Bed Scenes Allurement as Entertainment and Selling Point in Nigeria’s Nollywood Movie Industry

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ABSTRACT

We report on bed scenes allurement as entertainment and selling point in Nigeria’s Nollywood movie industry. In recent times, there has been an increase in the portrayal of bed scenes in Nollywood movies. Before now, Nigerian film producers have been very conservative when it comes to showing sex and nudity. This appears to have changed in line with global trends. Movie industries all over the world appear a haven for delectable women who glamorize our screens, not only with their beauty but also their acting skills. At Hollywood, Bollywood, Ghollywood and the like, pretty actresses with sensuous endowments engage in bed scenes which allure the minds of viewers. The idea that, a ravishing beauty on cast is as good as a box office hit apparently drives Nigerian film producers to incorporate bed scenes in their movies. In this era of sex crusade where what sells is sex and maybe a little bit of violence, there is the suggestion that producers believe that if the talent of an actress doesn’t do the trick, the sexiness she exudes is bound to get attention. Against this backdrop, our study examined bed scenes depiction by Nollywood films, in an attempt to establish if their allurement influences the choice of movie and purchase decisions of target markets. We assessed Nollywood films and viewer preference using the mixed method approach. Our findings reveal that bed scenes, as portrayed in Nigerian movies are a significant determinant of which films to watch and which films to purchase among the respondents studied.

Keywords: Allurement; bed scenes; Nollywood; selling point
I. INTRODUCTION

Movies all over the world are replete with glamorous ladies who adorn our screens and hold us spellbound; not only with their genius at acting but ravishing beauty also. All the way from Hollywood to Bollywood and Nollywood, sex appeal is used to woo the mind to movies. Film Producers seem to believe that a ravishing beauty on cast is as good as a box office hit. And in this era of sex crusade, entertainment is simply sex; and sex is entertainment. Since what sells is sex, and a little bit of violence, producers are constraint to employ talent and sex to try to get attention and patronage.

II. THE NIGERIAN MOVIE INDUSTRY

The Nigerian movie industry, popularly known as Nollywood, came upstream in the 1990s and 2000s and has become the second largest film industry in the world in terms of number in annual film productions; ahead of the United States and only second to India.

In year 2013 alone, Nollywood was rated as the third most valuable film industry in the world after generating a total revenue of NGN1.72 trillion (US$10 billion). This had placed it just behind India and the United States [1]. Today the Nigerian film industry is worth NGN853.9 billion (US$5.1 billion) as at 2014 and produces hundreds of home videos and films per annum [2]. The Nigerian movie industry is Africa’s largest movie industry in terms of value and the number of movies produced per year. Nigeria has been producing films since the 1960s, but the rise of affordable digital filming and editing technologies has stimulated the country's film and video industry such that Nigerian films have become globally acclaimed.

Early Nigerian films were made by producers such as Ola Balogun and Hubert Ogunde in the 1960s, but the prohibitive cost of film production frustrated their efforts at large scale circulation of films [3].

The entrance of Nollywood in the ‘90 signaled a boom in the Nigerian film industry which saw foreign media edged off the shelves. It is now an industry marketed all over Africa and the rest of the world. The use of English rather than the local languages expanded the market and aggressive marketing using posters, trailers, and television advertising also played a role in Nollywood’s success [4].

Nollywood has had its fair share of the ‘preying’ tactics of major movie industries in the world. Sex allure is a tactic employed at Hollywood and Bollywood. Bed scenes are usually weaved into the storylines of the most uncommon movies that one should not expect such acts, like war films.

The idea is to generate interest which almost always could lead to patronage.

Box office hit is the dream of every movie producer. Therefore strategies are adopted to achieve this. One of such strategies is entertainment through the allure of bed scenes.

Nollywood, the Nigerian movie industry has keyed into this scheme. At Nollywood these days we see gorgeous women who are not just talented but hot, pretty and sexy, playing roles that go the gamut of the sublime to the erotic. In this class are the following Nollywood actresses:

Fig. 1 Sexy eyes, nice lips: Genevieve Nnaji
Fig. 2: Luscious Tonto Dike

Fig. 3: Mercy Johnson – Sexy and Curvy

Fig. 4: Ini Edo – gifted, shapy actress

Fig. 5: Anita Joseph – sexy curves and luscious bum.
III. NUDITY AND ALLUREMENT IN NOLLYWOOD FILM PACKS

Generous amount of bed scenes and sex appeal now appear on the DVD and VCD covers of Nigerian movies. The trend is towards scantily clad young women, with some making enticing gestures as opposed to full nakedness. Because of the sexiness portrayed on these film packs, some Nollywood movies are seen as soft porn. But that appears to be a strategy because sometimes the content of the movies do not have any connection with the sexiness of the graphics of the film packs [5].

Nollywood film producers purposely incorporate such bed scenes in order to lure the minds of viewers, thereby attracting their patronage.

Some illustrations of movies with sexiness are shown as follows:

Fig. 6: Empress Njama - alluring sexy curved hip and boobs

Fig. 8: Omotola Jalade Ekeinde – smooth long legs and intimidating backside

Fig. 7: Cossy Ojiakor – regarded as Nollywood’s boobs star
On the movie cover above, an actress is dressed in seductive attire and grabbing her crotch. Why?

In the movie pack in figure 11, the actress is seen fondling her exposed breast and at the same time stimulating her genital; what’s the aim of this depiction?

The film pack in fig 10 shows the image of an actor and actresses half clad. What’s the essence?

Strange Act is a movie about spirits and a haunted house, but in the cover of the movie, we can see a bed scene; why?
IV. NIGERIANS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS NOLLYWOOD FILMS

The boom in Nollywood home videos and the attendant audience interest have attracted a lot of attention to this industry [6]. Volumes have been written on the technical quality and aesthetics of Nollywood home videos and production techniques. The thrust of comments have almost always been against the emphasis on sex, violence, fetishism and other negative portrayals [7].

Films are a major form of entertainment, although not all films have entertainment as their primary purpose [8]. In spite of scathing criticisms, Nollywood video production remain on the high side; new video releases receive massive patronage. Nollywood films are a staple in almost every Nigerian home. The growing popularity of Nollywood films go far beyond Nigeria to the market in diaspora. This is in spite of the severe criticisms about the quality of Nollywood movies [9][10].

V. PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Nollywood, the Nigerian film industry has the capacity to provide a platform for the positive promotion of Nigeria’s rich social values and culture, but the profit motive appears to be the main driving force at Nollywood. This perhaps explains why part of the strategy to ensure sales is the embedding of bed scenes in films. The philosophy seems to be sex is entertainment and if sex is entertainment then sex would sell.

The aim in this present study was to assess the extent bed scenes (which allude to sex) sells. This was done from the perspective of assessing audience preference and purchase decision in the light of exposure to bed scenes allurement.

Against this backdrop, the objectives of our study were:
- To determine the level of exposure to popular Nollywood movies among select undergraduates in Nigeria
- To establish the scope of bed scenes employed in such popular movies
- To ascertain whether undergraduates’ preference of these popular films is as a result of the bed scenes allurement component

VI. METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

The mixed method research approach was used in our study. For the quantitative aspect of our data gathering, the research instrument was a 50-item questionnaire structured to elicit answers from respondents in regard to their exposure and preferences of Nollywood movies. Here a sample size of 400 was drawn from an undergraduate student population of 238,500; comprising the student strength of five randomly selected universities in Southeastern Nigeria. The rationale behind the choice of undergraduate students was their perceived disposition to watching home movies. Also, Southeastern Nigeria was chosen as a regional case; the belief was that further studies could explore what obtains in the other regions that make up Nigeria or even the Diaspora. Content analysis was conducted to establish the scope of the employment of bed scenes in Nollywood movies. And to further add teeth to our survey results, five focus group discussions were conducted among 40 undergraduate students from the selected universities.

Results from our data in fig.13 show that majority of our respondents are heavily exposed to Nollywood films. Ninety percent among them said they regularly watched popular Nollywood movies.

Figure 13: Respondents’ exposure to Nollywood movies

Results from our content analysis show that for the first two quarters of the year 2014 more than 90 percent of Nollywood film packs contained depiction of bed scenes; and close to 70 percent of actual movies within this period contained scenes suggestive of sex.

The emerging themes like ‘entertaining’; ‘alluring’; africanness, from our focus group discussions show that our respondents regarded Nollywood movies as entertaining and alluring, and good at projecting African culture. Focus group discussion data show that the respondents were aware of the depiction of bed scenes and sex allurements on the packs of home movies, and more than half of the participants appreciated the idea because according to them, it is relaxing and entertaining.
They (the focus groups) revealed further, that the reason they loved bed scenes being portrayed in these movie packs, was because they wanted to relax their minds and escape for the moment from the many harsh realities besieging them by fantasizing sexually about the actors, most especially the actresses on nude attires; and that this goes a long way in giving them the enjoyment and relaxation (entertainment), which they need.

On whether there was any downside with these sex depiction either on the packs of movies or in movies proper, the trend by a greater number among the participants suggested that the only down side was that most times, the bed scenes in the film packs were portrayed in a most crude manner, and the poses of the actors (both male and female), were so dehumanizing that instead of achieving the desired result of seducing and captivating the audience minds, they end up disgusting and irritating them. They went ahead to suggest that Nollywood producers should craft the message of bed scenes and sex allurements in movies more appropriately, and in a more enticing way, in order to achieve box office hits.

Finally, majority of the respondents accounting for 90 percent said they prefer watching movies spiced with bed scenes since it is a trend that depicts reality, and would therefore consider purchasing sexed up Nollywood movies which are the closest thing to reality.

![Figure 14: Sexed up Nollywood films and respondents’ preferences](image)

Overall, results from our study suggest that bed scenes portrayal in Nollywood movie packs and movies, allure the minds of viewers, and also act as a key determinant of patronage for these sexed up films.

VII. CONCLUSION

Against the backdrop of our findings we conclude that producers of Nollywood films use bed scenes allurements portrayed in film packs as well as movies, as a sort of entertainment and a selling point for the Nigerian movie industry.

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All photos which appear as figures are credited to [http://nollywoodforever.com/cruz](http://nollywoodforever.com/cruz)

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