

**Nollywood in Diversity: New Dimensions for Behaviour Change and National Security
in Nigeria**

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Abstract

This paper sets out to demystify the nature of Nollywood movies existing in diversity and to propose new dimensions for using film to achieve behaviour change and a dependable national security in Nigeria. The paper views national security as the art of ensuring national safety of the government. Nollywood has naturally diversified along ethnic dimensions including the Hausa movies (Kannywood) in the North, the Yoruba movies in the West and the Ibo movies in the Eastern part of the Nigeria. Others include the Akwa-Cross movies from the Southern part and the Tiv movies from the Middle Belt region of Nigeria. The paper adopts observation and analytical research methods depending on secondary sources. The paper finds out and concludes that Nollywood's diversity is an opportunity to ameliorate some security challenges of the country and recommends the use of behaviour change focused themes which should be featured by Nollywood movie producers in Nigerian films produced along cultural, ethnic and regional boundaries.

Key words: Nollywood, Diversity, Dimensions, Behaviour Change, National Security.

Bio-data

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Introduction

In 1924, a renowned film Director, David Wark Griffith, predicted the future of films in a piece titled: *The movies, 100 years from Now*. In one of his predictions, Griffith declared that before the year 2024, “films will be made in various cities and there will be no concentrated motion-picture production in New York alone” (Schrank, 1998, p. 307). Indeed, Griffith’s prediction has come to pass in this direction. In Nigeria, the production of movies is no longer concentrated in Lagos alone. Movies are now produced in Enugu, Kano, Cross River and Benue States of Nigeria including many other cities in the country.

Film making in Nigeria began in the colonial era on the shoulders of free entertainment, with documentary productions and then moved to celluloid productions, when in the 1980s, the pioneering effort of Ola Balogun, Eddie Ugbomah, Sanya Dosunmu, Ladi Ladebo, Brendan Shehu, Hubert Ugunde, Adamu Halilu, and Afolabi Adesanya among others had witnessed a boom (Ekwuazi, 2000, p. 1). By 2002, a Nigerian movie industry was born and christened “Nollywood” after the American film industry (Hollywood) and the Indian film industry (Bollywood). Today, the Nigerian film industry is the world’s third largest producer of films, howbeit; video films (Adenugba, 2015, p. 1).

Characteristically, Nollywood movie genres are categorized under action, crime, family, horror, romance, and comedy or traditional. Apart from the recent geometrical evolvement of indigenous language film in Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo Nollywood movies that have gained international recognition are produced in English language. Nollywood movies are basically feature films which are primarily designed to entertain the viewer or dramatize a story whose story event exhibits causal and temporal relationship, narrative motivation and parallelism (episodic development of character and situation) (Ekwuazi, 2000, p. 12).

At the moment when Nigeria is experiencing serious security challenges, this paper contends that the Nigerian movie industry, through behaviour change movies, has a role to play in ameliorating security breaches perpetrated by some dubious Nigerians. Nigeria's current experience, occasioned by political and religious tragedies, is one of her worst in history so far. In 2011, about 10 corps members were maimed and some killed by some irate youths in Northern Nigerian over allegations that the corps members were involved in the rigging of elections that gave the then ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) victory in the presidential elections. The incessant attacks of Boko Haram on churches, security agents' premises and public places between 2010 till date and the devastating effects thereof can only be imagined.

Nigerians who believe in fueling political and religious crises in the country need urgent change in behaviour. The youths, who are used as agents of destruction of lives of property under the guise of Boko Haram also, need a change in behaviour. The Niger Delta Youths who are currently threatening more terrorizing activities such as kidnapping of expatriates and pipeline vandalization also need a rethink and behaviour change. These Nigerians who threaten the peaceful and collective existence of Nigerians; whose activities constitute security risk to other Nigerians need someone to change them through some means of persuasive and strategic communication. They deserve a social and behavior change communication that will persuasively discourage them against negative life-styles such as kidnapping, suicide bombings and armed robbery. They deserve films that will promote patriotic and positive behaviour in the society.

The thrust of this paper is to emphasis new dimensions for behavior change communication using the diversity of Nollywood to achieve national security. The security crises in Nigeria are fundamentally regional and perpetrated mostly by less literate individuals. The diversity of the Nigerian movie industry should be considered as another

opportunity in disguise for fighting insecurity in Nigeria. This paper highlights the capacities of diverse Nollywood movies and their ability to bring about behaviour change among deviant Nigerians.

Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the objectives of this paper include:

- To justify film as a tool for behaviour change using theoretical bases
- To identify the rationale for the diversification of Nollywood.
- To highlight some national security challenges in Nigeria
- To speculate new dimensions for utilizing Nigerian indigenous language movies for promoting peace and national security through behavior change communication.

Film/Media Theories for Behaviour Change

From scholarly discourse, a theory is a set of systematic generalization, based on scientific observation and leading to further empirical observation (Folarin, 2006, p. 4). From the foregoing theories are fundamental bases for explaining complex situations or interpreting a given phenomenon. They are verifiable facts that are tested and established as truths. Film or media theories are commonly anchored on the effects of contents on the audience. Indeed, the effects of film content can impact positively or negatively on the behavior or attitude of the audience because of the medium's power to store and convey a great deal of information.

The major assumption at this point is that the diversity of Nollywood can significantly bring about positive behavior change among Nigerians, with the view to bringing about peace and national security in Nigeria. Thus, film can be used, not only for entertainment or education, but also for the promotion of socially acceptable attitudes that would propel the nation's development, using persuasive strategies for social mobilization and advocacy in movies that are produced in indigenous languages in the country.

First, the social learning theory, propounded by Albert Bandura, Dorothea Ross and Sheila Ross, posits that movie audience learn attitudes and behaviour from observing the behavior of models or actors in the film (Ike, 2005, p. 210). This implies that desired behavior could be planted in characters whose actions will serve as a model for viewers who are in turn influenced through attention, retention and motivation. The theory further supports that people will enact behavior that they see others on television or film because the actors were rewarded and they will not enact behaviour for which they see other punished.

The second theory, related to the first, is the social judgment theory propounded by M. Sherif, C Sherif and Nebergall. The theorists postulate that attitude change or persuasion is a two stage process where individuals evaluate their position on an issue against that of others and attitude change result in relation to an individual's personal involvement with the issue and their latitudes of acceptance or reflection toward the issue (Ike, 2005, p. 210). To this effect, film producers must offer the viewers cogent reasons through logical presentations to enable the viewers to pass judgment.

Thirdly, the psychodynamic theory, derived from the psychoanalytical positions of Sigmund Freud, holds that, for a message to be considered as persuasive and effective, it must succeed in altering the psychological functioning (id, ego and super ego) of the recipient(s) in such a way that he or she or they will respond overtly with models of behavior desired or suggested by the communicator (Folarin, 2006, p. 92). For example, to encourage enlightened voting behavior, the film director would have to make actors to develop favourable attitudes towards the electoral process as a whole. Major psychological motivations used as intervening variables between the message stimulus and audience responses include urges, grudges, drives and opinions.

Finally, the aggressive cues theory is only a reality that explains the promotion of positive and negative behavior as enacted by film directors. The theory assumes that exposure

to mass-mediated aggression increases people's level of emotional and psychological stimulation which can in turn lead to aggressive behavior, for example, watching of war films, boxing or wrestling contest. However, the theory further believes that whether a person responds to aggressive behaviour may depend on whether he is experiencing frustration or irritation at the time of exposure to mass-mediated violence. But exposure to media violence can, according to this theory, also work in the opposite direction by inhibiting the actual expression of aggression through a sense of guilt.

Nollywood and Diversification

Although films in Nigeria began to gain popularity around the 1990s with the advent of movies like Kenneth Nnebue's *Living in Bondage* (1992) and *Nneka* (all Ibo films), the beginning of Nollywood dates back to the year 2002. The name Nollywood had been in contention as to when and who coined it (Iorapuu and Uzoji, 2012, p. 106). However, Nollywood had become a generally accepted name for Nigerian films because it covers the diversity of Nigerian films; the multicultural identification of the product.

The name Nollywood from one dimension refers to movies made in English, which is the reason the movies have a universal appeal in the first place. However, Adenugba argue that the term 'Nollywood' covers a diversity of Nigerian film production in the same way that Bollywood covers the production of Indian films in Tamil, Bengali, Telegali, Telegu and other languages beside Hindi in other parts of that huge country (Adenugba, 2015, p. 1). Thus, the term Nollywood covers Nigerian films in several languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa and English.

Nollywood today exist in diversity more than in a centralized form. The diversity of Nollywood is evident in the existence of separate indigenous movies from various regions and in different tribes and ethnic groups in Nigeria. The indigenous movies include films and industries such as the Igbo films (Igbowood), Yoruba films, Hausa films (Kannywood),

Akwa Cross films, Tiv films and many more. The diversification of Nollywood is occasioned by the proliferation of indigenous movies which are produced by different ethnic groups in different languages (even when subtitled) and in different regions of Nigeria.

Infact, there is a strong perception among Nigerian filmmakers that the diversification of Nollywood has become a strong basis for the survival of the industry because the more than half population of Nigerians are less literate rural residents who have picked more interest in movies that entertain and educate them in their local languages. The indigenous movies also attempt to mirror life and myths of the respective ethnic groups. To support the above point, the National president of Igbo Film Forum, a producer and film director, Mr. Harris Chuma, remarked at an Igbo premier film festival in Awka, Anambra State thus:

Nollywood of today survives based on indigenous language films. The champions of the Nollywood of today are the Yorubas and the Yoruba language film is booming. Hausa language films are also selling...English language film market is almost dead and that is why we are rushing to the cinemas (Orakpo, 2012, p. 8).

The diversification of Nollywood is predicated on several factors including the increased demand of indigenous movies by film audiences from different localities, the need to conserve and preserve respective cultures in Nigeria in any indigenous film producing competition and the need to showcase the myths of different ethnic groups to the present generation and the outside world. Other factors include the need to use the indigenous films as tools for educating the people, the need to expose African talents to the world and the need to appeal to the entertainment needs of Nigerians in diaspora.

Consequently, the evolvement of indigenous movies in the Nigerian film industry has witnessed a geometrical proliferation in leaps and bounds. In 2015 alone, some of the Yoruba movies produced include *Hadiza*, *IbaAgba*, *OmoOloja*, *Opalamba* and many more. In the previous year, other Yoruba movies such as *Iyawo* (2014), *Aloanukansoso* (2014), *Shoprite* (2014), *Aiyemi* (2014), *Oyenusi* (2014) and *Timutimu* (2014). Hausa movies produced and

making waves in northern Nigerian include *RawarGani* (which has being seen online by over 109,000 viewers) and *A Zango Bazan Barki Ba* (seen by more than 166,827 viewers online) (<https://m.youtube.com>). Others include *Aminullah* (2014), *Ali Nuhu's Yar Tasha* (2015), *Akasa Atsare* (2011), *Yar Agadez* (2011), *Yanmata* (2010), *Ya Daga Allah* (214) and many more.

Some Igbo movies in Igbowood include *Ajum Akwam Iko* (2013), *Onye Ntisa* (2014) and *Akonuche* (2014). Others include *Udo Gba Koi Koi* (2014), *Aka Ogheli* (2014), *Onye Iruabua*, *Ndi Oru Aka*, *Udara Ugo*, *Obinwa*, *Ada Abakaliki* and more. Some Akwa Cross movies (mainly from Akwa Ibom and Cross River States) include *Ekaetta*, *Udo Ekarika*, *Mfina Ibaha*, *Uwa Iban* and *Nsuto Anwan*. Some Tivwood films (from Benue State) include *Ifyan I Ngo*, *Orfoto*, *Ikpu Teacher*, *Gbor Igyo*, *Geneviva* and *Honourable Wam* (www.nigeriamovies.com).

Film and National Security in Nigeria

Denotatively, film is a flexible transparent base with a coating which reacts to light and which is used to record a photographic image (Ike, 2005, p. 83). However, film, synonymously called motion pictures or movies, connotes artistic reflections and creative expression of life in the society. Radio, television and film are considered as modern arts apart from seven of the arts namely: architecture, art, dance, drama, literature, music and sculpture (Titchener, 1998, p. 17). Film, accessed through audio and visual (video) sensibilities, is very attractive. What seems to be occupying entertainment writers much more than television in recent times is the increased interest in videos.

Film contents can be divided into two broad groups namely: features and documentary. The ultimate aim of feature film (and all drama related programmes) is to entertain the viewer through the dramatization of a story whose story event exhibits a causal and temporal relationship or patterns of narrative motivation and parallelism (Ekwuazi, 2000,

p. 12). Documentary films or videos on the other hand are wholly and entirely based on actuality (comprising real words of real persons or their writings, published or unpublished, moving pictures of their actions or photos and drawings) including the sounds and visuals of real events (Ekwuazi, 2000, p. 12). Feature films are acted (even when based on actuality) but documentary films deal with the presentation or representation of facts about ideas, historical, social, scientific, economic or biographical subjects, either recorded in actual occurrence or re-enacted where the emphasis is more on factual content than on entertainment.

Film in Nigeria has been used both as features and documentaries. Apart from foreign examples of documentaries on science and technologies, history of air plane crashes, lives of animals in the bush and aquatic life shown on most foreign stations in Nigeria, documentaries on Nigeria's independence, political transitions and economic realities abound on Nigerian air waves. The re-enactment of realities however, blurs the thin line between the feature and the documentary films. For example, the productions of movies on Idi Amin of Uganda and Sani Abacha of Nigeria are features in the first place, but the fact that they are anchored on reality makes them documentaries of some sorts.

Whatever the nature of Nigerian films, it is pertinent to posit that Nollywood has played less significant roles in addressing the realities of national security challenges in Nigeria. Nollywood movies have accorded more attention to feature films based on entertainment with less educational and informational values. There is no time the nation (Nigeria) needs collective efforts from the movie industry and all other sectors, to tackle national security challenges than now.

The South African white paper on Defense defines security in line with contemporary trends as an all encompassing condition in which the individual citizens live in freedom peace and safety; participate fully in the process of governance; enjoy the protection of fundamental

rights, have access to resources and the basic necessities of life and inhabit an environment which is not detrimental to their healthy and social wellbeing (Defense in a Democracy, 2014, para. 3). National security therefore is the freedom and safety including the enjoyment of fundamental human rights by citizens of a nation or country. Nigeria's worst national security challenges are fueled by some perpetrators of the nation's political and religious tragedies in recent years.

In 2011, about 10 corps members were maimed and killed by some irate youths in Northern Nigeria. The corps members who had participated in the 2011 elections as collation officers at various polling units were alleged to have comprised in the rigging of elections in favour of the People Democratic Party. The excesses of 'Boko Haram' and their killings of over five thousand victims including school children between 2011 and now, through suicide bombings or guerilla warfare strategies are some activities that constitute insecurity in our country Nigeria. The overall impact of insecurity on the nation's development efforts include threats of national disintegration, a sharp decline in economic activities, fear of patriotic and civil participation and general loss of lives and property.

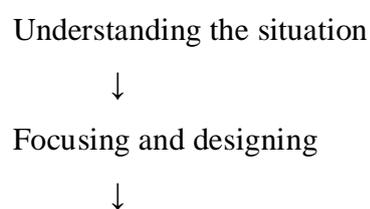
The Nigerian film industry has a role to play. Nollywood movies have however ignored the reflections of national security issues that are attitudinally motivated. The architects of insecurity in Nigeria include kidnapers, religious extremists, hired assassins and rituals killers. The behaviour change communication video films would encourage them to forego thoughts of evil acts that constitute insecurity in Nigeria. The Nigerian film contents deserve to include a social and behavior change communication strategy as it is famous in the health sector. Nigerians deserve a change in their behaviour in the political, social and religious sectors.

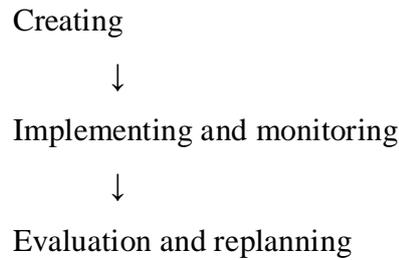
New Dimensions for Behaviour Change Communication

Change in behaviour of Nigerians, especially perpetrators of anti-social activities will likely bring about peace and national security in Nigeria. This can be achieved if the nation's communication systems or tools can employ social and behavioural change communication strategies and approaches. Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) is the use of communication to change behaviours, including service utilization by positively influencing knowledge, attitude and social norms. Although the recipients of behaviour change communication (i.e. the audience) depend on knowledge, attitudes, norms and cultural practices for change. In this context, communication goes beyond the delivery of a simple message, entertainment or slogan.

Strategic Dimensions: Strategic dimension demands the filmmakers (producers, scriptwriters, directors) to plan the production of the movies based on planned methodology. It involves identifying the purpose of each movie to be produced, selecting goals that the movie must accomplish, identifying specific approaches that must be implemented to reach each goal, identifying specific acts to implement each strategy and monitoring the movies' impact on the viewers (McNamara, 2006, para. 4). In social and behaviour change communication, the strategic dimension assumes a communication plan which is the C-Planning. Thus, every behaviour change communication (drama, film, music, meeting, group discussion) needs the SBCC plan or strategy to achieve effectiveness.

These steps in planning include analyzing the situation, analyzing the audience, designing communication objectives, designing or creating the message, evolving strategic approaches, evolving positioning strategy outline, implementation plan and monitoring and evaluation (USAID, 2005, para. 2). Summarily, the procedure can be illustrated thus:





Participatory Dimension: Participatory dimension demands the film makers in the diverse industry to involve as many local artistes from the location of the industry as possible instead of practicing the act of infusing professional artistes who are not from that ethnic group but who may have just low percentage knowledge of the language. As it is in Community Theatre, participatory dimension gives the audience from that location a sense of belonging.

Creative Dimension: Creativity is the hall mark of every work of Art. The content of the diverse Nollywood movies must be creatively rich and endowed with the cultural costume and property as appropriately related and relevant to the movie. The various movies from different ethnic groups should employ spectacular events such as singing and choreography which will add the necessary entertainment value to the productions and make them more attractive to the indigenous people. Other aspect such as storytelling should be regarded too. These aspects make the movies more lively and attractive.

From all indications, Nollywood movies have not maximally employed these strategies nor indicated a passion for behavior change. Thus, Nollywood movies are not research based consultative communications. The movies lack the zeal to promote and facilitate behaviour change among delinquent youths and perpetrators of political social and religious violence. Movie producers and directors are little interested in supporting the requisite social change that is necessary for promoting peaceful co-existence and meaningful living among the multi-ethnic and religious groups in the Nigeria.

Nigerian or Nollywood movie marketers, who double most times as movie producers or sole financiers of movies determine the content of movies to produce. Normally, they prefer scripts with workable ideas. Okome observes that what comes out fairly neatly in Nollywood movies is that the market dictates the content and style of presentation in video films. The market is itself governed by the producers/marketers who do this by insisting on what the script writer must write about and the perspective of the story to be highlighted. Since the scriptwriter is paid off handsomely by the marketers, the scriptwriter's job is simply one of writing the prompted script (Okome, 2005, p. 45).

The above assertion is a confirmation that Nollywood movies and their marketers/producers are interested in contents that only entertain and sell their movies. They have ignored their roles as social agents of reconstruction of values and morals in the society. Thus, if the contents are based mainly on forms of entertainment, even if they are indifferent to the moral building of the society, Nollywood producers are contented provided they sell and maximize profits. While this may be less worrisome, the need for movie makers in Nigeria to focus on social and behavior change communication (video films) should be paramount given the tensed political and religious crises that have resulted to insecurity in the nation. There is a need for movie makers to adopt new dimensions in the production and distribution of video films for behaviour change in Nigeria.

Discussion/Conclusion

The diverse video films produced in Nigeria in indigenous languages and mostly subtitled have the capacity to preserve indigenous languages and save them from total extinction. The films are also channels of propagating African tradition, culture, norms and values. They encourage learning of indigenous language through subtitles, help the cast in the interpretation of roles and enhance film aesthetic value (Babawale, 2009, p. 6).

Consequently, the various indigenous movies produced in different cities in Nigeria as illustrated above should be used to encourage and prompt behavior change among Nigerians through the evolvement of more indigenous film industries in multi-ethnic Nigeria. Nigeria is a country with 102 ethnic groups with many different languages, customs and religions (Ogundowole, 2013, p. 11). Due to this rich ethnic diversity, the Nigerian identity is very heterogeneous. The three largest ethnicities are Hausa and Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo and movies already exist in these languages. The perpetrators of political, social and religious crimes are drawn from different ethnic groups; most of them are less literate in understanding English language. The evolvement of indigenous film industries in indigenous languages will boost communication among the indigenous people, whose anti-social operations should be studied and addressed through the movies. Every ethnic group therefore deserves a movie industry and the respective governments where these ethnic groups are resident should offer support to indigenous movie producers, actors and directors to this regard.

Secondly, indigenous movie scriptwriters and producers should adopt improved thematic approach to film production. Indigenous movies already existing in Nollywood (Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Efik and Tiv) should adopt multiple thematic approaches to movie productions. Producers should employ a shift from mere entertainment themes to themes that encourage national security and patriotism. Movies should be also produced based on social themes that should encourage viewers to appreciate the collective existence of Nigerians in multiethnic communities. The upgraded themes should reflect the condemnation of barbaric acts by religious groups and politicians, through carefully planned, focused, designed and implemented behaviour based movies.

Thirdly, movies should be produced as documentaries. Indigenous movie makers in Nigeria should promote knowledge on national unity and patriotism through the production of documentaries that are educationally based on the need for behavior change in Nigeria.

Such documentaries should be produced and sponsored through the collaborative efforts of community leaders, well meaning individuals of the respective ethnic groups and the state governments. Film or documentary production is not an exclusive responsibility of producers, who ordinarily would prefer to produce movies for money making reasons.

Fourthly, the diverse movies produced by different ethnic groups should be research based. Indigenous movie producers should embark on the production of research based movies as they concern prevalent social issues in their locality. Such cases may include kidnapping, child trafficking, communal clashes, religious excesses and political tussles. The movies should allow for actors exhibition for reasons behind these acts and possible ways of escaping from them. The continuous exhibition of movie should convince viewers against negative behaviour.

Finally, the respective Nollywood industries existing in diversity should globalize their movies by acquiring a space on the satellite communication such as DSTV or GOTV. This should be achieved with the aid of respective local, states and federal governments for the purpose of reaching indigenous Nigerians in diversity. Movies producers from different localities should be given spaces or sponsored by their governments on satellite communication with subtitles as it is already done among most Yoruba and Hausa movies. This is because viewers have devised means of patronizing the internet more than sitting down to watch the movies in the sitting room.

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