



The Representation of Nigerian Indigenous Culture in Nollywood

Asogwa Chika Euphemia^{1*}, Onoja Ibe Ben¹ and Ojih Emmanuel Unekwu¹

¹Department of Mass Communication, Kogi State University, Anyigba, Kogi State, Nigeria.

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. For instance, while author OEU did all the literature review, author OIB coordinated the main research work and analyzed the data. Author ACE edited the work. Besides, all the authors proof read the work as well as ensured that all the corrections were adequately effected during the review process.

Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/JSRR/2015/15596

Editor(s):

(1) Grigorios L. Kyriakopoulos, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), Greece.

Reviewers:

- (1) Olimpia Niglio, Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano, Bogotá, Colombia.
(2) Abdellah Elboubekri, University of Mohamed Ben Abdellah, Fez, Morocco.
(3) Israel W. Udomisor, Department of Mass Communication, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
Complete Peer review History: <http://www.sciencedomain.org/review-history.php?iid=1126&id=22&aid=8960>

Original Research Article

Received 6th December 2014
Accepted 11th March 2015
Published 27th April 2015

ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study is to appraise the representation of the Nigerian (African) culture in the global market by the Nigerian Nollywood. Specifically, the study tries to find out how The Nigerian Nollywood projects Nigerian rich local cultural values to the outside world; and appraise how the influx of foreign cultural values into the Nigerian local film production affects the nation's cultural heritage. Nigeria or Nollywood is chosen for this study because of her position in the continent and her leading role in the film industry in Africa. This study becomes also necessary because, despite the fact that Nollywood ranks and competes with Hollywood and Bollywood, in terms of quantity, locally outsell foreign ones, and are also appreciated all over the world; Nigeria continues to suffer negative image in the comity of nations and critics kept crying foul over the erosion of indigenous cultures. To this end, this study employs case reference analysis method and analyzed some films purposively selected for the performance of this task. The study observes among others that Nollywood dwells too much on the negative aspect of the nation's cultural practices to the detriment of the nation's image. It was also discovered that the act of borrowing themes, plots etc, from foreign films has done much harm than good to the preservation of the

*Corresponding author: Email: euchika@yahoo.com;

indigenous culture. The study concludes that the increasing quantity of filmic contents from the Nollywood had not helped much in the area of projecting the nation's positive image and rich cultural heritage to the outside world as the quality of the filmic contents that emanate from the Nollywood remains grossly inadequate or usually situated out of context thereby re-enforcing the negative image fostered on Nigeria and Africa at large by the foreign media. The study therefore recommends among others that further productions should focus more on portrayal of the rich cultural Nigerian values rather than imitating the western culture or leaning narrowly on the nation's or continent's past negative cultural practices that have no place in the current Nigerian society anymore.

Keywords: Nollywood; Nigerian culture; mirror effect; films; cultural values.

1. INTRODUCTION

Earlier researches reveal that film could serve as a tool for socialization, information, education of the masses and national development in general. It is a means of communication and comprehension of people's cultural values.

The use of film for cultural projection is very important because 'the functioning of every human body is not only moulded by the culture within which the individual has been reared but also by the way he was born into society with a definite culture he has been fed and disciplined, fondled and put to sleep, punished and rewarded' [1]. Culture plays a vital role in the physical and mental development of an individual in any society. If it is required of the members of the Nigerian society to develop the basic physical, intellectual, social and emotional capabilities; or to change the world perception about Nigeria and Africa as a whole, then Nigerian films could be very helpful in this respect.

This is even true when viewed against the background that the nation's experience of slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism, coupled with economic and cultural domination has led her to self-alienation. This experience is further aggravated in the present global village that is full of cultural invasion, where the invader does not necessarily need to go personally to the invaded land like during the era of colonialism, but the action is being carried out by technological instruments like film.

Nigeria's Nollywood remains the dominant film industry in Africa that is poised to championing the projection of the Nigerian cultural values through film. The development of Nollywood dates back to the colonial era [2], through the efforts of the European merchant, colonial administration and the church. The first film

screening experience in Nigeria was on August 12, 1903 at the Clover Memorial Hall in Lagos [3]. The industry that started like a joke now ranks and competes with Hollywood and Bollywood, in terms of quantity, [4]; locally outsell foreign ones and are also appreciated all over the world [5].

However, even though Nigeria and Africa at large are gaining increasing awareness on the possible influences and role of film in the projection of indigenous cultural heritage and are making efforts towards bringing to the knowledge of the outside world as seen in the brief history of film in Nigeria, there seems to be some lapses and permissiveness of undesired contents which tend to imprint and aggravate the negative image the country and the African continent is already suffering in the minds of the global film viewing audiences.

It is expected therefore of the Nigerian Nollywood (film maker) to also consciously globalize the nations and the continent's rich local cultures while localizing positive foreign cultures. This no doubt would have a positive effect on the way Nigerians would be viewed elsewhere in the world as it will give non-native a glimpse into what is obtainable in Nigeria and Africa as a whole instead of relying on the distorted and bias angle foreign media and film industry usually portray Africa and her cultural heritage.

As research evidences have repeatedly shown that any nation that folds its hand and refuses to do anything positive to project its cultural heritage to the outside world would have to put up with battered image and cultural imbalance in relation to those who would take calculated steps at portraying whatever they deem fit that the world should know about them.

However, even though earlier research evidences has demonstrated the efforts of the

Nigerian Nollywood in the numerical quantity of production, [6], her position in the world film producing industry, [7], as well as different themes usually covered; relatively little literature has been devoted to examining the quality of the Nollywood production sequel to the projection and building of positive image for Nigeria or the Africa continent.

It is in view of the above that this study takes cursory view of Nollywood projection of Nigerian cultural values to the film viewers across the globe (using some selected films), believing that whatever is projected about Nigeria by Nigerian film industry as a window to the world, has an agendum setting effect on foreign audience and could be helpful in correcting some of the misconceptions about Nigeria (ns)/Africa (ns) and their rich cultural values.

1.1 Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study is therefore aimed at achieving the following objectives:

1. To find out how the Nigerian Nollywood project Nigerian rich local cultural values to the outside world in her film production; and
2. To appraise how the influx of foreign cultural values into the Nigerian local film production affects the nation's cultural heritage

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study is of great importance for a number of reasons. First, it will serve as an eye opener to the players in the Nigeria film industry on the benefits of showcasing rich and positive indigenous culture while guiding against undue adoption of foreign plots, themes and story lines that may not necessarily project the nation in a good light.

Secondly, policy makers will find this study helpful in formulating policies and programmes to promote proactive film production for nation image building and preservation of local cultural heritages.

Again, this study will no doubt serve as a wakeup call to the film producers in the country to leave up to expectation in terms of quality local content production and projection of the nation's positive image.

Above all, this study will add to the increasing body of knowledge in this research area and will

serve as a veritable source of document from which future researcher could draw background information from.

1.3 The Import of Agenda Setting Theory on Nollywood

For a greater insight, this paper will be hinged on Agenda setting theory as advanced by Lipmann, Cohen, McCombs and Shaw as a way of examining the relationship between the media (Nollywood) and the public (foreign audiences). The key postulate of agenda-setting is that, "the news media exert significant influence on our perceptions of . . . the most salient issues of the day" [8]. McCombs and Shaw concluded their study in the context of the 1968 U.S. presidential campaign. In the study, undecided voters were asked to list the most important issues at that time. A content analysis was then conducted analyzing the importance of the issues in nine media sources. The results, which laid the foundation for future agenda-setting research, illustrated that a strong correlation existed between the ranking of media salience and the voters' agenda [9].

Since the McCombs and Shaw study, agenda-setting theory has attracted a great deal of interest from researchers, with many embracing the idea that the media agenda holds a considerable sway on the public agenda. Past studies extended the scope of topics addressed by agenda-setting to include issues such as illegal drugs, same-sex marriage, gun control, and unemployment. A significant portion of these studies employed comparative methods analyzing media content with public opinion and survey results [10].

Generally, the primary methodological approach to agenda-setting has been content analysis and survey design. However, experimental studies have also offered solid support for a causal relationship between the media and the public agenda at the individual level [11]. The causal relationship indicates that media coverage can indeed influence how people think about issues in a laboratory setting. Through these methodologies, researchers have identified three ways that the media agenda shapes public opinion: Manipulating public salience of issues through the amount of coverage (agenda-setting), transmitting attributes or sub-issues that comprise the issues to the public (second-level agenda-setting) and priming [12].

Although agenda-setting theory has been investigated widely in the political communication field, few attempts have been made to test the theory in other contexts. Carroll and McCombs [12] argued that the central idea of agenda-setting fits equally well in the field of business communication. In their analysis, major corporations were categorized as research "objects." The findings supported agenda-setting effects of business news on the public's opinions about these corporations, [13]. Similarly, employing a triangulation of research methods, [14] found dependable proofs of the impacts of media coverage and public relations efforts on corporate reputation.

In addition, Wanta, Golan & Lee [15] made an attempt to translate the agenda-setting theory from its primary area in public affairs to the domain of foreign countries. These studies demonstrate the flexibility and versatility of first-level agenda-setting to address a wide range of issues [16].

The present study therefore, focuses on examining Nigerian Nollywood's projection of Nigeria and its varied cultural practices to the outside world through its films. This is against the backdrop of the fact that Nollywood, as a mass medium has the capacity to set cultural agenda for its entire audience by what they chose to showcase, how they show case them and its cultural implications on the Nigerian nation.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research work employed case reference analysis as its research method. In this, the researchers did not specifically explain any of the selected films in details (for want of space, and besides, readers could easily locate the film and watch for further details), nor follow any special sampling techniques to select the films used in the analysis and discussion (as this was not necessary) but made references to purposively selected films that contain themes and messages that best explain the idea in hand.

2.1 The Rapid Evolution of the Nigerian Nollywood (Film Industry)

Any discussion on Nollywood representation of Nigerian cultural values to the outside world would be incomplete without a review of its historical ascendance to the current prominence among the community of world film makers. The development of Nollywood (Nigeria movie

industry) dates back to the colonial era [17], through the efforts of the European merchant, colonial administration and the church. The first film screening experience in Nigeria was on August 12, 1903 at the Clover Memorial Hall in Lagos [18]. During this early stage of film, it was also used as a tool for education as evidenced in the screening of educational documentaries on farming, health and other important issues through the mobile free cinemas that would tour Nigerian villages, [19]. The content of such films can be easily discerned. The British colonialist used it for their "civilizing" mission as well as to indicate the blessedness of being colonized. The church, as their involvement in education and the media industry has shown, used films for spreading the gospel [20].

However, the account of the development of the Nigerian film industry cannot be given without references to the influence of the broadcast media industry in the country. The journey of Television broadcasting in Nigeria started in the 1960s and leaned heavily on government support during its early years of formation. Gradually, the medium became a useful communication tool in the hands of almost all the regional governments so much so that by the mid-1980s virtually all the existing states of the federation had already established a working broadcasting station. The fact that the law limited foreign television content made room for local television producers in cities like Lagos to televise local television programmes generated from the local popular theatre. Gradually, many of these local popular theatre productions were packaged and distributed on video which later metamorphosed into small scale informal video movie business. In the late 70s and 80s the Nigerian government, aware of the influence of cultural imperialism, gave people the opportunity to take technical film courses in the West. They hoped to show more Nigerian productions on television. Many members of the Nigerian theatre, disappointed by the difficulties of working on celluloid, went to television.

In the late eighties, coerced by the World Bank to follow the Structural Adjustment Programs, the Nigerian government was forced to allow greater privatization in many sectors, including media. It invested less in television. Suddenly, a group of professional television makers were left jobless. The encounter of these people with the new digital technology made Nollywood possible. Later, many others followed in their footsteps. According to Larkin, the privatized character of

the home video industry is the result of the integration of the Nigerian economy in the world wide market, which was made possible due to the higher oil revenues [21].

Film makers unable to cope with the cost of shooting on celluloid first, turned to reversal film stock and later on, video tapes. In 1992, Kenneth Nnebue, an electrical equipment salesman in Lagos, needed to dispose thousands of blank VHS tapes that were unsold in his store, [22]. Armed with a cheap digital camera and a number of good-hearted friends therefore, he shot a movie and dubbed all the unsold tapes with the film, with the hope of making his tapes more palatable to costumers. "Living in Bondage," a movie about human sacrifices, became an instant hit and gave birth to the modern Nollywood, [23].

The film, (Living in Bondage) was an enormous success and sold about 200,000 copies on video cassette [24]. Promptly a veritable film industry emerged, developing itself completely independent of every form of support. According to recent UNESCO research [25], Nollywood is the biggest producing film industry, after the Indian Bollywood and before the American Hollywood, [26]. The numbers are impressive. On a yearly basis about 1,500 films are released. On average, 37,000 copies of a film are sold. The films are extremely popular in Nigeria, on the rest of the African continent and in the African diasporas. The Nollywood industry is also said to have employed about 200,000 people.

According to Madu Chikwendu, one of the leading directors in the Nollywood industry, Nollywood embraces four separate industries. The most famous is the English language industry mainly centred round Lagos and it is to a large extent in the hands of the Igbo population. In the South, the Yoruba language production is situated, which emanated from the Yoruba popular theatre. In the North then, is the Hausa industry, very different through the strong influence of Bollywood and the Islam.

Lastly, there are a whole range of smaller productions made in local language in the South, around the Niger Delta, for the most part in Edo languages, [27]. As all the protagonists of this thesis are from the South, the northern industry will be almost completely neglected in the discussion, because of the substantial differences. The latter is a successful industry that equally emerged in the early nineties,

centered round the city of Kano and generally not always considered under the name Nollywood. Analogous with Nollywood, some have even given it the name Kanollywood [28].

Nevertheless, the growth of indigenous film industry was slow due to the prohibitive cost of raw materials and the lack of expert technicians, [29]. Unlike the American and Indian film industry, the Nigerian film industry popularly called Nollywood uses the video cassette format and recently the Video Compact Disc (VCD). As a consequence, the films are not shown in Cinema houses since they are shot straight into video tapes, replicated and sold for home viewing hence the term home videos. It is this ingenuity that has changed the face of the Nigerian film industry.

Suffice to say that the Nollywood ranks and competes with Hollywood and Bollywood, in terms of quantity, [30]. The Nollywood films locally outsell foreign ones and are also appreciated all over the world [31]. This could be as a result of the fact that their productions were always garnished with indigenous content and designed to address issues of enormous interest to their viewing audience. By merging the Nigerian narrative techniques (African storylines) and Western technology, Nigerian movies industry became a strong agent of recreating socio political and cultural events taking place in Nigeria, Africa and elsewhere across the globe. Hence, their productions, within a spate of two decades, became so popular among Nigerian and other African countries as well as an object of attraction to a good number of media practitioners, film festivals, and some American and European tertiary institutions among other.

3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

How the Nigerian Nollywood Project Nigerian Rich Local Cultural Values to the Outside World in Her Film Production

Nigerian Nollywood projection of the nation's local cultural values come in the form of historical films, films reflecting the current state of things in Nigeria, and those projecting how Nigerian should behave culturally in future.

Historical films are epic films which try to document past Nigerian/African cultural practices like female circumcision, different superstitions, and the activities of the occult world such as allusion to witchcraft, sorcery, ritual murder,

black magic, juju and so on), among others. An example of films that can fall rightly under the cultural reflectionary cultural representation is *Ijele*. In this film, Nollywood tries to cast a glimpse on what was in the Nigeria past, to tell the world how Nigeria was before, and during the arrival of the colonial masters and religion missionaries. Such epic films are necessary for the younger generations to keep in touch with Nigeria cultural history.

However, the objectives are usually lost in the air as a good number of the productions seem to glorify the bad sides of life as contained in the themes, without much energy being dissipated towards bringing out the moral messages inherent in productions, [32]. No wonder, considerable number of critics usually refers to those films as "occult thrillers."

Even if one cannot totally dismiss the existence of such practices in Nigeria and Africa in general, such beliefs and practices are fast eroding, and in instances where they are still in existence, they reside mainly with a few minority and cannot or should not be taken to represent Nigeria or Africa's popular culture. For a society that is predominantly dominated by Christians and Muslims to be portrayed in that manner left much to be desired. That is why critics have expressed concern over the misrepresentation of Nigerian culture via the film industry which may serve as the only window through which many foreigners could peep into the country.

Since repetition is a powerful tool of propaganda, when the viewers, especially foreign citizen, who may never have the opportunity of experiencing the continent or the country first hand, are continually exposed to the so called indigenous films (with such thematic contents, spiced up with fiction and sensationalism without clear indication to show that they are historic narratives with some entertainment embellishments and exaggeration of effects), over time, they would tend to see Nigeria and its cultural practice in that light.

This could account for the reason why, despite the current popularity of the Nollywood across the globe, Nigeria and Africa by extension is still seen the world over as an unprogressive, retarded, and culturally repugnant set of people. Meanwhile, other foreign society had similar ugly past cultural practices as seen in epic film like *Zenna*, slavery and inhumanity to man as in *The Spatacus* and so on. The difference is that the

producers of the later films were able to showcased the historical side rightly in context that no one could mistake them for their current lifestyle.

Again, Nollywood production sometimes portrays the Nigeria society as it is at the moment, serving as the mirror through which society sees its contemporary cultural values. This is against the backdrop that no society retains its cultural practices in whole over a long period of time when the same society interacts with and exchanges other things with its neighbours in the global village. Nigeria had gone past some of those negative and backward cultural practices that the country was once known with and depicted in most of the historical films as seen above, hence, Nollywood has tried to project the nation's evolving cultural identity in the face of globalization and technological transformation that has engulfed the entire human race through some of its productions like Tunde Kelani's *Thunderbolt* (2000) and Elvis Chucks's *Trials of Love* (2002), which portrayed women relatively in a positive way as seen in their evolving roles in the current Nigerian cultural setting.

Nevertheless, Nollywood movies producers seemed not to be awake to the current global reality and the effects of their productions on how Nigeria and Africa are being viewed by their teeming audience all over the world. As such, too much emphasis has been placed on minute bad cultural practices among a relatively few populace and projected as popular Nigerian way of lives when the reverse is but the case. It is important to note that there a good numbers of ethnic groups in the country (Nigeria) that are still sticking to their rich and good cultural ties and norms. Like every other place in the world, anti-social activities remain a deviation from the norm rather than the accepted rule; a point many critics of the Nollywood expect the industry to clearly bring out in all their productions, [33]. However, a review of the available productions from the Nigerian movies industry seems to be an aberration. For instance, the report of a study conducted by Akpabio revealed that out of 1,547 video films submitted to the Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board, only 7.27% were positive in slant whereas the whole 60.1 percent were negative in slant [34].

Though some researchers are of the opinion that ethical reengineering in the larger society may be a prelude to sanitizing the video industry, the situation still demands urgent re-examination of

the ethical foundations upon which the video industry itself is based. Besides, a celebrated Nigerian dramatist, Osofisan, while expressing his worries over this dilemma in his address at the Sixth Lagos International Forum on Cinema, Video and Motion Picture in Africa observed that:

The films also have significant influence on the way that others see us, and hence on the way they relate to us. We cannot but be concerned, therefore, about what they are saying, what attitudes they are promoting, and what image of us they are projecting. Precisely because they have deservedly won ovation everywhere, the Nollywood films have come to assume an authority over our values and our lives, such that what people see in them comes to be taken not as just a fictional projection of one imaginative consciousness, but as the true, authentic mirror of what we really are, as a veritable market of what our society represents, and much worse, of the ideal that we aspire, or must aspire, towards [35].

Just like many other critics, Osofisan's opined that the producers should play down on morally repugnant themes and produce videos that are of greater good to the larger society. Meaning emphasis should be on videos with good morals and "ennobling virtues." Film itself is a culture and is also the most effective vehicle of propagating culture. This is even more compelling when viewed against remarks that 'the cinema is one of the most efficient ambassadors providing information on inter-state because cinema carries with it bits and pieces of its country of birth'. After all, 'in Indian, European, and Hollywood films, the general approach is to present the best of their cultures to the audience'.

Take the case of women in Nollywood productions for instance, what the film industry project about women is no longer at tune with the new image and role women play in the current Nigerian society, but hardly did they make efforts at placing such role assigned to women in context because of lack of technical depth. As a result of this, some of the Nollywood productions are gender insensitive and a good number of them also still abide by the traditional and conservative attitude toward women, thereby leaving a wrong impression as to what women are and their current role in the Nigerian cultural background.

Again, a respected film academic and promoter of the Nigerian video film, Okome, while speaking about the aspects of the representation and "objectification" of women in Nigerian movies, noted that only a few Nigerian films, such as Tunde Kelani's *Thunderbolt* (2000) and Elvis Chucks's *Trials of Love* (2002), have portrayed women relatively in a positive way. These lapses, observed, exist so as to appeal to the male-dominated audience.

As such, often times, women are portrayed in most of the films as prostitutes or at best, courtesans, wily lovers, and witches, liable for all imaginable criminal activities. This kind of women portrayals according to, is visible in many filmic productions from almost all the sections of the country including the Northern and Southern parts of the country, with differing intensity though. The major observable difference is that the southern productions contain more rituals and murders, whereas such contents hardly ever dominate Northern movies. Nevertheless, Northern films do not reflect women roles in the society any better as they usually portray them as people that are greedy, fickle minded, weak, unable to make their own marital decisions and are available for purchase by the highest bidder.

Films such as *Living in Bondage I* (1992), *Abuja Connection* (2003), *Dangerous Sisters I and II* (2004), and *The Ritual* (1992) housed themes that are strong reflection of negative images of women in the society. The women in *Glamour Girls* (1992) are reminiscent of Helen of Troy, Jagua Nana (Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana* [1987]) and Rola (Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests* [1963]). In these films, women were not shown as traditional housewives sentenced to "hearth and home," but modern women who mount roadblocks and act as vamps. Therefore, when women are given a voice, it is misused; when they stand their ground, it is in a ruinous cause. For instance, in Alex Okeke and Ugo Emmanuel's *No Nonsense* (2003), the heroine, Ada, is presented as a liberated woman. She dominates and terrorizes anyone — her parents, brothers, sisters, husband, daughter, and son-in-law — who gets in her way. She creates trouble in her own household as well as in her parents' home. Again, the Nigerian movies do sometimes perpetuate sex role stereotypes and reflect the patriarchal social values dominant in Nigerian society, which amounts to what Tuchman would call the "symbolic annihilation of women".

Another way Nollywood internally mirror the Nigerian's cultural values is to hold the mirror for the Nigerians and their external audiences to see how Nigerians ought to behave culturally. It is a projection of what Nigerian cultural values should be.

Influx of Foreign Cultural Values into the Nigeria Local Film Production, and its Effect on the Nation's Cultural Heritage

There are times that Nollywood production is permeated on foreign cultural values. In such situations, themes and plots are borrowed from existing form of art work, domesticated and reproduced for their audience consumption. This means showcasing other people's filmic experiences (cultural values) at the expense of one's own. This sometimes happens because Nollywood movies' local appeal is squarely in pursuit of a popular audience so much so that they go unreservedly and unabashedly commercial. These are neither tame art house films nor quaint depictions of traditional culture. Instead, the movies are lively, sometimes sensationalistic and draw heavily on popular formulae and conventions long tested and proven by Hollywood. Nollywood's only agenda is commercial, unlike the self-conscious (albeit often brilliant) national cinemas subsidized by governments around the world. Elaborates: Nollywood "has no view, no agenda, no ideology. It is a sprawling marketplace of representations. Its storylines are plucked from newspapers, political rumour and urban folklore."

In watching such movies, the Western viewer may be struck by how they can seem both familiar and unfamiliar at the same time. The movie series Issakaba is a compelling example of how Nollywood blends African sensibilities into Hollywood conventions. It is a vigilante story, in the tradition of the American movies Dirty Harry and Death Wish, where the heroes protect the innocent and exact vengeance where an ineffectual establishment will not or cannot. However, it has a distinctly Nigerian twist. The story is "ripped from the headlines," and the events are based on real-life events in Nigeria where vigilantes, the Bakassi Boys, took justice into their own hands in the southern part of the country to the displeasure of many concerned citizens.

In many ways, the Issakaba story is more complex and ambivalent than its US counterparts, as befits the Nigerian experience.

As McCall (who introduced Western audiences to the film) explains, recent history tells Nigerians that "the 'goodness' of any action is never absolute, regardless of the evident 'evil of its target,'" that "power, no matter who wields it will eventually corrupt" and that "replacing one band of armed thugs with another offers little hope for true political reform."

Other films with borrowed titles, themes, plots etc are the American *Save the last Dance* and *Cinderella* whose titles and content were retained by the Nollywood in their own versions; whereas, the American's *Two can Play the Game* was translated and converted by the Nollywood into *Break Up*.

Beside, the brand name of the Nigerian film industry 'Nollywood' is a reflection of western influence on the industry. Some art critics like the Emmy Awards nominated American Director of Photography, Marc Wisengrad, at the annual Nigerian Film Corporation's Cinematography Workshop, tagged "SHOOT 2005," was downright paternalistic in his objections to the brand name "Nollywood." According to him, the name Hollywood stems from a town in the United States of America known for film production. In this respect, he opines that:

It would be stupid against this background to refer to your local film industry as Nollywood. It would be more understanding if it is called Lagos, because I understand that is the nerve centre of film production in Nigeria, but not Nollywood. New York, where I come from, has its own film industry, it is not referred to as Hollywood

Other critics like Olushola Oladele Adenugba were not silent on this. He adduced the following reasons to explain why some Nigerians are also not comfortable with Nollywood as name for the film industry in the country.

One of such reactions states that the term implies that Nollywood is an imitation of Hollywood and Bollywood rather than something in itself, something original and uniquely African. Many are opposed to the appellation because, according to them, it is a form of neo-colonialization, another Western propaganda. They wonder why the only film culture that has built itself by itself must be labeled after Hollywood.

However, Olushola Oladele Adenugba, himself and others believe the term was not a completely bad one as it covers the diversity of Nigerian films, including the "celluloid, video, short film, documentaries, film literatures, training projects, equipment and capacity building of the industry and its highly secretive professionals.

4. CONCLUSION/FUTURE DIRECTION

Beginning as a local industry and rising from nothing, Nollywood no doubt has become the second largest after Bollywood in terms of popularity, revenue generation and quantity of productions in circulation. From fantasy to reality, from tape to big screen, from local to global presence, from the sloppy sludge of yesteryears to today's reality and even the projected future, Nollywood has come a long way as a medium of communication to its local and global audiences.

With thematic cultural representations that are dominantly coloured with a mixture of internal and external cultural values, that seem to at times, generate cultural complications and even contradictions, the Nigerian film industry has overly spoken and still speaking in volumes to Nigeria, Africa as well as the global communities.

Nevertheless, it is important to point out here that the increasing quantity of filmic contents from the Nollywood had not helped much in the area of projecting the nation's positive image and rich cultural heritage to the outside world as the quality of the filmic contents (local positive cultural values) that emanate from the Nollywood remains grossly inadequate or usually situated out of context thereby re-enforcing the negative image fostered on Nigeria and Africa at large by the foreign media who usually approach Africa and Nigerian cultural values from a distance and through their own cultural telescope.

The fact that Nollywood is thriving in an environment with so many challenges like lack of finance and professionalism, poor distribution and editing, piracy, as well as technological and environmental factors; suggests that the industry can persevere.

As the Nollywood continues her journey of becoming the leading film industry in the world, and might soon become in not too distant future, the following grey areas therefore, have to be corrected. Such corrections will enable her to not only stand tall among her peers but also to be able to positively project and position Nigeria and

Africa in the good book of many citizens of the global village.

To start with, Nollywood should endeavour to localize identified rich global cultures while globalizing the wealth of Nigerian and African's experience, cultural values and norms rather than concentrating attention on the cultural practices the nation has jettisoned on its own or those foreign values capable of infesting the citizens' lifestyle negatively as seen in the body of this literature. Nollywood must therefore showcase originality and mirror the Nigerian and African society right.

To compete favourably with other leading film industries in the world, Nollywood must be more serious and pragmatic. The latter's well-honed technical expertise, expensive locations, appealing sets and costumes, inspiring special effects, thoroughly developed scripts, and glamorous stars; is still quite huge to roll away.

Since, the industry is already one of the most patronized medium through which the country/continent is viewed and understood. It behoves on its association- the Actors Guild of Nigeria (AGN)- other relevant agencies and stakeholders to ensure that certain practices that tends to place the culture and identity of Nigeria/Africa into disrepute should be frowned at and stopped. For instance, the act of concentrating on practices and beliefs that are either in the past or only reside mainly with a few minorities should not be presented to represent or reflect a way of life for the totality of the people.

Similarly, the practice where Nollywood production is permeated on foreign cultural values at the expense of their own in pursuit of popular audience, perhaps, to satisfy commercial quests is needless and purely antithetical and represents a huge step back for Nigeria and the continents' fight against cultural erosion by western cultures.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

1. Mead M. The concept of culture and psychosomatic approach. In: Weider A, editor, Contributions towards medical

- psychology: Theory and psychodiagnostic methods. Ronald Press Company, New York. 1953;1:368-397.
Available:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/11419-015>
2. Ibie N. How video films developed in Nigeria; 2004.
Available: <http://www.nollywood.net> (Accessed on 28 July, 2013)
 3. Uchegbu B. Goal oriented film censorship policy for Nigeria: Lessons from the colonial era. In: Ekwuazi H, Nasidi Y. editors. Operative principles of the film industry: Towards a film policy for Nigeria. Nigerian Film Corporation, Jos. Nigeria; 1992.
 4. Fafolu GO. Nollywood: A viable vehicle of public diplomacy in Nigeria. New media and mass communication. 2013;11:21-25. Available:www.iiste.org (Accessed on 28 July, 2014).
 5. Akpabio E. Attitude of audience members to Nollywood films. Journal of African Studies. 2007;16(1):90-100.
 6. Fafolu GO. Nollywood: A viable vehicle of public diplomacy in Nigeria. New media and mass communication. 2013;11:21-25. (Accessed on 28 July, 2014).
Available: www.iiste.org
 7. McCombs M, Reynolds A. How the news shapes our civic agenda. In Bryant J, Oliver MB, editors. Media effects: Advances in theory and research, 3rd ed., Routledge, New York. 2009;1-16.
 8. McCombs M, Shaw DL. The agenda-setting function of mass media. Public Opinion Quarterly. 1972;36:176-184.
 9. Shaw DL, McCombs M. The emergence of American political issues: The agenda-setting function of the press. St. Paul, MN: West; 1977.
 10. Iyengar S, Kinder DR. News that matters: Television and American opinion. University of Chicago Press, Chicago; 1987.
 11. Seaver BM. The public dimension of foreign policy. The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics. 1998;3(1):65-91.
 12. Carroll CE, McCombs M. Agenda-setting effects of business news on the public's images and opinions about major corporations. Corporate Reputation Review. 2003;16(1):36-46.
 13. Kiouisis S, Popescu C, Mitrook MA. Understanding influence on corporate reputation: An examination of public relations efforts, media coverage, public opinion and financial performance from an agenda-building and agenda-setting perspective. Journal of Public Relations Research. 2007;19(2):147-165.
 14. Wanta W, Golan G, Lee C. Agenda setting and international news: Media influence on public perceptions of foreign nations. Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly. 2004;81(2):364-377.
 15. Zhang C, Meadows iii CW. International coverage, foreign policy and national image: Exploring the complexities of media coverage, public opinion and presidential agenda. International Journal of Communication. 2012;6:76-95.
Available:<http://ijoc.org>
 16. Ibie N. How Video Films Developed in Nigeria; 2004.
Available:<http://www.nollywood.net> (Accessed on 28 July, 2013).
 17. Uchegbu B. Goal oriented film censorship policy for Nigeria: Lessons from the colonial era. In: Ekwuazi H, Nasidi Y. editors. Operative principles of the film industry: Towards a film policy for Nigeria. Nigerian Film Corporation, Jos. Nigeria; 1992.
 18. Udomisor I, Sonuga A. Content analysis of programs produced by Nollywood particularly on Africa Magic: DSTV. Research on Humanities and Social Science. 2012;2(11):27-34.
Available: www.iiste.org
 19. Chowdhury M, Landes T, Santini M, Tejada L, Visconti G. Nollywood: The Nigerian film industry. Harvard School of Business; 2008.
 20. The Economist. Nollywood dreams Malaysia sun: Nigeria's little known Film Industry spring a surprise. 2008;2006.
 21. Onishi N, Step aside LA. Bombay, for Nollywood. The New York Times; 2002.
 22. Barrot P. Nollywood: The video phenomenon in Nigeria. Indiana University Press, Bloomington; 2008.
 23. UNESCO Institute for statistics. International Survey on Feature Film Statistics'. UNESCO Institute for statistics; 2010.
Available:http://www.uis.unesco.org/template/pdf/cscl/Infosheet_No1_cinema_EN.pdf (last
 24. March E. The Nollywood phenomenon. Wipo Magazine. 2007;10(3).
 25. Noy F. Hausa video & sharia law. In: Barrot P. editor. Nollywood: The video phenomenon in Nigeria. 2008;78-84.

26. Benibo TF. The Nigerian film industry (Nollywood). Nigerian Film Corporation; 2008.
27. Fafiolu GO. Nollywood: A viable vehicle of public diplomacy in Nigeria. New media and mass communication. 2013;11:21-25. Available:www.iiste.org (Accessed on 28 July, 2014)
28. Akpabio E. Themes and content of Nigerian home video movies. Unilag Sociological Review. 2003;4:129-43.
29. Ebewo P. The emerging video film industry in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. Los Angeles, California: Journal of Video and Film. 2011(Fall);59(3):46-57.
30. Vieyra PS. Les cinema et L'Afrique', presence Africaine. Paris; 1969.
31. Enahoro A. Film makers and film making in Nigeria: problems and prospects. Africa Media Review. 1989;3(3):98-109.
32. Giwa J. Onookome Okome: Nudity in Nollywood movies is normal. Available:<http://www.igilandi.org/Onookome%20Okome.html> (Accessed on 7 Oct. 2006)
33. Anyanwu C. Towards a new image of women in Nigerian video films. In: Ogunleye F, editor. African video film today. Academic Publishers, Manzini, Swaziland. 2003;81-90.
34. Strinati D. An introduction to theories of popular culture. Academic Publishers, New York, Routledge. Swaziland. 1995;69-80.
35. McCall J. Nollywood confidential: The unlikely rise of Nigerian video film. 2004; 13:(98,109).

© 2015 Asogwa et al.; This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Peer-review history:

The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
<http://www.sciencedomain.org/review-history.php?iid=1126&id=22&aid=8960>