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# DYNAMICS OF GLOBALISATION AND MULTICULTURALISM FOR THE SUSTENANCE OF NOLLYWOOD

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*The film industry in Nigeria, Nollywood, is undoubtedly popular among the Nigerian audience and some parts of Africa. The sustainability of this popularity vis-à-vis the promotion of what is generally accepted as the way of life of Nigerians have become an issue among film patrons and the like in the society. In the era of globalisation, which is considered as a playing ground for competitiveness of qualitative cultural products, films as such product ought to be qualitative enough in order to positively place Nigerian cultures in the global sphere. That is why this paper considers that the multicultural features of Nigeria are potent means from which acceptable cultural themes can be developed as films for the global audience. Being that the audience naturally depends on the media to understand new ideas and contribute to its development, dependency and diffusion of innovation theories are considered for this paper. A brief review of Akon-Itiat, and Efik-Ibibio film is done to show attestation to a seeming quality that can promote an acceptable way of life of the people and further attract a global audience.*

**Keywords:** globalisation, multiculturalism, culture, Nollywood.

## Introduction

This work aims to show that Nigerian films, as cultural products, possess great potential to becoming a leading feature in the global media space. The resources for attaining this level of development are those cultural ingredients that are positive and veritable, and fit to compete with the challenges of other media products in the global media space.

The Nigerian Film industry known as Nollywood emerged in the era of globalization and the Nigerian Government has seen its emergence as a positive step and as a medium to promote the Nigerian cultures so that Nigerians and Nigeria can be better known and understood. The films produced by this industry have formed popular features especially in the African media space and are sufficiently distributed, as cultural products, in the country, the continent and even beyond. Nigerian cultures through the film medium are fast gaining global appreciation, even though the productions often swing from acceptable cultural themes to such that people do not want to identify with.

Notwithstanding some diverse opinions about globalization, issues concerning development in cultural studies, theatre and media inclusive, have formed part of the globalization theory. Since the advent of the twenty-first century, the term globalization has become commonly referred to when contending that all countries of the world would meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a matrix for development into the global community.

Nigerian society is best appreciated for its complexities, diverse cultures and multicultural identities. With more than 250 ethnic groups with different languages and settlements, Nigeria is a multicultural society. The multicultural nature of the country is an appealing element that other people of the world are fascinated about. Nigeria has remained a unified entity for more than fifty five years now, despite political and cultural differences with a population of over 160 million people. These elements of multicultural societies have served as archetypes that encourage the identification of all cultures in the Nigerian society. These elements have the potential of contending with competitiveness in the global space.

It is the opinion of this study that the best option to understanding the dynamics of development in any cultural sphere even in theatre and media studies is globalisation. The term connotes development. Marshal McLuhan claims that the world is a global village and Stanley Baran succinctly explains globalisation as the process of shrinking the world and making it a place where people 'become increasingly involved in one another's lives through the media' (Baran 2010: 237). According to McLuhan as cited in Baran, a global village is developed when people of other communities who were once separated from their neighbours or some other communities because of distance begin to relate closely and also enjoy positive and beneficial services from that relationship (*Ibid.*: 261). This suggests the unification of the entire world by reaching distances and making people to share ideas, understand and perhaps be accountable to each other.

For critics and skeptics, Baran observes that McLuhan was only revealing his unrealistic, utopian infatuation for technology with the idea of a global village (Baran 2010: 274). Burton also argues that the world as a global village is basically and discretely the promotion of cultural imperialism, the intimidation and destruction of 'developing' cultures by 'developed' cultures (Burton 2010: 256). The role of America in globalizing the world is also brought into this argument. Rodman argues that 'the displacement of other developing traditional cultures with American culture through the global dominance of American media is a typical example of cultural imperialism' (Rodman 2006: 14). This contention sees globalization as typically imperialistic by way of Americanizing the global media space through corporate media networks like the Cable News Network (CNN), Fox News, *etc.*

Arguably, Nigeria is considered to be facing these effects because developed countries are said to extend their overwhelming structure over those of the developing countries. On this contention, the developed nations impose their media products on the developing countries that are considered as being uncompromisingly averse to a prototypical free cultural exchange and mutual benefits; in terms of production and distribution of cultural properties, political economy of corporate media conglomeration and other transnational and internationalization activities.

For this reason, Branston and Stafford maintain that globalization is a result of capitalist ideology in media organization with the media products of developed countries successfully exported through television to developing countries (Branston and Stafford 2007: 498). They stress that globalization through the media promotes:

Ways in which technologies can overcome global distances so that people live in a world which seems borderless and where images of events can be relayed instantaneously; ways that are particular to an economic system. The free market or global capitalism permeates the globe (Branston and Stafford 2007: 479).

Nwamuo and Ekpang also agree that globalization is an extension of capitalist influence in every cultural activity throughout the globe (Nwamuo and Ekpang 2008: 114). These considerations uphold that dominant ideologies always have their way over smaller economies that try to catch in with the pace of development system. Although this portends the hegemony symbols of globalization, we would depend on the fact that convergence of cultural, media, social and economic activities are promotional attributes of globalization that can facilitate development. Rodman explains further while referring to media globalization that since '1980s, advertising has become an international business while agencies, especially those in the United States, Japan and Britain have been growing and merging into transnational behemoths' (Rodman 2006: 415).

Burton argues this in terms of global news, which he refers to as news meant for a national audience but with a world perspective (Burton 2010: 246). The issue here is that news pervades public sphere with the use of technologies, a feat not possible until recently. He claims that there is a positive effect of globalization and uses Al Jazeera as an example to discountenance the question of imperialism, power and hegemony of the 'West', referred to as the 'developed countries'. Burton writes:

But globalization, such as it is, has been accompanied by counterforces of regionalism and resurgences of national and international identities. So too, the creation of global news agencies and news makers, alongside other transnational media institutions has been accompanied by the appearance of regional news centres and specialist agencies which feed into the multinationals (Burton 2010: 247).

Irrespective of the foregoing, there seem to be a positive relationship that exists between globalization and the media. In this regard, Burton expressly claims that 'globalization introduces new forms of world independence and shows a sign of declining grip of the West over the rest of the world' (*Ibid.*: 2). On account of this, globalization can be viewed as a means of encouraging the cultural promotion of commodities with social, economic and political content. Thus, Burton holds that products like local music still have the comparative advantage of global flow as alternative (*Ibid.*: 296). Idolor simply considers globalization as 'the integration of the activities of various people irrespective of distance and national boundaries through new information, communication, transportation and technological applications' (Idolor 2007: 103).

This contention suggestively includes multicultural aspects as well as social and economic tendencies and also shows a connectivity line linking people with cultural attributes in a transnational activity. The fact cannot be taken away that globalization represents the paradigm that is shaping the world today. Multicultural elements have tangible and positive features to stimulate development in the era of globalization. Multiculturalism is understood as cultural diversity, the celebration or acknowledgement of multiplicity of cultures in a given society. Whitehead views multiculturalism as being the celebration of cultural tolerance and human diversity as well as positively expanding smaller units of the society and setting the pace or showing them a broader perspective of cultural heritage (Whitehead 1991: 233).

The amalgamation of the entire Northern and Southern regions of Nigeria in 1914 brought together the Hausas, Yorubas, Igbos, Efiks, Ibibios, Bekwarras, Ejaghams, Anangs, Orons, Kanuris, Fulanis, Tivs, and Idomas among other ethnic groups in a country with multicultural identities. Even the British colonialists, who employed indirect rule in the administration of the amalgamated Nigeria, had no plans to obliterate the multicultural elements of the country. The concept of multiculturalism considers desira-

ble different peoples or nations living in the same territory and sharing the same state (georgezarur.com), for the purpose of development.

Thus, it can be said that the promotion and development of all the cultures are the essential concern of the people and government, who would feel satisfied that their languages and ways of life are not forgotten and made extinct in the society they live in. Wallerstein observes that it was the move to break the barrier of exclusion among diverse cultural entities, that the French revolution instituted the policy of inclusion (Wallerstein 2003: 650). This could be taken as a step to promote the level of tolerance and respect for all citizens in the country.

Radio, television, newspaper, films and other media forms are channels that promote cultural identity. Arguably, television, radio, newspaper and magazine audiences in Nigeria are losing their patrons compared to the Nigerian video films. Technological advancement in the era of globalization is considered as a factor that is pulling a large number of people to the new media of internet, IPOD, YouTube, cellular phones, IPAD etc. However, with its pedagogical form, the Nigerian film medium is attracting national and transnational audiences and with is currently competing favourably in the global media space for sustained popularity and identity for Nigerians.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Studies in communication and media development are challenging areas that incite interest in finding out the potentials of the media in promoting and enhancing development culturally, economically, socially and even politically. The period of globalization has impacted on these areas to the extent of challenging their development patterns. In effect, globalization, a paradigm for globalizing cultures of the world through the spread of worldwide practices and the organization of social life can play critical role in enhancing cultural development. Therefore, the argument of this work will be tailored in the direction of dependency theory as well as the diffusion of information and innovation model. The approaches are prone to stimulate cultural development of media content and effect in the global media space.

According to Littlejohn, the central focus of dependency theory is that 'audiences depend on media information to meet needs and attain goals' (Littlejohn 1996: 348). He explains that the theory also portends audience dependence on the media for a number of alteration effects on social issues. Supporting the argument, Melvin DeFleur, notes that 'the members of audience rely on the media to offer a broad range of entertainment content to fill an ever-increasing amount of leisure time' (DeFleur 2010: 254).

In a different light, Dennis McQuail says dependency lies between two dimensions as proposed by Mowlana. The dimensions, he considered, is technology axis (hardware versus software) and communication axis (production versus distribution) (McQuail 2008: 252). McQuail's consideration is said to be focused on international media and he explains it in this way:

Media product from one country are typically imported and incorporated into a quite different distribution system and reach audiences for which they were not originally intended. Quite commonly, especially in respect of film and television, the entire origination and production of products occur in one country and the distribution in another (McQuail 2008: 252–253).

It may be safe to argue here that the dependency theory holds the potentials to stimulate the development and promotion of media contact to the level that it can deli-

ver the essential to the audiences. This theory thrives on the fact that the people will depend on the media to promote their cultures or product for acceptability thereby stimulating the development in the global community.

In the diffusion of information and innovation model, Littlejohn states that 'an idea spreads from a point of origin to surrounding geographic areas or from a person to person within a single area' (Littlejohn 1996: 335). This activity is reputed to have an effect on social change through invention or communication that may occur internally in a group or superficially by way of interaction with external change agent (*Ibid.*: 337).

In this theory, interpersonal networks are considered to have played significant roles over channels of mass communication, but this research will attempt a proof to show the relevance of Nigerian media especially the film medium in causing an effect in the global sphere. Explaining the diffusion of innovation theory, DeFleur picks an analysis of Ryan and Gross which expresses that there are stages in diffusion of information with different categories of adopters involved in the process through a number of channels to impact on the adopters. According to him, this process helps in understanding how new traits spread through a relevant population of adopting units (DeFleur 2010: 240). The relevance of this theory in the study is to help show that new phenomenon such as globalization can be useful to the development of culture through its spread.

### **Culture: The Local and the Global**

The argument about culture in this study is basically to show how local culture is significant in meeting the challenges of globalization irrespective of the manifestation of other cultures in the society. To this end, culture can be understood in the view of Quizlet 'as the sum total of the knowledge, attitudes, and habitual behaviour patterns shared and transmitted by the members of a society' (Quizlet N.d.). This points to the fact that a group of people can transmit their culture from generation to generation or even from one society to another. Movement from one place to another or even the interaction of people with others not of their culture is capable of laying the foundation for the culture to be shared and transmitted to the next group of people.

Defining culture, Malinowski, stresses the relevance of local culture to the people in which the culture is meant for. Quoting from sociologyguide.com, Malinowski postulated:

Culture is an instrument which enables man to secure his bio-psychic survival and subsequently a higher mental-intellectual survival; and that since each aspect of a culture, whether it is economic organization or social organization or religion or language is rooted in the needs of the human being, they are all inter-related with each other through the common ground in which they are rooted as it concerns the human being with his needs (Sociologyguide N.d.).

Malinowski further emphasizes 'self-sufficiency and the holistic character of a culture and points out that if one aspect of a culture is changed the whole of the culture changes' (*Ibid.*). Furthermore, he explains that in cultural pluralism;

Every culture grows in response to localized versions of the bio-psychic needs of a people and that it is to be judged in terms of these and not in terms of any absolute values contending that adequacy in terms of local needs is the characteristic of a well-integrated culture in the light of prevailing knowledge (*Ibid.*).

From Malinowski's assessment, it can be held that the mind and body of a person in a cultural environment would be inclined to promoting the local needs of the society to

the extent of making it become a part of life and acceptable values in the society. Thus according to the findings of Hollis on the significance of culture in competition with international and indigenous kinds of products, 'the brands which were perceived as part of local culture were sold better, regardless of their global or local character' (Hollis 2009: 16). We can, therefore, reason that local cultures are as popular as global brand among the people in need of it. The findings reveal a skeptical notion that the world will become homogenized, and Russell and Valenzuela describe the experience between local and global cultures as glocalisation, considered as the 'coexistence of homogenising and heterogenising processes in the global society' (Russell and Valenzuela 2005: 86).

Pekajová and Novosák in their study of Zlin culture emphasize that apart from funding which stands in the way of local cultures competing with global or manifested cultures, local cultures still represent an important part in the society (Pekajová and Novosák 2009: 175). Their argument stresses that important folklore event and other local cultural contents considered to be good are still being organized in the communities (*Ibid.*: 174), and are very likeable by the people. This is not far-fetched because even in the African setting, Omagu opines that the culture of new yam festival with pomp and pageantry is still being enthusiastically celebrated by the people and is even attaining international level (*Ibid.*: 224).

However, in the face of global competition local culture is also considered being threatened by manifested culture. This view is held strongly by modernist and postmodernist scholars. Cvetkovich and Kellner further explain this.

Both modern and postmodern theorists argue that the world today is organized by increasing globalization, which is strengthening the dominance of a world capitalist economic system, supplanting the primacy of the nation-state by transnational corporations and organizations, eroding local cultures and traditions through a global culture (Cvetkovich and Kellner 1997: 1).

In support of this argument, the theorists see the era of globalization as a period when cultural attributes of the local society is impacted upon by the communication or media power of the global culture. To them, local culture is susceptible to the power of the global media by depending on them for information and which could manifest the culture foreign to the people.

Although it is observed that it could be difficult to attain the homogenization of cultures consequent upon the effect of global culture, the strength of the pervasiveness of western cultures is acknowledged by argument. That is there is the tendency for either a cultural implosion of the local identities or a reshape, a manifestation of what is globally accepted into local identities. Cvetkovich and Kellner argue in support of this thus:

The intersection of the global and local is producing new matrixes to legitimize the production of hybrid identities, thus expanding the realm of self-definition. And so although global forces can be oppressive and erode cultural traditions and identities they can also provide new material to rework one's identity and can empower people to revolt against traditional forms and styles to create new, more emancipatory ones (Cvetkovich and Kellner 1997: 10).

Be that as it may, there is no doubt that local or national culture offers a sense of identity for the people of own culture and even those who reside as tenants. This identity is a key to 'common understandings, traditions, and values that are integral to the

identification of plans of action' for the improvement of livelihood (edis.ifas). According to Brennan, this kind of culture 'contributes to building a sense of local identity and solidarity as well as boosting the confidence the communities have for coming together to address specific needs and problems' (Brennan *et al.* 2014). He further posits that 'local commitment among residents based on culture and common identity can serve as a valuable tool in shaping the effectiveness of development options and local actions' (edis.ifas); and can sustain social improvement efforts.

This could be taken as a precursor to the position that the people's local culture can be celebrated for popularity above manifested culture pruned by global culture. Sule reasons that the fear in making local culture popular among Western culture is conditioned by the action of the third world cultures. He explains it this way.

It is simply that third world functionaries are so dazzled by the seeming sophistication of conditions in Europe and America that they assume that for anything to succeed, in whatever part of the world, that thing has to be patterned in exactly the same manner as obtains in the western world (Sule 1991: 32).

Sule, therefore, suggests that because culture is not just a component of human experience but the totality of the human experience, 'whatever we do, as a people, and in whatever form, should be in keeping with our indigenous circumstances and requirement and, therefore, a manifestation of our culture' (*Ibid.*: 33). This serves as a support particularly to indigenous communities, who hold tenaciously to their cultures as their richest heritage that reminds them of their roots, history and style of living. This is considered as their pride and not destruction in the age of globalization.

### **Multiculturalism and the Experience in Nigeria**

Multiculturalism is clearly associated with culture and in simple term portrays the multiplicity of cultures in a given society. Proponents of multiculturalism think of it as a fairer way in allowing people of different cultures to integrate in the society. According to Heywood, multiculturalism has been used in both normative and descriptive terms. He explains that as normative, the term means 'a positive endorsement; even celebration of communal diversity typically based on either the right of different groups to respect and recognize one another to the benefits to the larger society of moral and cultural diversity' (Heywood 2007: 277). The factors that support multiculturalism, Trotman argues, are valuable because they show that multiculturalism uses various indices in showing how people especially women and the young ones are marginalized. He declares that multiculturalism helps the downtrodden to be identified with (online).

Historically, the term is said to be popularized in 1971 by a former Prime Minister of Canada, Trudeau, when he introduced a new policy for the bilingual country to integrate the citizenry in national identity. In the 1980s, an extensive kind of identity began to gain prominence over particular identity. Wilson and Wimal state that,

at the same time the policy initiative of government shifted from interest in the maintenance of cultural language and heritage (which had been primarily focused on the French Canadians) to a far more extensive and stronger commitment to the improvement of what it termed 'race relations' (Wilson and Wimal 1996: 237).

Opposing views on multiculturalism usually doubt the possibility of diverse cultures to co-exist and interrelate without being influenced by one another. To this school of thought, cultures that would previously have been distinctive with their peculiar cultural identity would easily lose out to enforced multiculturalism, which in the long run would cause cultural erosion of the peculiar and distinctive culture of the people. At the same time, it is argued that it would be 'impossible to appreciate the value, benefit, and even functional necessity of difference in modern societies' (soc.umn.org).

Notwithstanding, other thoughts supporting multiculturalism have thrived. For instance, Parekh argues that 'multiculturalism is not about minorities but about the proper terms of relationship between different cultural communities' (online). He further explains this to mean that 'the standards by which the communities resolve their differences such as the principles of justice must not come from only one of the cultures but must come through an open and equal dialogue between them' (igcollege.org).

That is why multiculturalism is considered as cultural mosaic, which is the synthesis of diverse cultures as experienced in Nigeria. According to Hartmann and Gerteis, 'it is a response or a set of responses to diversity that seeks to articulate the social conditions under which difference can be incorporated and order achieved from diversity' (Hartmann and Gerteis N.d.). Therefore, in the context, a people reputed to have been living for over 100 years and keeping more than 250 cultures, the reason for the promotion of the different cultures is essential. Essoh and Oluwabamide underscore this situation and attest that Nigerians living today did not have to develop a common language for themselves neither did they have to develop new system of morals, beliefs and fears nor the ways the elders should be respected and the food and the dresses to put because, 'all these had earlier been developed by our forefathers and passed on to us as cultural heritage which we in turn will transmit to our children' (Essoh and Oluwabamide 2006: 102).

The introductory page of the Nigerian constitution notes as follows 'we the people of Nigeria' acknowledges the cultural plurality of the country, and further holds that three major languages: Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba will form part of national languages irrespective of the use of English. This gives attestation to the diverse cultures in Nigeria and suggests them as veritable elements for promotion and propagation. It is, therefore, real that Nigeria is a multicultural state and given the more than 250 languages of the ethnic groups in the country; it is an outstanding environment for globalization, where the various powers and riches of mankind can be orchestrated. Udebunu opines that the concept of 'One Nigeria' is a playground or an encompassing theatre 'where all the various National groups can display with respect the diverse riches of cultures and talents is an irresistible invitation' (Udebunu 2011:19).

In addition to this argument, it can be taken that the cultural milieu of Nigerians is based on the people's belief system and values that control and form their practices without the fear of ethnic differences and these values are peculiar attributes and core to the people even beyond boundaries. Jonah identifies these values and proposes the need for their global promotion thus:

Religiosity; extended family; tradition and rituals; community; respect for elders; decent dressing; tolerance; hospitality; peace and so on. These values must transcend our national boundary and film or movie is the right path that can help us achieve this aim (Jonah 2010: 10).



## The Nollywood in a Multicultural Nigeria

Around the early 1990s, the films in Nigeria started gaining popularity. In fact, after the production of *Living in Bondage*, an Igbo popular film (1992) followed by Nneka, another Igbo film and others that came thereafter, there was a move to establish a movie industry that would stimulate the development of the sector. This led to the establishment of Nollywood, coined after America's Hollywood and India's Bollywood.

Today, Nollywood is said to be one of the leading producers of films churning out not less than 4,000 films annually and at least, 300 monthly (nigeriafilms.com). Nollywood has shown traits for globalizing its products given its potentials in harnessing the cultural materials for the free market space. Yet, the industry has not yet fully exploited the multicultural features of the Nigerian society with positive aspects. Significant cultural aspects of historical and epic features that would tell the story of Nigerians in the global media space are lacking. Cultural issues that express positive moral values, criteria and principles for a positive national identity are scarcely used as major themes. Good historical accounts like the Aba Women's riot and some of the works of Ola Rotimi are viable resources that are ignored by the Nollywood. The production of films, television programmes for a multiculturalists society ought to demonstrate the validity, identity and importance of diverse cultures to be promoted vis-à-vis making people sensitive and aware of the interconnectedness between power and domination.

In a multicultural environment, cultural elements that are positive and demonstrate the identity of the diverse cultures ought to be expressed in media production. To gain global popularity and attract a mass audience in a multicultural society, media products must appeal to the diverse society. The Americans know how to do this through their media networks and international celebrities. Madonna, the American pop-singer's 'popularity was in large part, a function by her marketing strategies and her production of music videos and images that appealed to diverse audiences' including the blacks, whites, sexist, lesbians, etc. (Kellner 2003). That is why it is held that communication channels that promote their host cultures should engage stakeholders, establish conducive environment, and assess risk and opportunities in order to bring about positive change.

With a specific focus on multiculturalistic elements for the promotion of cultural identity, Ifeoma Amobi and Ralph Akinfeleye think that in the face of globalization, the Nigerian film industry, Nollywood, should be prototypical of African cultural identities and especially Nigerian cultures (Akinfeleye and Amobi 2011). Nollywood should endeavour to work on the content in line with African realities; producers and directors should make concerted efforts to include content that promotes the Nigerian cultural identities. The positive aspects of Nigerian cultures need promotion by the film industry, which themes are replete with seeming unacceptable content of witchcraft, voodoo, obscenities, and sorcery.

Against this background, the option of patterning and selecting magical and alien themes even in the face of acceptable enduring and positive local themes viable for global appeal portends a challenge for Nollywood. Haynes states that 'the difficulties of reintegrating into the village have been the theme of African cinema' (Haynes 1996: 63). By this conception, Haynes refers to some thematic considerations of the films which are seemingly alien and too Westernized to be considered as African culture.

Thompson and Bordwell share the opinion that the Hollywood movies are said to have kept faith with the promotion and protection of American culture (Thompson, Bordwell 2003: 42). Films produced by Hollywood dedicatedly portray the American vision and policy and show the power and popularity of the Americans over the sover-

eighty or integrity of other countries. In Ayakoroma's view, 'most of the Hollywood war/action films portray America as a dedicated country ready to sacrifice everything to save just one of its own citizens' (Ayakoroma 2011: 25).

The Hong Kong example, as expressed by Eric Kit-Wai Ma, shows how the cultures of a multiculturalistic society like Hong Kong pervaded the global media based on the influence of the British and Chinese cultures. Eric Kit-Wai Ma expresses this with examples from popular Hong Kong cartoon productions that became acceptable among the people of the area thus:

Popular media subsequently filled this cultural space left by Britain and China. Without any state imposed shackles, popular media in particular film and television culture evolved to become the grade of indigenous cultural identity. The simple term Hong Kong gathered weight in films television serials and cartonese ping sung (Kit-Waima 2000: 256).

In the late 1960s, television was said to have absorbed western ingredients, 'transformed Chinese cultural particulars, articulated local experience and crystallized a distinct Hong Kong way of life' (Kit-Waima 2000: 256). This suggests a pattern of influence of the media in the era of globalisation that can become a cultural product of relevance. The Hong Kong experience today is, arguably, identified with its ability to become prominent feature in the era of globalization and making its products acceptable to multicultural situation. Chadha and Kavoori say that Hong Kong media product, films such as *Journey to the West* and *Pao the Judge* have enjoyed the large patronage of diverse audience numbering 2.5 million globally (424).

This gives tonic to the argument that Nigerian Nollywood could harness multicultural traits and themes and become truly globalized. Already, the industry has shown potentials for this to be achieved. The cable television station, African Magic, on DSTV is replete with daily Nigerian home videos. Media personalities like Genieveve Nnaji, Omotola, Ekeinde, Mercy Johnson, Ini Edo, Desmond Elliot and the likes have appeared on personality interview on African Magic. Nnaji has appeared in the acclaimed Oprah Winfrey show. In addition to this, it has been observed that anytime a Nollywood star attends an international event, the media give the star close emphasis, whether or not the event was about film production. Nollywood is also reputed for enhancing the crystallization of the Ghanaian film industry through distribution and starring in their movies.

For Adejunmobi, 'the distribution of Nigerian films is incontestably transnational'; and further contends that African countries such as Niger, Benin, Togo, Cameroon, Sierra Leone and South Africa have all shared in the benefits of Nigerian video films and stresses that where media end product extends beyond national borders, it is an instance of transnationalism (Adejunmobi 2007: 6). He adds that Nigerian movies produced in English, Yoruba and Hausa have made good sales in these countries. Nollywood films have also proliferated separating into other cultural systems to get the appeal and identity of multicultural audience. Today Nigerian movies are produced in the Efik-Ibibio Language and compete favourably in the market with Igbo and Yoruba popular films that have made their mark already in the global media. The major function expected of the film industry is cultural transmission and promotion as stated by Sambe; 'Cultural transmission is the preservation of past heritage or culture... transfer of culture from one ethnic group to another, one nation to another and from generation to generation for purpose of promoting and even integrating culture' (Sambe 2008: 51). Put differently, to make the mass media popular and taken to have performed their functions, the media

must spread cultural and artistic products to the people for the preservation of heritage as well as promotion and development of culture.

The producers of Hausa films have understood this and stress that in the new age of globalization, Hausa films must promote accepted Hausa culture and make it popular. In this regard, they maintain that 'we are now in a wonderful global and digital information age with the advent of great technologies like the Internet, digital cameras, streaming video, and mobile devices and computers and so our goal is to use these technologies to further promote and spread the Hausa film industry and Hausa culture globally'. The import of this portends a strong effort for cultural protection.

This affirms Burton's view that even the developing nations can substantially take advantage of globalization above the developed and that it depends on who capitalizes on the chance to draw benefits (Burton 2010: 249). Drawing the benefits of globalization, therefore, can be referred to using the accepted and positive aspects of the culture that would present a good cultural identity of the people. Ugor cites an example of this in the use of cultural and linguistic similarities that transatlantic audiences share with the indigenous Nigerian video patrons (Ugor 202: 71).

Juxtaposing this position with the consistent domination of Nigerian films on African Magic, Ekpenyong claims that Nigerian culture through the music of Nigerian musicians like Tuface, Sound Sultan, Sunny Neji and others have been globalized with IPOD, MP3, MP4, Channel O and MTV (3). Furthermore, the engagement of Stephanie Okereke and other stars in the Nollywood by Hollywood in their shows is another plus for global promotion of good cultural traits. Rita Dominic, another Nollywood actress and multi-choice Nollywood Ambassador, has promoted the Nollywood identity, when she visited Malawi as a Multi-choice Ambassador, with numerous fans applauding her as a global star. It can, therefore, be held that Nollywood stands in good position to pioneer the globalization of Nigerian media products. Jonah holds that,

the films have gone to the far ends of the earth and it should be a medium for show casing the country's rich cultural heritage through the packaging of movies which is being watched by Nigerians at home and abroad (Jonah 2010: 9).

Thus it can promote Nigeria's accepted cultural identity to sustain its popularity among transnational audiences.

### **Globalising the Nollywood**

We can simply begin here by reasoning along the lines of Williams Onogu, who avers that 'Nollywood has greatly been impacted by globalization going by its ability to blow out the limits of existing markets of the nations' (Onogu 2012: 165). This argument is supported by Adejunmobi who affirms that where a media product is likely to extend beyond national borders, it is an instance of transnationalism, which is typical of globalization (Adejunmobi 2007: 7). In supporting this argument, Okome stresses:

The main industry began in Lagos, and has influenced other productions. Nobody is going to tell me that Nollywood that began in Lagos did not influence the Ghanaian video films. Nobody is going to tell me that it did not influence the film industry coming up in Kampala (Okome 2010).

There is no gainsaying the fact that the Nollywood has become a global phenomenon capable of exporting acceptable Nigerian cultures for global acceptability. Onogu further argues, 'Nollywood films are part of globalization media (*i.e.*, media that target

global audience with a worldwide reach) fostered by globalization' (Onogu 2012: 166). Giving more credence to his argument, he says films, as social media are global in nature and can be used to network with people of divergent cultures races, tribes *etc.* located at various parts of the world via its filmic content (Onogu 2012: 166). This is why Ihejirika and Abulude attest that 'Nollywood has taken a giant stride to become an industry to be reckoned with, both within and outside the country' (Ihejirika and Abulude 2011: 2). In economic terms especially in film production, Ihejirika and Abulude note that in 2006 Nollywood was ranked second to Bollywood by UNESCO after producing 872 productions all in video format while the United States produced 485 major films; and in just a few years, 'the industry grew to become the second largest in the world, generating \$286 million dollar per year for the Nigerian economy' (*Ibid.*: 3). A categorical experience is, when *Osuofia in London* was released in 2003 (supplemagazine.org), and 'the movie gained international acclaim and recognition as the highest gross and best-selling movie in the video format for that year'.

Apart from the UNESCO rating that has projected the Nigerian films globally, the World Intellectual Property Organization through its Director-General, Francis Gurry also acknowledged the potency of the film industry with his position that;

For the past 15 years, 'Nollywood' has fueled an insatiable appetite in Africa's most populous country for home grown films made by Nigerians, about Nigerians. It is an industry made possible by affordable digital technology, and is driven by the ingenuity, resourcefulness and keen business sense of Nigeria's people. It is an example for many developing countries that seek to foster domestic creative industries. These films do not just find their way into the home viewing market and video outlets. Dedicated satellite channels with significant portions of Nigerian and Ghanaian programmes are being broadcast to consumers as far a-field. Some estimates even put 'Nollywood' productions at well over 1,000 films annually. Nollywood generates hundreds of millions of US dollars per annum in revenues which directly benefit Nigerians and the Nigerian economy (Gurry 2009: 70).

It would, therefore, be safe to say here that Nigerian home video genre of popular commercial entertainment has become Nigerian's culture ambassador. Through the home video entertainment, the ways of life of the Nigerian heterogeneous groups are captured and exported, and Atakpo infers that more things are known about Nigeria and Nigerians (Atakpo 2005: 93–94).

Following the foregoing, critical review of an Efik-Ibibio film, Akon Itiat can suggest that Nigerian video films with acceptable cultural sermon fall under such that can meet the globalization grid. The story is a typical indigenous narrative that preaches against abuse of power and oppression through a King who grants his friend authority to claim his brother's belongings including the wife after killing the brother. Retributive justice sets in, and destroys the King and the man, who killed his brother in order to gain his things; and in the end a new emerged and ordered equity, equality and justice to all.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Empirical views in terms of interviews conducted to find out the strength of Nollywood in a multicultural state in the face of globalization have suggested that Nigerian cultures are becoming globally known through Nollywood productions. Although, threat by globalization is acknowledged, it is also popularly known that Nigerian films are in

high demand in other African countries. To lend support to this, John McCall quoted from *siu.edu* states:

One cannot underestimate the degree to which these videos have become a part of popular life in Nigeria. The characters, plots, and themes are now part of the everyday discourse of farmers, taxi drivers, market women, urban professionals, and native doctors. The popularity of Nigerian video movies in Nigeria, and increasingly all over the African continent, is highly significant (McCall 2002).

This affirms that the Nigerian films have been prevailing in the media space not only in Nigeria but also in Africa, and thus possess some potential that can sustain them as global commodity. Furthermore, there is the possibility of making Nollywood even more popular with acceptable Nigerian cultures other than some of the things the industry churns out. Arguing in this direction, Jonathan Haynes posited:

Embarrassment and chagrin at finding that Nigerian cinema had come to mean atrociously made films about witchdoctors and adultery led to proposals for censorship, including one suggestion that films liable to convey a negative image of Nigeria abroad, through their technical quality and/or cultural content, be denied a license necessary for exporting the film (Haynes 1996: 163).

Here, Haynes substantiates that there are positive Nigerian cultures that can be promoted apart from atrocious content that tend to portray Nigeria in bad light at the global sphere, and stresses that this is part of the reason Nigerians proposed for such films to be censored.

The innovative and creative power of the Nollywood in the African media space has been covered by this work in the sense that the public depend on film for entertainment and positive cultural promotion. The theory of diffusion of innovation relates to the ability of new ideas being pervasive in the society. As globalization has shown its pervasiveness, so is the Nollywood. It arguable to say that Nollywood has pervaded the society and caused quite some effect in the global media space with an overwhelming affirmative response that the films are popular feature on cable and satellite stations. It further proves that other African countries find veritable means of entertainment in Nollywood films by watching them more often than their own productions.

It cannot, therefore, be taken for granted that as globalization and multiculturalism impact on Nollywood so does Nollywood impact on the African media. This is experienced in Kenya, Malawi, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana, Africans in the Diaspora, in St. Lucia and the Caribbean, in terms of reception and consumption, and also the development of film industry in Kampala ([ngrguardian.com](http://ngrguardian.com)). It is possible to say that as the world fits into the age of globalization, Nigeria, being a part of the world, can also exploit the opportunity with its cultural products. Thus the films of the Nollywood industry can sustain its popularity in the global media as well as tell the world what Nigerians love to be known about them, through the integration of accepted positive aspects of the Nigerian story. Although there are traits of cultural hegemony from the corporate media organizations like the CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera among others, Nigeria, a multicultural country, cannot be bereft of qualitative cultural elements that are positive and can sustain the global audience. This is to say that with the huge number of ethnic groups, Nigeria is not supposed to be found wanting in the search for positive, spectacular and attractive cultural elements that are peculiar to it.

Today, the Multichoice television, DSTV, CTL, CMTV, Startimes are among other cable and satellite television stations that have found in the Nigerian films, the possibility for being part of the globalization grid. This is so because all these stations have created at least one channel for Nollywood films, a development that is enjoyed by Nigerian films above other African films. The benefit of that monopoly can be said to be significantly related to a move that will finally globalize the Nigerian cultures.

The threat of globalization against local cultures has been considered and argued that it may not after all be entirely negative as it is also an opportunity to compete in the market system, and be among the key players and popular ones to be reckoned with. This paper has shown that the concept does not entirely pose a bad effect on the Nollywood, but has instead challenged it to promote the Nigerian cultures by making it appreciated in the global sphere through what it produces.

In the era of globalization, what is interesting in international market is the competitiveness of cultures, cross-cultural activities, and UNESCO acknowledgment of peculiar cultural content as viable for export. If Nollywood productions were not viable for the globalization of Nigerian cultures and to a larger extent the African cultures, specific channels allocated to it by Multichoice television, DSTV and other cable and satellite stations would not have been possible. Suffice it to say that the pervasiveness of these films abroad could form didactic lessons seen as an expectation for them to be appreciated. They could also serve as lessons more than the ordinary entertainment production.

It can safely be said that, this can be achieved through the promotion of accepted positive aspects of Nigerian cultures in the films. That is if Nollywood upholds cultural protectionism by encouraging committed production of accepted positive Nigerian cultural content to counter the pervasiveness of less positive and western content, it would have achieved the promotion of Nigerian cultures accepted by all under the effect of globalization. This being the case, the industry can capably sustain its popularity in the global space.

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