

Biopics: Changing the Narratives in Nollywood

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Abstract

Being a popular form of mass entertainment and used as tool for cultural propagation, transmission and enlightenment, movies have far reaching impact on the society. It is a prism through which the world is viewed and understood. Nollywood has presented numerous fictional narratives on the socio-cultural and socio-economic life in Nigeria, however with a dearth on biopics, more so on females. There is a concern that Nollywood is imbued with patriarchal paradigm, and even though women have made significant strides in many areas, film narratives have been slow to recognize these progresses. This research looks at gender imbalance in Nollywood narratives with select filmmakers, using survey to sample the views of undergraduates at Caleb University, and interview on two notable Nollywood filmmakers, Tunde Kelani, and Zeb Ejiro. The survey reveals that, though people expect filmmakers to do more biopics on women, the filmmakers did not find the genre of film lucrative, hence the absence of biopics, more so on Nigerian women. The study therefore recommends that Nollywood filmmakers set the agenda of encouraging young girls to focus on their innate qualities to succeed in life.

Keywords: Biopics, Feminism, Video, Movies, Filmmaker, Nollywood, Women

Introduction

Film is one of the most popular forms of entertainment, enabling people to immerse themselves in an imaginary world for a short period of time (Tanis, 2009). Film is not only a medium of mass communication, it is also a tool for cultural propagation and transmission. Video movies (Nollywood) as an art process and industry is a powerful force of cultural enlightenment, it has become the prism through which we view and understand our social world. Scholars over the world have established the fact that mass media, and film, as instrument of socialization shape our views, opinions, attitudes, perceptions of various issues and influence the way we interact with our immediate environment (Macharia, 2016). Of late the themes of love, tradition and wealth in Nollywood movies inundates our visual minds.

Due to its visual power, movies shape the way people perceive gender reality, particularly narratives that highlights gender themes. Movies have the ability to cultivate perceptions about gender among viewers and also play critical roles in constructing responsibility through framing. Since inception in Nigeria, film as a medium of entertainment and enlightenment has influenced our perception of the African woman, it is in this light that (Macharia, 2016) states that, due to the way they (media) deal with gender issues, and there are cultural assumption about how males and females should think, act and speak. Citing Rama (2005), Macharia explains that the media (movies in this case) are influenced by the trend of the male leadership paradigm and even though women have made significant strides in many areas, the media have been slow to recognize these gains. Amobi (2013) as cited by (Macharia, 2016) argues that although, African countries have grown in their economies and in the education, the media portrayal of men and women reflects a patriarchal society.

Nollywood is replete with themes of young girls who survive or attain economic freedom through prostitution than themes depicting a ladies who attain economic success without the contribution of a man as opposed to Hollywood movies that would present *Frida* (2002), the eponymous character who was a great painter, activist and politician; Queen *Cleopatra* (1963) of Egypt whose life story have been made and re-made by different movie producers; *Ashanti* (1979) which tells the tale of an African lady who held on tenaciously even in captivity; *Sarafina* (1992) which looked at the life of a maiden during the South Africa apartheid struggle and of recent *Queen of Katwe* (2016) based on true life story in Uganda.

All these successful movies got international acclaim, but such representation of great and successful Nigerian women in filmmaking culture is conspicuously absent in Nollywood hence, the essence of this study which investigates why biopics of successful Nigerian women are not prominent in the narratives. The essence of this is to change the narrative in young girls in Nigeria as opposed to using sexual wiles to attain prominence. There existed strong and successful Nigerian women such as Queen Amina, who led her soldiers into a conquest raid of other northern and middle belt states in the 16th century; Inikpi of the Igala kingdom (the town of Idah in today's Kogi State) scarified herself (buried alive) for her people in the 17th century; Moremi who saved Ife from fiery wild forest marauders. There is Olufunmilayo Ransome-Kuti; women leader of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC); Hajia Gambo, women leader of Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU); Nike who runs one of the biggest art galleries in Nigeria; Folorunsho Alakija, a self-made billionaire; Mo Abudu, a media mogul; Nike Okundaye the fine artists with the largest privately owned art gallery in Nigeria. Other notable Nigerian ladies whose lives are worthy of media portrayal include the first female indigenous pilot, the first female Nigerian to bag a PhD., the first female army general in Nigeria, Professor Alele Williams the first female vice-chancellor in Nigeria (University of Benin).

Statement of Problem

A lot of Nigerian women have distinguished themselves in numerous incredible achievements in disregard to sensuous looks, but out of their natural abilities and hard work. It is interesting however, that Nollywood narratives have not placed thematic premium on these women. This study therefore looked at the reasons that may have warranted the dearth of biopics on women in Nollywood.

Research Objectives

The various objectives set to be achieved in this study include:

1. To find out the extent to which Nollywood filmmakers portray indigenous successful women in local films based on their effort and innate gifts.
2. To ascertain if local filmmakers are convinced/ believe/ are interested in the story of successful indigenous women; why they do and why not?
3. To know ascertain how much impact Nollywood films have on the psyche of young Nigerian girls and how it affects their purview of success in life.
4. To ascertain why Nollywood shy from making biopics on successful women
5. To change negative narratives on women

Literature Review

Since Nollywood activities fall under the radar of academics, every production and movie have constantly been under scrutiny for many reasons ranging from cultural misrepresentations, gender prejudices, poor narratives to movies with technical flaws. Movies are seriously considered by academics because it shapes our views, opinions, attitudes, perceptions of various issues and influence the way we interact with our environment (Macharia, 2016). Nollywood movies permeates every facet of our society however with the youths toping the viewership, and this is well elicited by (Ekwuazi, 2011), that about 60% of Nigeria's 120 million population figure is Nollywood's latent audiences. While viewers are busy having fun, researchers are busy looking into how these Nollywood movies impact on the lives of the audience. Most scholars admit that Nollywood has done well in building what they have today. However, there are concern about the quality and content of the industry's product. (Akpughe, and Adeseye, (2014), recorded that early Nigerian film theatrically emphasized culture and history to some extent, morality and politics, but contemporary social realities were left out because of the financial constraints experienced by filmmakers. They added that, perhaps, the success of Nollywood could be attributed to the ability of present-day-filmmakers to emphasize on contemporary realities which many Nigerians and Africans can relate to. On a second thought one would be forced to consider this statement, if most contemporary Nollywood movies are based on issues, which means, the society only experiences decadence. Commenting on the message, the authors wrote that Nollywood movies have been accused of emphasizing negative themes like student prostitution,

get-rich-quick syndrome, and corruption. Such unhelpful presentation has caught the attention of the National Film and Video Censor Board (NFVCB) which advised that producers of Nollywood movies look beyond portrayal of violence, sex, crime, pornography, obscenity, vulgarity, religion and other sensitive subjects (NFVCB, 2000). This advice omits what 'positive' messages the movies should portray. David Oyelowo, is a Nigerian actor who played the role of chess coach in *Queen of Katwe*. He throws more light on the use of the dark side of life in movie narratives. He says that "...as a Christian, an important aspect of storytelling is showing not only the light but also the dark of a given narrative; ...The idea is not to promote the darkness, or glamorize the darkness" (Donnellan, and Genovese,).

Noting that film has dramatic effects on the perception of viewers consciously and otherwise, producers should be sensitive about this. The case of the girl-child empowerment and gender equality should be explored in the right way. Accent to this notion (Edum, and Obire, 2013), believes that Nollywood movies have remain a reservoir of Nigerian culture, identity and proffering solutions to problems of tribalism, prostitution, security ineptitude, cultism, poverty, greed, religious cleavages, amongst others. They believe that such social problems may become non-existent if Nollywood explore successful women themes.

While the debate of female underrepresentation in the society and media become topical by the day, the focus of the issue is not often clear. Women are still being seen in most Nigerian cultures as help-mates. Such traditional and social practices not only limit their developmental capacities, but condemn them to poverty and denies them the opportunity to participate meaningfully in society. (Ekhareafu, 2011) posits that this seeming practice against women is traced to the dominant social and traditional patterns within the society which reinforce the idea that women lack the potentials to excel in formal organizations or play active roles in societal development.

We are not oblivious of the fact that making movies about real people and places could be very controversial as (Uchenunu, 2014) noted, how uncertainty in Nigerian political climate could lead to a business fiasco as experienced by Eddie Ugbomah in his attempt to re-tell the Aba Women Riots of the 1930s, where his expected revenue went down the drain because of the indiscipline of Nigerian politicians.

Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on George Garber's Cultivation, and Agenda- Setting Theories. The cultivation theory is concentrated on how heavy television (or movie) viewing could lead to certain exaggerated beliefs about certain issues in society. For instance, heavy viewers of violent movies on television are likely to get this feeling that the world out there is more violent than light viewers. In this line of thought, Griffin (2012) observes that television power comes from the symbolic content of the real drama to the viewers. Such impact/effect is noted by Akpughe and Adeseye (2013) who believe that Nollywood contributes to the violence amongst youths in Nigeria because youths in their gullible state tends to experiment what they see in movies. Also, Nwaolikpe, Oforibirikoroma, and Donkor (2014) state that those who watch the West African movies (dominated by Nollywood) are tempted to believe that most females solve their family and other problems through witchcraft because more often than not, they are seen visiting papas/witch doctors in makeshift shrines. Some scholars have proven that film has a dramatic effect on the perception of viewers, consciously and unconsciously. In similar vein, if Nollywood narratives could focus on women emancipation and empowerment by making regular biopics on women who have surpassed all socio-cultural barriers, to encourage young people, the effect of the cultivation theory as it affects audio visual consumption, the dynamics on feminine relegation would change significantly.

The Agenda-Setting Theory by Walter Lippmann by its dictate, also berates the attitude of Nollywood filmmakers who have disregarded heroines movies on Nigerian women. (Oboh, 2014), explains that the event or issue the media focused on in their reports/programmes, automatically becomes the subject of public debate and discussion. Most movie narratives are often about topical issues in the society. Nollywood filmmakers could set the agenda for encouraging young Ladies towards self-actualization, through biopics on self-made women. They could set

the pace, by making such women centre of their productions to promote the girl-child empowerment and gender equality. This media effect is evident from the effect *Queen of Katwe*, made in Uganda has infected many youths in Nigeria to realize that chess game does not discriminate against players' gender, age, race or education. It is now common to see school children attempting to play the game. Ukomadu, a reporter for *News Trust* writes, "To live here is hard" said Michael Omoeye, who at 14 has already dealt with food scarcity and worked to feed himself. Inspired by "Queen of Katwe", the 2016 film about a girl who escapes poverty in a Kenyan slum through chess, Omoeye hopes chess will help him, too". In similar report, Kuo also run a research on the effect of *Queen of Katwe*.

Those completing their final year of school who watched *Queen of Katwe* showed an improvement of 0.13 standard deviations from a previous mock exam and were 6 percentage points more likely to get a place at a public university. Younger students completing their fourth year of school (S4 students) also improved their overall scores and were 11 percentage points less likely to fail the math component of their exams. The benefits were the most pronounced for female students.

With such enormous influence, by a movie highlighting young girls, there is hope Nollywood filmmakers would achieve a lot and contribute to gender equality by making great biopics of our unusual women.

(Macharia, 2016) states that the media, for instance, can choose to highlight certain perspective of gender such as violence in relationship. In Nigeria, the issue of campus prostitution has taken centre stage, with the movies advocating the myth that young Nigerian ladies are becoming increasingly materialistic by patronizing rich men. If the heavy portrayal of the promiscuity in the movies is done to discourage the misdemeanour, its counter-productivity is very glaring as the society now, mirrors the art. If the dictates of the cultivation and agenda setting theories are plausible, filmmakers could recondition the minds of the public through unending positive narratives on self-made women that would engender the rise of young ambitious and vibrant ladies who will make huge impact in the society.

Research Methodology

Mixed research method- qualitative and quantitative was adopted in this study. The qualitative focused on personality interview of two prominent filmmakers, Tunde Kelani and Zeb Ejiro, while in the quantitative method, survey research design is used with the distribution of questionnaires to 240 female students of Caleb University Lagos because, the topic in question is focused on women. This is carefully laid out in its tabular format for easy comprehension.

Interview Presentations with Tunde Kelani

We decided to exclude preambles to interview from this presentation and on to core questions.

How would you describe the central themes of your films?

I don't have a specific theme, the stories unfolds as I read about them. Any issue from the literature/book may caught my attention and I pick it from there. I have done films on many topical and social matters yet I don't pursue any topic in particular.

How many of your films are women central to the theme?

Most of my works are of social and political relevance, aside that, most of them are adapted from literatures, like *Thunderbolt*, *Maa'mi*, and *Campus Queen*. What is common to all of them is their settings in Yoruba tradition, which employ positive female character.

How many of your films uphold the qualities of women and promote(s) their achievements in the society?

Like I said, I have done women-related films like *Thunderbolt*, *Campus Queens*, *Arugba*, *Maa'mi*, the *Dancing Mirage* and *Magun*, where women are the central focus. I don't base my work on a particular issue. Being an avid reader, I chose to share my view after reading stories that catch my attention. In other words, I find my stories or the stories find me. I might be drawn by environmental matters or personality. Maybe it's an unconscious choice about my works as different issues caught my attention in the stories. For instance, my recent movie *Sidi*, *Ilujinle* an adaptation of Wole Soyinka's play is just a mere expression about the romance and the thrill of village belle.

If you have done any work on women in this regard, did you enjoy the project? Were the movies box office success?

Well, I did a job on the life of Efusetan Aniwura, *Iya'lode of Ibadan* some years back and it was well received by viewers. The film was popular among certain circus and that gives me joy. That is all that matters to me.

Have your works/films promote the cause of women in the area of leadership in the society

You should know that for the filmmaker, the objective is about making money. I can work on biopics if there are sponsors or sympathizers on a particular cause. If sponsored by a group or individual I will produce it. Movie is about the actions, sex, violence which biopics naturally lack. It is a risk for a filmmaker to commit resources into biopics because the viewers would want to see action, violence, and sex but will not be willing to see a movie about a woman when these elements are not there. Filmmakers pick a work when it has the necessary ingredients like I mentioned before. Again some viewers would ask why the choice of your personality, they would ask why you prefer to tell her story over others.

Have you, as a filmmaker seen the need to make biopics on indigenous women and their contribution to society?

Such films should be commissioned by organization who would set to make movie about a particular. Basically, the producer will be willing to work on such films if the film ... in my case I work consciously and unconscious on the roles of African women in the society as mothers, wives, teachers. Etc. sometime ago, I produced a biopic on Efusetan Aniwura, *Iya'lode of Ibadan*, the work was great but just focus of the story at that time, it wasn't about the money. Recently I did a job for the Kudirat Abiola Initiative in collaboration with an organization in the United States titled *Supreme Price*, the documentary was screened for free and was not publicly released.

Do you have any Nigerian woman in mind to use as a central focus of a biopic, if yes, what is the criteria for choosing her

No, I don't have focus on biopics. The biopic I want to focus my attention on is about a man, not a woman. I want to make a film on the story of the late *Apala* musician, Ayinla Omowura. I am not drawn to matters because they are successful or not, I do them when I read the story and felt convinced.

Summary of Interview

The interview with Tunde Kelani reveals that he does not have specific theme in mind when embarking on new movie projects, but attracted by quality narratives adapted from proeses which features female characters like *Thunderbolt*, *Maa'mi*, and *Campus Queen* with Yoruba traditional setting in all. *When asked how many of his movies upheld the qualities of women and promote(s) their achievements in the society.* He points to *Thunderbolt*, *Campus Queens*, *Arugba*, *Maa'mi*, the *Dancing Mirage* and *Thunderbolt*, where women were the central focus, and that he does not base his work on a particular issue. He said he was contented about the reception on a biopic on the life of Efusetan Aniwura, *Iya'lode of Ibadan* which he made some years back.

On inquiry if his movies have promoted the cause of women in the area of leadership in the society, he highlights the importance of financial gain in filmmaking. He said that he can work on biopics if there are sponsors or sympathizers on a particular cause. If sponsored by a group or individual he will produce it. Movie is about the

actions, sex, violence which biopics naturally lack. It is a risk for a filmmaker to commit resources into biopics because the viewers would want to see action, violence, and sex, but will not be willing to see a movie about a woman when these elements are not there. Filmmakers pick a work when it has the necessary ingredients like I mentioned before. Again, some viewers would ask why the choice of your personality, they would ask why do you prefer to tell her story over others. Such films should be commissioned by organization who would set to make movie about an individual. Basically, the producer will be willing to work on such films. He said he has made movies consciously and unconscious on the roles of African women in the society as mothers, wives, teachers, etc, and sometime ago, a biopic on Efusetan Aniwura, *Iya'lode of Ibadan* just to tell a story, but not for financial gains, and recently, he made a movie about Kudirat Abiola's initiative in collaboration with an organization in the United States titled *Supreme Price*, the documentary was screened for free and was not publicly released. On whether he intends to make a biopic about women, he declined a focus on biopics more so on women, but that he has a man, the late *Apala* musician, Ayinla Omowura in mind because of his captivating story than just financial gains.

Interview with Zeb Ejiro

How long have you been in filmmaking for?

I came into the television production in 1985 where I was trained by NTA and BBC in scripting, producing and directing. I graduated from University of Nsukka Mass Communication department. Then in 1988 I created *Ripples*. It ran for five years on NTA network service. Then I went into the movie industry and directed *Nneka the Pretty Serpent*, *Evil Passion*, *Fatal Desire*, *Domitilla*, *Tears in Heaven*, *Sakobi 1 & 2*, *Yellow Cassava*, *Pure Honey* etc.

How would you describe the central themes of your films?

The themes of my movies are mostly influenced by my environment, Things I see around me, people I meet and societal influences.

How many of your films are women central to the theme?

Yes, I have done movies with women as the central themes.

How many of your films uphold the qualities of women and promote(s) their achievements in the society?

I have done a lot of movies with women as the central theme. The one that stands out is *Yellow Cassava*. This is a movie that not only project women but also showcased women's achievements in a nation building. The theme is about a young lady who puts aside her lucrative job in the city and goes to the rural area to educate people on nutritional value of Yellow Cassava. Her love for this worthy cause affects her love-life. She is given national honour by the president of the country for her good works. *Yellow Cassava* was sponsored by Harvestplus Washington and IITA Ibadan. The premiere in Abuja was attended by representatives from Harvestplus Washington and the Nigerian government. It has been shown on big networks like NTA, Isoko etc. starring Monalisa Chinda, Segun Arinze, Chidi Mokeme and Emeka Ossai.

Have you, as a filmmaker seen the need to make biopics on indigenous women and their contribution to society?

I have not done any movie on biopics. I would love to do one.

Do you have any Nigerian woman in mind to use as a central focus of a biopic, if yes, what is the criteria for choosing her?

Right now, I don't have any woman in mind, but I may be considering one in the nearest future.

Summary of Interview with Zeb Ejiro

Zeb Ejiro said that the themes of his movies are informed by his environment, and has positively made movies with women as the central themes showcasing their *qualities and achievements in the society such as Yellow*

Cassava (2014) which showcased women’s achievements in nation building. *Yellow Cassava* was sponsored by Harvestplus Washington and IITA Ibadan. He has not done movie on biopic, but desire to and considering a woman of substance which at the time of the interview, he has none in mind.

The response of these two prolific filmmakers confirmed the fears in the title of this essay about biopics, and on Nigerian women. Tunde Kelani has made just a movie which he claimed was just for posterity than for economic benefit, while Zeb Ejiro has not made any, but the closest to that was a sponsored campaign which in consonant with Kelani’s view that he could embark on that if sponsored because of the huge financial involvement which may not be recouped because of the absence of audience’s attraction such as action and scopophilia.

Survey

Convenient sampling was adopted drawing on a sample size of two hundred and forty female students administered questionnaires of eleven questions. There was validity of two hundred and twenty two well completed and returned. This represents 86 % of the response rate.

Part A: Personal Data Presentation

Table 1: Level of Students

Level	Frequency	Percentage
100	62	27.93
200	52	23.42
300	66	29.73
400	42	18.92
Total	222	100

Table 1 represents the level of students and class population which is the frequency. In 100L 62; 200L 52; 300L 66 and 400L 42, totalling 222 students that returned valid questionnaires. We have 100% of returned questionnaires and this runs through all the adjoining tables.

Table 2: Age Bracket of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
16-20 years	100	45.05
21-25 years	110	49.55
26-30 years	11	4.95
31 years and above	1	0.45
Total	222	100

The age bracket of the 222 respondents is from 16 years. 16- 20 years polled a hundred students; 21-25 years 110; 26-30 years 11 while above 31 years, 1 respondent.

Part B: Research Questions

Table 3: I watch Nollywood movies a lot

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	68	30.63
Agreed	101	45.50

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Neutral	38	17.12
Disagreed	11	4.95
Strongly Disagreed	4	1.80
Total	222	100

On those that watch Nollywood a lot, 68 respondents strongly agreed, 30.63%; 101 Agreed, 45.50%; 38 were neutral, 17.12 %; 11 disagreed, 4.95%; and 4 strongly disagreed 1.80%.

Table 4: Many Nollywood movies are centred on the life of successful women in our society

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	34	15.32
Agreed	81	36.49
Neutral	60	27.03
Disagreed	33	14.86
Strongly Disagreed	14	6.30
Total	222	100

Many Nollywood movies are centred on the life of successful women in our society 34 respondents strongly agreed, 15.32%; 81 Agreed, 36.49%; 60 were neutral, 27.03%; 33 disagreed, 14.86%; and 14 strongly disagreed 6.30%.

Table 5: Many Nollywood movies about the success story of indigenous women are very interesting

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	80	36.04
Agreed	92	41.44
Neutral	30	13.51
Disagreed	15	6.76
Strongly Disagreed	5	2.25
Total	222	100

Many Nollywood movies about the success story of indigenous women are very interesting: 80 respondents strongly agreed, 36.04%; 92 Agreed, 41.44%; 30 were neutral, 13.51%; 15 disagreed, 6.67%; while 5 strongly disagreed 2.25%.

Table 6: Biopics on successful Nigerian women in Nollywood encouraged me to be focus in my carrier

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	46	20.72
Agreed	104	46.85
Neutral	42	18.92

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Disagreed	24	10.81
Strongly Disagreed	6	2.70
Total	222	100

Biopics on successful Nigerian women in Nollywood encouraged me to be focused in my carrier

46 respondents strongly agreed, 20.72%; 104 Agreed, 46.85%; 42 were neutral, 18.92%; 24 disagreed, 10.81%; while 6 strongly disagreed 2.70%.

Table 7: Most Nollywood movies portray women as subservient to men, only few about the life of independent women in our society

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	59	26.58
Agreed	90	40.54
Neutral	32	14.41
Disagreed	34	15.32
Strongly Disagreed	7	3.15
Total	222	100

Most Nollywood movies portray women as subservient to men, only few are about the life of independent women in our society.

59 respondents strongly agreed, 26.58%; 90 Agreed, 40.54%; 32 were neutral, 14.41%; 34 disagreed, 15.32%; while 7 strongly disagreed 3.15%.

Table 8: Most Nollywood narrations based on women always imply women need to have romantic affairs with men to be successful in life

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	45	20.27
Agreed	62	27.93
Neutral	42	18.92
Disagreed	50	22.52
Strongly Disagreed	23	10.36
Total	222	100

Most Nollywood narrations based on women always imply women need to have romantic affairs with men to be successful in life.

45 respondents strongly agreed, 20.27%; 62 Agreed, 27.93%; 42 were neutral, 18.92%; 50 disagreed, 22.52%; while 23 strongly disagreed 10.37%.

Table 9: Nollywood movies send vital messages to youths

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	82	36.94
Agreed	81	36.49
Neutral	36	16.22
Disagreed	18	8.11
Strongly Disagreed	5	2.25
Total	222	100

Nollywood movies send vital messages to youths

82 respondents strongly agreed, 36.94%; 81 Agreed, 36.49%; 36 were neutral, 16.22%; 18 disagreed, 8.11%; while 5 strongly disagreed 2.25%.

Table 10: Nollywood movies encourages the young girl to focus on her innate ability to be successful in life

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	66	29.74
Agreed	94	42.34
Neutral	50	22.52
Disagreed	9	4.05
Strongly Disagreed	3	1.35
Total	222	100

Nollywood movies encourages young girls to focus on their innate ability to be successful in life

66 respondents strongly agreed, 29.74%; 94 Agreed, 42.34%; 50 were neutral, 22.52%; 9 disagreed, 4.05%; while 3 strongly disagreed 1.35%.

Table 11: Nollywood filmmakers need to make more biopics on successful indigenous women

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	96	43.24
Agreed	90	40.54
Neutral	27	12.16
Disagreed	5	2.25
Strongly Disagreed	4	1.81
Total	222	100

Nollywood filmmakers need to make more biopics on successful indigenous women

96 respondents strongly agreed, 43.24%; 90 Agreed, 40.54%; 27 were neutral, 12.16%; 9 disagreed, 2.25%; while 4 strongly disagreed 1.81%.

Discussion of Findings

This research uncovered some important facts were that will be of importance to filmmakers, critics, screen writers, and movie reviewers. In the course of interviewing, veteran filmmaker Tunde Kelani, revealed that

making biopics on people in the society may not be easy. This is due to many things involved, and besides, such genre of movie are not always commercially successful since they often lacked scopophilia and violent scenes. Keeps extracted Guinevere Turner's (co-screenwriter and actress - *American Psycho*) speech. Turner believing strongly that sex sells, says,

People want to see R-rated movies, adults and children alike, and an easy way to get an R-rating is to have sex scenes or nudity. We'd be fooling ourselves if we didn't think teenagers wanted to see sex. And in creating the taboo, we create frenzy around it.

In similar vein on the discussion of the attraction of violence on audience psychology, Eyclopedia.com captures it in a nutshell, "Nevertheless, when it comes to entertainment, violence sells". These are known facts about the media, more so, movies. Successful movies of modern times are replete with no matter how minute, feminine nudity and high level violence even in simple drama

Zeb Ejiro who has been making films for almost four decades could have made lots of biopics on women if the genre were to be financially successful. Though, he never gave reasons for not venturing into the production of biopics. From an academic point of view, it is arguable that our filmmakers are not having introspection on their filed of operation. Filmmaking is a specialty which allows practitioners to be creative and explore every means to improve a common story into piece. It is an art for gifted minds who could transform a story into an epic production. Since the cost of production could be enormous, fear of recouping invested capitals and onward to profit making may have cowed moviemakers to steer clear with respect for unchecked piracy in uncertain political climate. Table 11 reveals that more biopics centred on the lives of self-made women should be made. Filmmakers must look inward to achieving this.

Conclusion

Biopics: Changing the Narratives in Nollywood treated the objectives set out at the beginning of this research. It unveiled the extent to which Nollywood filmmakers portray indigenous successful women in local films based on their effort and innate gifts, which turned out negative, as Nollywood movie makers are not interested, are not convinced, and do not believe in biopics.

The essay was able to ascertain the impact Nollywood films have on the psyche of young Nigerian girls and how it affects their purview of success in life. Over 80% responded in the affirmative achieved through questionnaires.

Response from filmmakers is hinged on scopophilia and absence of violence as the reasons why Nollywood shy from making biopics on successful women.

Drawing on the success of biopics the research was able to advocate a change from negative narratives on women.

The major objective of this study is to look at Nollywood narratives in its prolific productions, prying to know if biopics on successful Nigerian women is given prominence. The reason being that Nollywood movies pervade the Nigerian society with a large youth audience, and positive images would change their perspective of honourable path to a successful life. Using two instruments, interview of renowned Nollywood directors, our findings corroborate some of the earlier assumptions about why biopics on successful Nigerian women are not made. The survey conducted on university female students exposed a yearning for biopics. The questionnaire revealed that most of the girls view Nollywood movies a lot and wish Nollywood filmmakers would make more biopics on the life of successful Nigerian women. This view on the side of the filmmakers interviewed shows that it is not so easy for the movie makers to do such movies because they are not commercially viable as the regular fictional movies.

Recommendation

Some of the filmmakers approached for interview were not responsive due to various reasons undisclosed. We therefore would appeal to filmmakers to be more receptive to academics to discuss issues that may bedeviling the industry to foster a new direction. The fact that this inquiry unveiled that Nollywood filmmakers do not find biopics lucrative and as such have little or no interest in making such movies, we recommend thus:

- Corporate organisations, philanthropists as well as government parastatals should embrace financing the production of biopics.
- Nollywood filmmakers should take a cue from the making of *queen of katwe* and the success recorded
- Narratives such as *queen of katwe* be made to rekindle the interest of young audience, women particularly.
- Hard working and successful women should be well presented in biopics to change the negative narratives of sex for success in women.

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