasons given all lamenting the proliferation of digital satellite television affecting local football. There was a response to say digital satellite television has both positive and negative effects. It has taken a large number of supporters from local league and are now fervent followers of virtual team that are far, viewed on television with high quality picture, said one participant. To add on, one interviewee said, *'it has made fans not to attend local matches physically and enjoy watching football at the comfort of their homes.'* The other commented that local football has suffered a big blow as Zimbabwe television has no such coverage depriving people for the past 10-15 years. To add one, one participant went on to say, reviews, previews, league compilation, and many programming related to local football leagues /clubs has been affected greatly. Put clearly the other interviewee said, *'television games are meant to market players internationally, give coaches time to review their team performances and also have a preview on the opponent's as well.'* One administrator raised the issue of attendance affecting gate takings. This how it was put *'whenever Liverpool is playing; we rarely have supporters attending local matches.'* To add on, the other had to buttress the point by alluding to the fact even if the matches are for free there are less spectators as long as Liverpool is playing. The other reason given was that of availability of digital satellite television pushing local football out of market and more so local football is not part of digital satellite television bouquet. Furthermore, the other added that local television does not broadcast football matches allowing its people to be absorb by digital satellite television. Positively, this how one informant answered, it has increased access to live matches worldwide, exposing fans to different playing styles and at the same time inspiring and cultivating interest for sport locally. Of interest is the observation by one administrator on the socio-economic as one factor that has driven and affected locally football. Club managers feel the migration that the country is experiencing has taken away strong football supporters leaving those who are not keen to support local football. Put clearly, the clubs lost die hard football supporters who despite Liverpool playing did not miss the local matches. A possible explanation of these results may be the lack local television that offer quality football matches. Secondly, there is a possibility that people are forced to view digital satellite television not that they shun their own local content, but because of non-availability of attractive services on offer. Thirdly, it is difficult to explain this result, but it might be related to the gratification theory which drives people to behave in the manner that they are doing (Wang et al. 2016; Blulmer & Katz, 1974) and the media imperialism theory. Together, these results provide an insight into how digital satellite television has affected local football.

Just over half of those who answered the question on why fan and spectators prefer English Premier League, responses were varied but all pointed at quality of matches. One interviewee explained that the matches are clear and of excellent quality. The other said it is because of availability of digital satellite television in each and every household, and also EPL leagues is available in all packages unlike French and other leagues. One informant expressed concern that the problem begins at home where children as they grow are exposed to digital satellite viewing and have never watched local television at all and to them it is the norm and part of life. To add on, the quality of local football is not comparable to what digital satellite television offers, this has resulted in people shunning local products and feel that what comes abroad is better, more so this has also changed the way they dress and their lifestyle. The other interviewee emphasised that the African mentality thinks foreign products are better thus allowing dominance by digital satellite television. One interviewee added that EPL has been in existence for a long time with many iconic teams, also the level of competition is high with

legendary star players and media coverage is good making it accessible internationally. The other reason that gleaned was that of being competitive and available on various service providers such as Supersport, Multichoice, Skysport and many more. The other reason proffered was that of a marketing strength where viewers are lured to it. Of interest is a point raised by one interviewee where parental influence plays a crucial role, children at home watch DSTV, feel programmes on DSTV are better than local content. The other stated the issue of allegiance, as children grow up, they are exposed to DSTV watch EPL matches and know those players better and thus local football quality is not up to expectation to them. There is a possibility that availability of digital satellite television at home attracts viewers to enjoy full view of English matches that are assumed to be quality. Orji & Nzeaku (2020) likened EPL matches to paintings of Leonardo da Vinci.

Question 4 sought to establish the environment at local stadium for supporters to watch matches. This question had mixed reactions from participants. This is what some of them had to say. One of the managers said the environment is too rowdy and the matches are not enticing at all. The other one when interviewed responded by saying the environment depends on the teams that are playing but overall, it's conducive and peaceful. The other one complained of ticketing and security systems making the environment unfriendly. Some were quick to say you cannot take your family to watch football in such an environment. The other administrator highlighted the following as factors that determine conducive and safety of stadia environment '*seating arrangement, facilities like restrooms, food stalls within the vicinity, crowd behaviour management measures*'. There is a general observation to suggest that stadiums where PSL matches are played are not friendly at all, this therefore, could be the reason digital satellite viewing could be gaining popularity amongst football fans and spectators. Virtual stadiums are enclosed found in shops, pubs and residential areas likened to nooks and crannies (Dogari et al., 2017) making the environment friendly, conducive, and attractive.

The last question focused on what could be done to improve local football in light of digital satellite viewing. There were numerous ways that could potentially improve local football suggested by interviewees and of interest are the following: '*Football administration should be improved and professionalised with capable members who understands how its managed, give value to the job done by coaches and players, stick to agreed contractual agreements, bring competitive television viewership and promote grassroots soccer development programme and nurturing of talent*'. The other interviewee advocated for running the league professionally avoiding unnecessary inconveniences and government to invest in the development of football locally. There were varied responses coming from interviewees such as, the idea of investing in quality soccer, infrastructure development and have a better remuneration package for players. To add on, one raised the issue of the primary sponsor and corporate world as affecting local football, there is no funding from the government to attract players. There is a probability that local football lacks commitment from primary and secondary sponsors in terms of uplifting its standard. While the suggested strategies might assist, members feel primary sponsor should do its part so that coaches, players, fans, and spectators are afforded the opportunity of enjoying local football. Grassroots programme is one strategy with the likelihood of improving talent through the catch them young concept.

Conclusion

The findings have shed light on the impact of digital satellite television on PSL matches. This study has demonstrated that digital satellite television has taken over people's lives, virtual stadiums, satellite fans and availability of decoders are now the norm. The study has also established that digital satellite television is becoming popular not that people like it, but the quality of matches, reception of ZTV in some areas and environment at the stadia are major contributing factors. The quantitative data has indicated that while entry fees are affordable the environment at the stadia is prohibitive and more so, quality of screened matches is rated second. Besides, not everyone in the country is able to access ZTV locally with its limited sports channel. Qualitative data has revealed that the government is to blame as a primary sponsor. Local football lacks funding making it vulnerable to so many unpleasant circumstances affecting attendance and quality of matches while virtual stadiums are promoted, and subsequently displacing local products.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that of allowing football to die at the hands of developed countries who are able to manipulate and push their agenda. The country has been colonised through mass and electronic media and there are no measures to promote our own products. Sport, particularly football is one area that has suffered a big blow and television is one media that is capable of changing behaviour, dress code and language of people. The nation has failed its own people, football is not getting the support it deserves allowing DSTV and its associates to take over.

Recommendations put forward are that Zimbabwe football association (ZIFA) should run football professional and government to inject funds to lure young players and uplift sporting infrastructure. Local television should have a wide coverage so that people at different corners of the country are able to have full view. Quality of screened matches should improve, if possible ZTV should be part of DSTV bouquet. The grassroots sport policy is one strategy that is likely to improve quality of football if implemented fully. The study experienced limitations. Firstly, it covered two places making it difficult to generalise findings. Also, places that were covered some of them have challenges accessing local television hence responses could be biased.

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