

**NOLLYWOOD AND THE NIGERIA'S NATIONAL IMAGE: A STUDY
OF SOME SELECTED NOLLYWOOD MOVIES (2010-2016)**

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Abstract

Previous studies have shown that contents of Nollywood films are not geared towards positivity. Previous studies have also shown that Nollywood films can be assumed to be one of the major causes of the fact that Nigerians are facing the encumbrances of a negative perception globally. This research seeks to find out if this trend has changed with the recent Nollywood productions (from 2012-2016). Both Content Analysis and Face-to-Face Interview were adopted as the methodologies used to carry out this study. Five Nollywood films were purposively selected for this study using registration and approval by National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB), superb production quality to fit the big screens and premiered both in Nigeria and internationally as the criteria for selection. From the interview, it was indicated that most Filmmakers are focused on contents that will appeal to their audiences and maximize profit, and the interviewee emphasized that Nollywood movies give the exact picture of reality-whether good or bad. From the content analysis, it was verified that there are more negative themes than positive themes in Nollywood movies. Based on findings, the study recommends that, all Nollywood films must be checked by NFVCB, to meet the criteria of positive portrayal, before it can be shown internationally. Secondly, the government should collaborate with filmmakers to produce films that promote Nigerian cultural identity to the global community.

Keywords: *Portrayal, Nollywood, Nigeria, Image, Movies*

INTRODUCTION

The effects of the media on people cannot be overemphasized. It is evident, that the media directly influences the image of a country, as viewed by the international community. The media contributes to national representation but the degree is intricate to measure in Nigeria. Previous studies According to Auger (2011), Richard Raskin, the editor of Short Film Studies at Aarhus University, Denmark, explained the importance of film as a key part of the media. He opined that “Film matters for the same reason all art matters – because it embodies and conveys the values and beliefs of the culture within which and for which it is made. Popular art forms, such as film, are of special importance because they speak to the most central of those values and beliefs (p.6). Therefore, it is acceptable to state that film mirrors life and is a major carrier of culture. It should be noted that Nollywood, which is the thriving film industry operated by

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Nigerians in Nigeria has been one of the most significant concepts to develop and grow from Nigeria. Therefore, Nollywood films can be presumed to be carriers of the multi-tribal nature and diverse cultures that are predominant in Nigeria.

The reason why Nollywood is the focus of this study is because it has been proved by different authors to be the most widely circulated piece of art that shows the culture and values of Nigerians globally. Alawode (2013) states that films have ‘been recognized as a popular culture which not only mirrors and tells stories of the societies which it subsists; films depict the lifestyles, attitudes, environments and activities within and around them.’ (p.1). Haynes (2007) states concisely that ‘Nigerian video film is... what is on television in Namibia, and on sale on the streets of Kenya. In Congo, they are broadcast...in New York, Chinese people are buying them. In Holland, Nollywood stars are recognized on the street by people from surname and in London, they are hailed by Jamaicans.’ (p.6). Alawode (2013) also supports this declaration, by stating that ‘popular opinion, based on UNESCO report (2009), holds that the Nigerian film industry, popularly called Nollywood, which is dominated by home videos is currently rated second in production of films after Bollywood (India) and over Hollywood (America). Whether this claim is true or not, the truth is that Nigerian movies are widely watched. (p.2). Also Oyesomi (2008) acknowledged that ‘Nollywood has over the years become a world phenomenon, as its movies are being sold in Ghana, Togo, Kenya, Uganda and South Africa as well as Jamaica, USA and the UK to name a few.’(p.282). The reality is that, the Nigerian film industry (Nollywood), has a very wide distribution base. These three statements suggest that Nigerian videos have various international audiences, who have been exposed to international standard.

Government intervention in the film industry to facilitate a positive national image, and its positive implications in Nigeria, both on Nigerians living in Nigeria and in diaspora, are vague. According to Jedlowski (2011), in an attempt to create a panacea for the depraved image of Nigeria, an effort was made by the Nigerian government to restore a positive image of Nigeria in the past, through the video industry. A promotion labelled “Nigeria Image” later renamed “Heart of Africa” was launched by the Minister of Information and National Orientation and also stated that ‘one of the main axes of this campaign was to encourage a new image of Nigeria and to draw intercontinental investments and tourism, using the video industry as an instrument to achieve these objectives (p.232).

This study aims at analysing the content of Nollywood films. 5 selected films which have been produced within the year 2012 to 2016 was thoroughly analysed, for the purpose of this study. The researcher had access to these films through DVDs. Thus, references and suggestions was made based on the contents of these 5 films. The films to be examined include:

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Table 1: The 5 Nollywood Films Selected for This Study

	FILM TITLES	YEAR OF RELEASE	LOCATIONS OF RELEASE
1.	Black November	2012	Nigeria United States
2.	Phone Swap		Nigeria Ghana United Kingdom
3.	October 1	2014	Nigeria United States United Kingdom
4.	Fifty	2015	Nigeria United Kingdom
5.	The Wedding Party	2016	Nigeria Canada

As shown by aforementioned studies -Alawode (2013), Haynes (2007) and Oyesomi (2008), it has been gathered that, the Nigerian film industry (Nollywood), has a very wide distribution base. Also, it is reality that, as shown by Oyesomi (2008), the contents of Nollywood films are not geared towards positivity. According to Jedlowski (2011), As a result of the contents of Nollywood films, Nigerians are facing the encumbrances of a negative perception globally. Also, Jedlowski also perceived that demeaning subjects or themes of some Nigerian films have posed unlimited problem to the nation and this peril must be tackled so as to avert circumstances where negative impressions are given out to the outside world about the country. Since Nollywood films, which are cultural carriers and a representation of Nigeria, have unsuccessfully made the Nigerian image attractive since the 'Heart of Africa' campaign started (according to Egwemi 2010), the contents of some of these Nollywood films warrants critical investigation especially as they affect the Nigerian image. This is to therefore examine the effect of Nollywood films on Nigerian Image.

As opined by Oyesomi (2008), film seems to have been overlooked and underestimated as a source of opinion construction of a particular set of people. Nollywood does not seem to be deliberate about creating a positive image about Nigeria; filmmakers are more focused on creating stories that will sell, as profit making seems to be the overall motive behind the making of these films.

1. To determine the degree to which the themes of the selected Nollywood films portray a positive Nigerian image.
2. To determine if characterization in the selected Nollywood films portray Nigerians as good or bad people.
3. To determine the degree to which the overall content of the selected Nollywood films portray a good image of Nigeria/Nigerians.



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4. To determine if Nigerian filmmakers have motives of creating a positive Nigerian image through their productions.

This study is to get the attention of both the government and filmmakers (particularly), through dissemination of the research results, conclusions and recommendations on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blog posts etc.). This will bring their attention to the positive sides of the country that can be portrayed to the international community, through international film festivals and through other means. This is the significance of this study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The name 'Nollywood' was given by a foreigner. As stated by Onuzulike (2009), it first appeared in an article by Matt Steinglass in the 'The New York Times' in 2002... (p.177). Steinglass (2002) described Nollywood as, Nigeria's domestic movie industry, known here as "home video," as one of the great African success stories of the last 10 years. It grew from the rich traditional culture of Nigeria into a supposedly modern internationally recognized industry' (p.21-22).

Discussing image, image is important and inevitable in our everyday living. Every human or product inevitably, has an image. A quote is credited to Aristotle that states that, "The soul never thinks without an image." The idea that mental imagery serves a representational function can be traced back at least as far as the ancient Greeks. According to Kosslyn, Thompson & Ganis (2006), a mental image occurs when a representation of the type created during the initial phases of perception is present but the stimulus is not actually being perceived; such representations preserve the perceptible properties of the stimulus and ultimately give rise to the subjective experience of perception (p. 4). Image is a mental picture or perception of a representation of something or someone.

Attention has been paid to the contents of Nollywood movies and its negativity has been vetted in the past. According to Akpabio (2007), the former Nigerian Minister of Information, Mr. Frank Nweke, lamented the emphasis on negative themes claiming that it gives the country a bad image [p.4]. Lawal-Arowolo, (2015) claimed that, the economic situation of developing and least develop countries (LDCs) is claimed to be the reason for piracy (p. 11). Ekeanyanwu (2010) stated that, 'The call for Nollywood to be a true purveyor of Nigeria's cultural values and heritage is a development imperative that cannot be wished away. This could be done by the creative portrayal and juxtapositioning of Nigerian rich cultural heritage with positive global norms. When this is done, many foreigners, especially those who want to do business with or in the country, will see Nigeria for who she is. The development implications of this cannot be overemphasized' (p.143).

The influence of film on national image cannot be emphasized. As emphasized by an article titled 'Influence of Film on Modern Society' Over the years, film has gained the attention of every culture in every part of the world...the idea that a film can have such an enormous impact on

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people can be difficult for some, however, this same impact can also be a great tool when used properly and for the right reasons...Movies also play an important role as advertising grounds. In another article titled, 'The Role of Film in The Society', Tom Sherak stated that-"Cinema has become a powerful vehicle for culture, education, leisure and propaganda...the influence in India of films is greater than newspapers and books combined."

As identified by Shodhganga, the findings demonstrate that films can affect national image, therefore, the contents of films need to be developed and structured to market the image of the nation to the film audience (p.13).The strategy of using film to advertise a nation started long ago. Tuclea, & Nistoreanu (2011) opined that, Film tourism marketing strategies have been successfully employed in the leading film destinations such as United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand and Australia. Lessons learned from these countries can benefit many destinations that intend to use films to promote existing or new attractions (p.29).The United States' Hollywood has been leading the charts, when it comes to cultural imperialism. Ibbi (2014) stated that Hollywood film is the American ideological medium of mass communication, it has influences to the movie industries in several countries as well. This process is called Hollywoodization, in which the Hollywood affect the movie industries in Asia to adopt the production style, dressing, or even imitate the name of Hollywood, as such (p.95).

Ibbi (2014) also clarified that, 'it is not only in Africa that Hollywood has come to dominate the way of thinking of filmmakers and the audience, it is the same in film industries all over the world. Hollywood has succeeded in selling America to the world; America is seen as a utopian society that is devoid of errors. After the September 11th terrorist attacks on America, some local traders were involved in a heated argument that it was not America, they believed America had some sophisticated gadgets that would have intercepted the planes before they hit the twin towers' (p. 94). As claimed by Ibbi (2014), the Chinese film industry like Bollywood was popular around the world because of its martial arts displays. Children and youth alike in the 1980s could be seen displaying some martial arts skills after exposing themselves to some dose of Bruce Lee films. People learnt from such films the culture and religion of China (p.101). Ibbi (2014) also stated that, from the findings of his study, it is obvious that though each country tried to sell its values across frontiers (p.105).

This study is necessary to pinpoint the problem with the contents of Nollywood films and to encourage the government and its agency (NFVCB), as well as filmmakers to take active and effective steps to curb the spread of negativity. Since Nollywood films are so widely watched, this study seeks to analyse the contents of five 'cinema quality' or 'modern/new Nollywood movies'- October 1, Phone Swap, Black November, Fifty and The Wedding Party, which were all produced within the space of 4 years to the timing of the study, and have all been shown both nationally and internationally, to determine if the contents are actually portraying positive values, negative values or both. This is the gap that this study seeks to fill.



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This study the rest of the world by specifically selecting movies that have been shown in international cinemas. Since Nollywood films are so widely watched, this study seeks to analyse the contents of five ‘cinema quality’ or ‘modern/new Nollywood movies’ - October 1, Phone Swap, Black November, Fifty and The Wedding Party, which were all produced within the space of 4 years to the timing of the study, and have all been shown both nationally and internationally, to determine if the contents are actually portraying positive values, negative values or both. This is the gap that this study seeks to fill.

Theoretical Framework

Framing theory was propounded by Erving Goffman in 1974. It is an extension of the agenda setting theory. However, the idea of this study goes beyond agenda setting. As explained by an article titled ‘Framing Theory’ (2014), “the basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. Framing is an important topic since it can have a big influence and therefore the concept of framing expanded to organizations as well... Framing is the way a communication source defines and constructs any piece of communicated information... In essence, framing theory suggests that how something is presented to the audience (called “the frame”) influences the choices people make about how to process that information...” Tankard (2001), Framing recognizes the ability of a media presentation to define a situation of a nation... media framing is important because it can have subtle but powerful effects on its audience... (p. 96).

Therefore, if framing is often adopted for information dissemination, general communication and to lay emphasis on certain events and organizations, it can be applied to the creation of a new image for a nation as well.

Empirical Review

According to the findings of Spears, Josiam, Kinley & Pookulangara (2013), in their study ‘Tourist See Tourist Do: The Influence of Hollywood Movies and Television on Tourism Motivation and Activity Behaviour’, it is indicated that Hollywood movies/TV productions have a positive impact on viewer involvement and that movie/TV related tourism is likely to be affected by movie and TV viewing preference and destination image. The results identify that the predictor “TV viewing behaviour” is the strongest predictor of entertainment motivated tourism, followed by “destination image” and “movie viewing behaviour.” Findings also indicate that “destination image” is the strongest predictor of movie-related activities and that the image portrayed in a movie does influence the viewer’s inclination to visit and participate in activities featured in a movie. Also, according to a study, ‘Identifying Bollywood as a crucial factor of India’s economic development: A review analysis’ conducted by Bouka, Merkouri & Metaxas (2015), Bollywood was pronounced as a profitable cause for India’s development. This above statements are proof that film, is a very important influence on economic development, which leads to all round national development.

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According to an article on Gender, Race and Media, “the inaccuracy of ethnic groups can affect how we perceive one another and relate to one another.” As stated by Ozele (2016), through these movies Africans are experiencing a cultural connect worldwide, something which foreign movies cannot provide... In a post-modern world, reality has become fluid, and no medium has done more to make it so than film, with its wide accessibility, its sense-and-psyche altering format, and its effortless ability for persuasion (p.1).

It is important to note that according to previous studies, blacks (especially African Americans) are generally portrayed in movies and television in the negative way. According to an article on Gender, Race and Media, “African Americans are the most stereotyped people in the modern and historical United States. They are portrayed as lazy, unintelligent, loud, immoral, destructive, and obnoxious as well as being portrayed as criminals or thugs in the media.” James (2002) describes what Africa has been portrayed as in the western media, as a ‘Homogenous Entity’, ‘the Dark Continent’, ‘Africa the Wild/Jungle, Hunger, Famine and Starvation’ ‘Endemic Violence, Conflict and Civil War’, ‘Political Instability and the Coup Cycle’ and a continent full of HIV/AIDS’.

Meanwhile Nigerians are portraying themes that are supporting these stereotypes emphasized by the western media. The themes of Nollywood films are indeed broad and covering Nigerian, African and universal issues: ... female genital mutilation, evils of polygamy, extra marital affairs, elopement, different forms of rituals, cultism, betrayal, sibling rivalry, the activities of hired assassins and armed robbers, the spirit world, mermaids, witchcraft, work place rivalry, incest, hypocrisy of religious leaders, the world of twins, mother in-law problems, parental match making, clash of Western and traditional cultures, conflicts, sexual intercourse with housemaids, Christianity, Islam and traditional religion, landlords and tenants, sickle cell anaemia, barrenness, challenges to love and lovers, widowhood practices, unemployment, street children, search for roots, abandonment of aged parents, teenage pregnancy, overemphasis on male children, “first lady” syndrome, effects of bad upbringing on children, the police, drug trafficking, marriage, angry gods and goddesses, campus life, tribal conflicts, curses, conflict between rich and poor, proliferation of Churches, switching of babies at birth, surrogate motherhood, slavery, organized crime, home abandonment, prostitution, cancer, rivalry over titles, smuggling, HIV/AIDS, battle between good and evil, murder ... (Akpabio, 2007, p. 91).

METHOD OF STUDY

This study adopted both content analysis and in-depth interview, which is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods of research. According to Prasad (2008, p.1), “content analysis is described as the scientific study of content of communication. It is the study of the content with reference to the meanings, contexts and intentions contained in the messages... Thus, content analysis is all about making valid, replicable and objective inferences about the message on the basis of explicit rules. The unit of analysis might be an entire film" (p. 13). 5 movies were content analysed. McNamara (1999) states that “Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant’s experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth

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information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up...”in this case, to the conclusions made from the content analysis of the films “...to further investigate their responses” (As cited in Valenzuela & Shrivastava, 2002, p. 2).

Purposive sampling method (which is a non-probability sampling technique) was used for the selection of the 5 films for this study. The type of purposive sampling used was the homogenous purposive sampling technique because the selection of the films by the researcher was based on having similar features because such features are of a particular interest to the researcher. A homogeneous sample is often chosen when the research question that is being address is specific to the characteristics of the particular group of interest, which is subsequently examined in detail. The reason for the purposively selection by the researcher is to bring focus to specific features of the population of interest, that best allowed the researcher to find answers to the research questions that have been posed. They can provide the researcher with the justification to make generalizations from the sample that is being studied, whether such generalizations are theoretical, analytic and/or logical in nature. This should not be regarded as a weakness of the study, as the study has adopted both qualitative and qualitative methods in analysing data.

Criteria for the selection of the films listed:

1. These Nollywood films are registered with the National Film and Videos Censors Board (NFVCB).
2. The full (or part of) the production process of the film took place in Nigeria.
3. They have been shown consecutively at Nigerian cinemas for a particular period of time from year 2012 till date.
4. They are of more superb production quality to be fit for the big screens.
5. They have been premiered both in Nigeria and internationally and may have been featured in international film festivals, which facilitates exposure to larger international audiences.
6. They are available for sale on DVDs or soft copy format. Out of all the films that met the criteria for this study, these 5 films were the only ones available to the researcher. Due to the long-drawn-out battle of film piracy in Nigeria and the indifferent outlook of the government towards this issue, most of the movies that may have been studied were inaccessible for purchase.

Unit of Analysis

This study was conducted by examining various genres, themes (both positive and negative), lifestyles, behaviour, religion, as well as other factors such as the different languages that were used as a medium of expression in the 5 selected Nollywood home videos. The unit for the measurement of the movies were mutually exclusive and were broken down into smaller units of measurement, as shown in the table below. The units that were used to classify the videos are:

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Table 3.1: Content Categories for The 5 Selected Movies

Genres	Action 1		
	Adventure 2		
	Comedy 3		
	Fiction 4		
	Drama 5		
	Biopic/History 6		
	Mystery 7		
	Tragedy 8		
	Romance 9		
	Others 10		
Themes	Positive Themes	Love 1	
		Loyalty 2	
		Redemption 3	
		Education 4	
		Faith 5	
		Hope 6	
		Family 7	
		Honesty 8	
		Justice 9	
		Truth 10	
		Friendship 11	
		Community 12	
		Perseverance 13	
		Tolerance 14	
	Negative Themes	Negative Themes (cont.)	Disloyalty/Betrayal 1
			Deceit 2
			Drama 3
			Revenge 4
			Fear 5
			Greed 6
			Hatred 7
			Pride 8
			Poverty 9
			War 10
Infidelity 11			
Polygamy 12			



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Also, there was one purposively selected interviewee for this study. The interviewee is a filmmaker in Nigeria. His educational qualification and his deep knowledge and involvement in the Nigerian film industry, at the beginning and when it became a global phenomenon was the reason why he was selected for this study. He holds a diploma in the art and technique of filmmaking from the London International Film School. This signifies that he learnt the basic technique of filmmaking from foreigners and has been developing himself over the years in Nigeria by producing numerous movies.

At the time when Nollywood movies started becoming commercial entities (with the production and distribution of Kenneth Nnebue's 'Living in Bondage' in 1992), Kelani was active in the Nigerian film industry at the same period, when he produced Ti Oluwa Nile (Part 1-3) in 1993 and Ayo Ni Mofe (Part 1&2) in 1994 and others all through that decade till date. This qualified him to be a suitable interviewee for this study.

This study was conducted by examining various genres, themes (both positive and negative), lifestyles, behaviours, religion, as well as other factors such as the different languages that were used as a medium of expression in the 5 selected Nollywood movies. The unit for the measurement of the movies are mutually exclusive and are broken down into smaller units of measurement, as shown in the table below. To investigate the content of the 5 DVDs (which is the sample size for this study), 'Content analysis' was applied for simplification of data. As indicated by Macnamara (2005), "...this should include the Code Book/Coding List; coding guidelines and instructions to coders..." (p.13)... The more comprehensive the Coding List and guidelines to the coder, the more reliable the analysis will be. Coding guidelines should be strictly followed" (p.14).

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The summary of facts of the face to face interview as well as the analysis of the five selected movies will be discussed here. The result of content analysis of the five selected Nollywood movies is displayed in the table below.

Content Analysis Results:

Table 2: Positive and Negative Themes from Black November, Phone Swap and October 1st

BLACK NOVEMBER		PHONE SWAP		OCTOBER 1ST	
Positive	Redemption	Positive	Family	Positive	Honesty
	Love				Love
	Justice	Love	Education		
Negative	Greed/Theft	Negative	Disloyalty		Community
	Poverty		Poverty		Justice
	Deceit		Drama	Tolerance	
	Revenge		Deceit	Negative	Revenge
	Fear		Pride		Deceit
	Infidelity				
	Poverty				

Table 3: Positive and Negative Themes from Fifty and the Wedding Party

FIFTY		THE WEDDING PARTY		
Positive	Friendship	Positive	Friendship	
	Love		Love	
	Faith		Loyalty	
	Hope		Family	
Negative	Disloyalty/Betrayal		Negative	Honesty
	Infidelity			Truth
	Immorality	Redemption		
	Pride	Greed/Theft		
	Drama	Infidelity		
	Hatred	Drama		
	Fear	Hatred		
	Deceit	Deceit		

Result Analysis

The results of this study will be stated to answer each research questions. The responses to the questions are as follows:



1. The Extent to which the Themes of the Selected Nollywood Films Portray a Positive Nigerian Image

The first aim of this study was to find out the extent to which the thematic depictions in the five selected movies affect the Nigerian image. The positive themes that were depicted in these five selected films are virtually all the positive themes listed in the unit of analysis which are love, loyalty, redemption, education, faith, hope, family, honesty, justice, truth, friendship, community, perseverance and tolerance. The negative themes are disloyalty/betrayal, deceit, drama, revenge, fear, greed, theft, hatred, pride, poverty, war and infidelity. Out of all the negative themes listed in the content categories, only polygamy was not found in any of the five selected movies.

From the analysis of the selected 5 films (Black November, Phone Swap, October 1st, Fifty and The Wedding Party), the themes (both positive and negative) were portrayed in 77 scenarios. Below is a breakdown of all the positive and negative themes present in each of the 5 selected movies:

Table 4: Positive and Negative Themes in 5 Selected Movies

MOVIES	THEMES		
	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	TOTAL
BLACK NOVEMBER	3	5	8
PHONE SWAP	2	6	8
OCTOBER 1ST	6	2	8
FIFTY	4	8	12
THE WEDDING PARTY	7	5	12
			n=77 (5 films)

Table 5: Number of Positive and Negative Themes in the 5 Selected Movies

MOVIES	SCENES		
	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	TOTAL
BLACK NOVEMBER	4	9	13
PHONE SWAP	5	12	17
OCTOBER 1ST	7	2	9
FIFTY	7	13	20
THE WEDDING PARTY	11	7	18
TOTAL	34	43	77

As presented in tables above:

- The 3 positive themes present in the movie ‘Black November’ are redemption, love and justice (4 scenes), while the 5 negative themes are theft, poverty, deceit, revenge and fear (9 scenes).



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- The 2 positives themes present in the movie ‘Phone Swap’ are family and love (5 scenes), while the 6 negative themes present are disloyalty, drama, deceit, pride, infidelity and poverty (12 scenes).
- The 6 positive themes present in the movie ‘October 1st’ are Honesty, education, community, justice, tolerance and love (7 scenes), while the 2 negative themes present are revenge and deceit (2 scenes).
- The 4 positive themes present the movie ‘Fifty’ are friendship, love, hope and faith (7 scenes), while the 8 negative themes are disloyalty/betrayal, infidelity, immorality, pride, drama, hatred, fear and deceit (13 scenes).
- The 7 positive themes present in the movie ‘The Wedding Party’ are friendship, loyalty, love, family, honesty, truth and redemption (11 scenes), while the 5 negative themes are greed, infidelity, drama, hatred and deceit (7 scenes).

Therefore, the total number of positive themed scenes in all the 5 selected movies are 34 (44.2%), while the total number of negative themed scenes are 43 (55.8%).

Table 6: Percentages of Each Theme Potrayed in the 5 Selected Movies

THEMES PORTRAYED IN THE 5 SELECTED MOVIES	PERCENTAGES
Redemption	4.3
Love	10.6
Justice	4.3
Family	4.3
Honesty	4.3
Education	2.1
Community	2.1
Tolerance	2.1
Friendship	4.3
Hope	2.1
Faith	2.1
Loyalty	2.1
Truth	2.1
Theft/Greed	4.3
Poverty	4.3
Deceit	10.6
Revenge	4.3
Fear	4.3
Disloyalty	4.3
Drama	4.3
Pride	4.3



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Infidelity	6.4
Hatred	4.3
Immorality	2.1
Polygamy	0.0
TOTAL	100 n=77 (5 films)

As shown in Table 4.8, the positive theme with highest portrayal was love with the negative theme with the highest portrayal was deceit, both with 10.6% while education, community, tolerance, hope, faith, loyalty, truth and immorality were all at the lowest with 2.1%. The percentage of infidelity was also high with 6.4%. Redemption, justice, family, honesty, friendship, theft/greed, poverty, revenge, fear, disloyalty, drama, pride and hatred were all 4.3%. However, polygamy was 0%, which means that it was not portrayed in the 5 selected movies at all.

The Nigerian image is at stake because the more negative themes are present in nollywood movies, the more Nigeria is selling its negativity to the world. It has been shown that most of the themes in Nollywood films are negative, therefore the world is perceiving negativity and these can affect the image of Nigeria negatively. As stated in by the interviewee, there is no perfect country in the world but the reason why it is assumed that some are better is because of the positivity of their nation that has been successfully sold internationally. There are more negative themes than positive themes and this will not promote a good Nigerian image.

The first aim of this study was to find out the extent to which the thematic depictions in the five selected movies affect the Nigerian image. The positive themes that were depicted in these five selected films are virtually all the positive themes listed in the content categories which are love, loyalty, redemption, education, faith, hope, family, honesty, justice, truth, friendship, community, perseverance and tolerance. The negative themes are disloyalty/betrayal, deceit, drama, revenge, fear, greed, theft, hatred, pride, poverty, war and infidelity. Out of all the negative themes listed in the content categories, only polygamy was not found in any of the five selected movies.

Characterization in Selected Nollywood Films Show Nigerians as Both Good and Bad People

The interviewee-Tunde Kelani stated that, there are both good people and bad people and since films mirror the society, there are both good and bad characters. From a qualitative analysis of the scenes of the 5 selected movies, There were good characters such as Ebriere-the slain heroine of the Niger-Delta, Dede her lover who was killed along with the other Niger-Delta warriors in Black November, Mary, her family, Akin and Akin’s mother who both accommodated stranded strangers in Phone Swap, Agbekoya- the farmer who decided to stop his education to avoid future consequences, , Danladi-the inspector with integrity, omoladun- a hardworking police officer, Tawa-the brilliant school teacher, the king of Akote who welcomed a stranger to promote peace in the land in October 1st, Kate-who informed Tola that Maria was pregnant for her husband in



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Fifty and Yemisi and Deardre, who were great advisers to Danni on her wedding day in The Wedding Party.

Examples of negative characters include the CEO of western oil who did not care if Ebiere was killed, the corrupt chiefs who were sharing the money meant for the people of the Niger-Delta, the corrupt law enforcement agents who were paid to beat up peaceful protesters in Black November, the ass-kissing assistant of Akin who was a snitch for him and against him, Alexis who always took credit for Mary's designs, Akin's ex-girlfriend- Gina who travelled from Lagos to Abuja to beat Mary, Mary's married ex-boyfriend-Tony who travelled from Lagos to Owerri to beat Akin up in Phone Swap, Prince Aderopo who was responsible for the killing of 5 virgins in his town, Reverend Downey, who raped secondary school boys entrusted into his care in October 1st, Lizzy who slept with her daughter's boyfriend, Maria who was having an affair with a married man, Tola who was proud and nasty and Kunle, who was cheating on his wife and eventually impregnated his concubine in Fifty, Bamidele Coker-the father of the bride who was living a fake life, Wonu-the pretentious wedding planner, Lady Obianuju-the hostile mother of the groom, Chief Felix Onwuka-the cheating father of the groom, Dozie's ex-girlfriend who put in thong in his suit pocket and invited her friends to torture the bride on the dance floor and the petty thief with a toy gun at the Wedding Party.

This proves that Nigeria is not full of bad people and is not also full of good people like every other normal society. It is more like a balance between the good and the bad.

The Extent to which the Overall Content of the Selected Nollywood Movies Show a Positive Image of Nigeria/Nigerians

The total number of positive themed scenes in all the 5 selected movies are 34 (44.2%), while the total number of negative themed scenes are 43 (55.8%). Therefore, it is harmless to state that there is more negativity in the 5 selected Nollywood movies analysed than positivity. Also, the positive theme with the highest portrayal is love with 10.6% while the negative theme with the highest portrayal is deceit with 10.6%. This shows that the 5 Nollywood selective movies focus a great deal on love, as well as deceit more than the other themes.

From the interview, Nollywood developed from nothing, grew and produced stars. It came at the very appropriate time to save the image of Nigerians, being dented all over the world on the different media platforms. Nollywood came as an unconscious rescue initiative that showed that Nigerians should not be seen as frauds and scammers, but as hard working and resilient people. Nollywood is one positive thing to come out of Africa. A variety of films with different themes are available to a variety of audiences that will contain the good, the bad and the ugly. Overall, the content of Nigerian do not portray a good or bad image of Nigeria. There is a healthy balance between the two. This is because that is exactly how life and every society is- a combination of the good and the bad.



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Nigerian Filmmakers Do Not Have Motives of Creating a Positive Image of Nigeria in their Productions

Tunde Kelani stated that his films are used as a tool for cultural diplomacy, emphasizing that sometimes, it is the responsibility or the artiste or the filmmaker to project the country in a positive way. The filmmakers are subtly selling their own country. So in a way, it is important that the filmmakers use Nollywood films as ‘soft power’ to sell the positive aspects of the country. They can kill two birds with a stone. It is important to make a lot of money so that they can keep on making movies and hopefully make films that portray a positive image of Nigeria. After all, it’s a business that has to make profit. During the administration of the former president of Nigeria, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, incentives were created for filmmakers but its regularity has not been determined. For the present administration (of President Muhammadu Buhari), incentives for filmmakers have not been emphasized yet. Therefore, it is benign to say that filmmakers are not given enough motivations to deliberately portray Nigeria positively in their productions. They are ready to tell the story as it is. If there are more of negative portrayals in the work, as it is in real life, this may portray a negative Nigerian image.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the five selected movies and the analysis of the interview transcript, these are the conclusions that were made:

- It has been established that the themes in these five selected Nollywood movies do not show Nigeria and/or Nigerians in a positive light.
- From the breakdown of the characterization, from both the interview and the analysis of the five selected movies, there is a healthy balance between the good and the bad. Although, but the interviewee emphasized that films are a reflection of the society, not an exaggeration.
- The overall content of the selected these five selected Nollywood movies portray a balanced image of Nigeria/ Nigerians. The interviewee emphasized that there are a variety of films for various audiences with different preferences.
- Nigerian filmmakers do not have a shared motive of creating a positive national image in their productions. Their concentration is more on profit-making, as opined by the interviewee for this study- Tunde Kelani.
- The government hardly supports Nollywood industry. The administration of former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan made provision for the financial support for filmmakers, though it was irregular. The administration of President Muhammadu Buhari is yet to do the same, as stated by the interviewee for this study- Tunde Kelani.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NCFVB Regulation: the functionality of the National Film and Video Censors’ Board should be investigated. Through the National Film and Video Censors Board, the government should make

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the filmmakers consider a positive image of Nigeria (as much as possible), in their productions. It should be made a criterion for the approval and release of their movies. This is an extreme criterion but the effect would be seen in the long term, if the government is fully committed to carrying out this plan.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

Previous studies are scarce on the areas of very recent Nollywood cinema (high) quality movies, from the year 2012 till date and how it affects the Nigerian image. The contribution to the work is the proven knowledge of how the themes, characterization, overall contents and stereotypes of the most recent Nollywood movies from 2010 till date-that have been viewed at international cinemas, will create a negative Nigerian image and the need for filmmakers to be motivated through incentives-governmental support, provision of infrastructures, the urgency of piracy laws and the proper regulation of NFCVB, for an enhanced Nigeria's positivity. This will bring about all round growth and development through tourism and international investments that will boost Nigeria's economy.

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