

Censorship and Compliance to Code of Ethics in Film Production: An Appraisal of Three Nigerian Home Video Films

Mr. Chikezie Anthony Enyeazu

Department of Theatre Arts,
University of Abuja, Abuja-Nigeria
Email: chikezieenyeazu@gmail.com

And

Prof. Barth Oshionebo

Department of Theatre Arts,
University of Abuja, Abuja-Nigeria
Email: barth.oshionebo@uniabuja.edu.ng

Abstract

Despite the success and popularity of the Nigerian Home Video Films (Nollywood films), there has been accusations of non-compliance to the Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers developed by National Film and Video Censor's Board (NFVCB). The accusations are premised on the distortions and misrepresentation of our national values and culture, manifest in films containing immoral, licentious and objectionable contents. It is against this backdrop that this study examined three (3) purposively selected 'popular' Nigerian home Video films in English language (Glamour Girls, Omata Women, the Wedding Party), to determine the veracity or otherwise of non-compliance to the statutory regulatory provisions on film making in Nigeria; as well as other forces within the Nigerian video colony that determine what we see in the films. Anchored on Development Media theory, the study adopted the content analysis method based on direct observation of films, and found that two of the films (Glamour Girls and Omata Women) contravened the code while the Wedding Party complied with the code. The reasons for contravention of the Code were traced to socio-political and economic factors such as lack of political will on the part of the government, influence of foreign culture, economic situation of the country and poor regulatory standards among others. The recommendations included banning of films with immoral and objectionable content, sanctioning of marketers, producers cum actors of such films; as well as government periodic sponsorship of films etc.

Key words: *Censorship, Code of Ethics, National film and Video Censor's Board (NFVCB), Cultural values, Nigerian home video films (Nollywood).*

Introduction

In Nigeria as in most African countries, there exists cultural values that serve as the parameter through which individual and group actions are dictated and regulated. Such cultural values constitute the beliefs and principles acceptable and revered by individuals, groups or societies. Thus, Culture and values are distinct albeit interrelated.

Values are standards of conducts, efficiency or worth which a society endorses, maintains and even transmits to her members in both present and future generations (Okeke, 1989; Amaela, 2000;

Idang, 2007). Just as an object is seen to be of a high value that is treasured, our beliefs about what is right or wrong that are worth being held are equally treasured. This shows that values occupy a central place in a people's culture. Olaitan (2017) argues that a national value then is a representation of what the people generally consider and strictly adhere to as very integral to its national success. These ideals or beliefs are the basis of standards in public life derived mainly from tradition, experience, and religion.

Culture, as it is usually understood, entails a totality of traits and characters that are peculiar to a people to the extent that it marks them out from other peoples or societies (Awoniyi, 2015). Since values are an integral part of culture and culture is what defines a people's identity, then the values that a people hold are what differentiate them from other people. As noted by Babawale (2011), it does appear that culture is about shared patterns of way of life and which always try to maintain those values that are necessary for the survival of a people.

Scholars argue that the Nigerian film industry evolved to represent the culture, values, myths, history and stories of the people contrary to the stereotypical visual imageries of African people in mainstream Western cinemas (Dirks,1992; Nwachukwu, 1994; Barlet,2000; Ackah,1999; Akomfrah, 2006; Drakard,2006). However, as a relatively new phenomenon, Nigerian Home Video Films (Nollywood films) uses culture and technology to raise awareness of the story of Africans in general and Nigerians in particular (Ofeimun, 2003; Kunzler 2007; Okome 2007). The film industry peaked in the mid-2000s to become the second largest film industry in the world in terms of the number of annual film productions, placing it ahead of the United States and behind only to India (Kunzler 2007).

However, despite the successful development and popularity of the films, there has been accusations of non-compliance to the Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers due to apparent distortions and misrepresentations of national values and culture manifest in immoral, licentious and objectionable contents (Okunna, 2002; Rodman, 2006; Ezeajugha, 2011; Nwosu, Onwukwe & Okugo, 2013; Uzundu and Ejelonu, 2015). It is against this backdrop that this study uses content analysis method to examine three (3) purposively chosen 'popular' Nigerian Home Video Films in English language (*Glamour Girls*, *Omata Women*, and *the Wedding Party*) to determine whether or otherwise there is compliance by film makers to the Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers in Nigeria; and other social forces within the Nigerian video colony that determine what we see in the films.

Literature Review

This study builds on existing body of research on the content of Nigerian home video films otherwise referred to as Nollywood films. It proposes to review the efforts at evolving a policy thrust for film making and the basis of the Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers evolved by National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB). The study is anchored on Development Media Theory which emphasizes that the principal role of the media is to help develop and build the nations. The study further examines other social forces within the Nigerian video colony, which contribute to what we see [or do not see] in Nigerian Home Video films.

Theoretical Framework: This study is anchored on *Development Media Theory* advanced by McQuail in 1987, which advocates for the use of the media to meet the development needs of developing countries by supporting objectives such as national unity, stability and cultural integrity without prejudice to their traditional functions of information, education and entertainment. (Folarin 2002). This theory highlights the role of media in sustaining the cultural values of a nation, and is therefore relevant to this study, hence the purpose for the establishment of Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers is basically to promote and safeguard the ideals of social responsibility on the part of film makers for the development of the nation.

Background of Film Censorship in Nigeria

Independence for Nigeria in 1960 not only implied a review of political and economic policies, it also called for a fresh overhauling of the cultural and creative sector. This according to Hyginus Ekwuazi (1991) cited in Ugor (2007) led to the emergence of the Cinematographic act of 1963; which became the reference point for film censorship in Nigeria for many years. Dafiaghor (2011) argues that the notion of censorship is the regulation or prevention of objectionable information and ideas circulated within a society through the media. Meanwhile, the Cinematographic act of 1963 mandated the minister to establish for the country a federal board for film censorship comprising of suitable individuals and groups that will represent collective views and perceptions of Nigerians. It was formed accordingly and later reconstituted in 1977, with the addition of newly incorporated bodies and interest groups. It became a sixteen-member board divided into four committees to superintend film and cinema productions in the four different geo-political zones in the country. The films exempted from their terms of reference were only those produced or exhibited by international organisations, Europe, federal or state governments including broadcast and radio stations. (Hyginus Ekwuazi 1991, cited in Ugor, 2007).

Other later sectorial policy and laws to provide a policy environment for the industry to thrive include Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree (1978), Nigerian film Corporation Decree (1979), Copyright Decree (1988), Cultural Policy for Nigeria (1989), National Mass Communication Policy (1990). However, each of these documents proved inadequate in dealing with the problems of the film industry; a situation the National Film Policy came to remedy in 1992. Among the objectives of the National Film Policy is to serve as a vital instrument for international image building and to protect our rich cultural heritage and our national aspirations in the process of industrialization and integration (National Film Policy, 1992). Thus, the major focus of the National Film Policy is to ensure that the films protect Nigeria's cultural values. To drive its objectives, the policy advocated for the establishment of a Federal Board of Film Censorship and Control to regulate the content of films among other ancillary duties. Prior to this date, censorship was done by News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) created for the purpose of censoring electronic media, such as radio, television, and Digital Versatile Disc (DVD) in 1978. At that time, electronic media was predominantly privately owned, but the government was able to influence content through the NAN (Drewett, 2006). However, coincidentally after the acknowledged first Nigerian Home Video film (*Living in Bondage*, 1992) was produced, the Nigeria Film and Video Censors' Board (NFVCB) was 'born' in 1993, to censor and classify films and related cinematographic arts, as well as curtail the negative influences that film and video works might have on society (Irons, 15 March, 2015). To ensure that negative influences are effectively curtailed, the NFVCB, currently a parastatal under the Federal Ministry of Information and Communication in Nigeria, prepared The Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers in Nigeria herein referred to as the Code.

The Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers in Nigeria.

As noted by NFVCB (2004), 'the Code is designed to enhance the ideals of social responsibility and social relevance among Nigerian motion picture producers so as to ensure high standards in the technical and artistic qualities of their films' (p.3). Thus, the Code enjoins film makers in Nigeria to recognize their responsibility in promoting national ethics as well as national mobilization; instead of promoting negative foreign culture influences which are alien and in dissonance with our traditional value system. The basic guidelines for film makers in packaging a production and releasing it to the public regardless of the theme, storyline, and target audience is summed up in the Code of Ethics as follows:

- (a) That the medium of film remains responsible and sensitive to the values and standards of society; by inculcating in the generality of our people the virtues inherent in our diverse cultures, customs and traditions.
- (b) That films should have educational and entertainment value by propagating desired aspect of our national character, values and customs internally and externally. That films should positively protect,
- (c) project and promote national culture, unity, aspirations and interest of Nigeria.
- (d) That no film should encourage indecent, obscene, pornographic, and immoral acts that are likely to offend human sensitivities.
- (e) That films should not promote the degradation and sexual humiliation of women thereby outraging the standards of public decency.
- (f) That no film should encourage illegal or criminal acts or promote racial, religious or ethnic discrimination.
- (g) That no production is likely to undermine national security or expose the people of African heritage to ridicule.
- (h) That no film should be produced which is likely to encourage or incite crime or glorify the use of violence, dehumanization of the Nigerian people including child abuse etc. (NFVCB, 2004).

The above guidelines and criteria are set up to achieve the objectives of the code which among other things include: (i) to use the film industry as tool for national integration, unity and international image building (ii) To sensitize film and video producers on the need to employ the medium as a vehicle for public enlightenment, national mobilization, education and enlightenment. (iii) To use films to motivate the people by propagating ideas which promote national pride, solidarity and consciousness (NFVCB, 2004).

Notwithstanding the establishment of the Code of Ethic and Production for Film Makers in Nigeria towards regulatory control of filmic contents, there have been allegations of immoral and indecent contents in the films over the years. Many argue that the indecent and immoral display in Nigerian Home Video Films contradicts the guidelines of the Code, vis-à-vis to project and promote national culture; and not to encourage indecent, obscene, pornographic, and immoral acts that are likely to offend human sensitivities. According to Azeez (2010) and Ikhidero (2013), most Nigerian Home Video Films portray and position Nigerian women stereotypically and negatively as inferior and morally corrupt individuals ready to expose and use their sexuality despicably to

achieve their desires. Ikhidero (2013), Uzundu and Ejelonu (2015) and Papadaki (2021) corroborate this view and note that sexual objectification (the act of treating an individual, particularly a female, as an ordinary object of sexual desire) is fast becoming an attribute of Nigeria Home Video films; and that such films contributed to the ‘appetite’ for immoral and pornographic film productions commonly witnessed in the second and third decades of films produced in Nigeria. Ukata (2010) cited in Onyenankeya, Onyenankeya and Osunkule (2019) argues that the deliberate distortion of image of the women in films as objects of sexual desire by men, can cause undiscerning minds to ascribe the projected negative immoral and indecent attitudes as qualities of women and their true characters both in the film and in real life. Ironically, the hard copies of most of such uncensored films with despicable contents are marketed and ‘consumed’ in Nigeria, making one to wonder at the effectiveness of NFVCB and its instrument of regulatory control of Filmic contents.

Factors Affecting Compliance to the Code of Ethics for Film Makers in Nigeria

Many factors can be identified as reasons responsible for none compliance to the code by some film makers. Notable among such factors is the non-involvement of NFVCB in the pre-production activities of the filmmaker(s) where they need to exercise control of filmic content as done in other clime like the United States (Ugor, 2007). A situation where the NFVCB has to mere tinker with the finished work can rarely ensure compliance to the Code by film makers.

Additionally, the effort of the board (NFVCB) is further weakened by marketers and Producers whose aims are essentially to influence content in order to maximize profit. Due to poor pre-production supervision of film makers by the board, the producers are unfettered to determine the type of movies they want, with emphasis on the demands of the market cum movie audience that will ensure better financial reward (Ugor, 2007).

Another reason is the challenge of getting decent employment particularly by the youth who constitute the majority of university graduates, and who struggle to survive the grim economic outlook of Nigeria (Al Jazeera, 2019. Para, 2). Of significant note is that the youth are interested in any profitable undertaking or venture, and therefore will not be opposed to acting some high financially rewarding roles akin to those promoting bizarre, indecent, obscene, pornographic and immoral acts in films.

Furthermore, film producers often rely on the internet which is beyond the regulatory jurisdiction of the Board, as a means of promotion and ensuring that their films, particularly those

likely to be adjudged indecent or immoral, reach as wide an audience as possible without regulatory guidelines. Accessibility to the internet is further heightened by the availability of the mobile phone.

Finally, the emergence and influence of Ghollywood (an acronym for Ghana's film industry) is argued to have triggered the interest of Nigerian producers in producing indecent and other morally decadent films. The obsession towards patronage of Ghollywood films by Nigerian youths, and the financial implication of such patronage prejudiced producers of Nigerian home video films to reassess and realign their views towards pornography (Njoku August 9, 2013; Cosmic, 2015).

Discussion

To achieve the objectives of this study, three (3) purposively selected 'popular' Nigerian Home Video films in English language (*Glamour Girls*, *Omata Women* and *the Wedding Party*) produced in Nigeria are content analyzed, to determine compliance to the Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers in Nigeria. The rationale for selecting films in English language is to prevent challenges often encountered in reading indigenous language films that may be located outside the language domain of the researcher. Also, the selection of films is based on accessibility of the films to the researcher, though with an aim to cover the three decades of film production in Nigeria (1994-2023). Notwithstanding, each of the selected films has its uniqueness. For Instance, *Glamour Girls (1994)*, produced by Kenneth Nnebue is acknowledged the first Nigerian Home Video film (Nollywood Film) in English language—the antecedent of all other films in English Language that contributed to the national and international giant the industry has quickly become. *Glamour Girls (1994)* is also adjudged the first overtly licentious display that is considered the forerunner of indecent and immoral content in films (Ugor, 2007). *Omata Women (2003)* produced by Okigwe Ekweh and directed by Ndubuisi Okoh is one of the films that attracted public outcry and the attention of scholars over alleged negative portrayal of young married Nigerian women as materialistic, diabolic, wicked and sex maniacs. *The wedding party (2016)* produced by the trio of Don Omope, Zulu Oyibo and Ijeoma Agukoronye; and directed by Kemi Adetiba is a Nigerian romantic comedy film, acknowledged the highest grossing Nigerian film from 2016 up till 2019; followed by its sequel, *the Wedding Party 2: Destination Dubai (2017)* directed by Niyi Akinmolayan. The theme is marriage between children of rich parents albeit from divergent ethnic communities cum cultures.

Synopsis of selected films***(1) Glamour Girls 1 (1994)***

Due to challenges of living in the village without any reasonable means of livelihood, and difficulty in settling down with any of the suitors that came her way, Sandra (Jennifer Okere) moves to Lagos at the instance of her friend Doris (Gloria Anozie) who, with the help of Thelma, helped set her up as a ‘senior girl’, an acronym for paid mistresses of married men. Their lives revolve around parties, cloths and making money through sex. Marriage was not an issue as they can ‘buy husbands’ with their wealth. Impressed by Sandra’s supposed innocent disposition, Chief Esiri (Peter Bruno) decides to keep her for himself by giving her a fabulous apartment, a job in a bank and made a declaration of intent to marry her. But when Sandra falls in love with Dennis (Pat Attah) and quits the relationship with Chief Esiri, he vows to destroy her. At the end, Dennis abandons her and moves to America, and Chief Esiri her packing from the apartment and her bank job.

Meanwhile, a schoolmate of Doris, Jane (Liz Benson) who is also a ‘senior girl’ eventually marries wealthy Desmond (Sola Fosudo), who defied his parent’s advice to marry a prostitute. When Desmond eventually becomes disabled due to an automobile accident that happened while on his way to see Jane’s mother, Jane is persuaded by Alex (Raymond Johnson) a ‘presidential aspirant’ to leave Desmond. After divorcing Desmond, she later discovers that Alex is a con man and a dupe. But Jane swears that she will have her revenge someday for the millions he took off her, and his influence that made her divorce her caring husband. She later gets information from a friend that Alex is at a hotel. Without wasting times, she arrives at the hotel and shoots Alex, before being arrested.

In the film, Helen (Barbara Odoh) a classy heartless prostitute decides after a sex session to blackmail her regular customer Chief Esiri with a threat to expose pictures of their sexual escapade. Chief Esiri later pays to avoid exposure. One day, a man gives her a ride, but instead of getting down when she asked the man to stop, she holds the man shirt and tells him to pay her for two days’ sexual services. When a crowd begins to gather, the man ends up paying to avoid further embarrassment. Helen usually plies her trade along Allen Avenue where she is hired to spend the night with an entrepreneur (JT Tom West). They agree on the amount and Tom West take her inside. Later, he becomes exhausted after having her, and invites his friend Martin to take over so

that they can take her 'turn by turn'. As Martin is about to 'begin', He and Helen recognise each other and Helen ashamedly runs out of the house. END

Part II

Glamour Girls 2: The Italian Connection focuses mainly on prostitution and how Doris alongside her accomplices and cohorts sustains the Italian sex trade through a regular supply of young girls whose desperation to travel abroad for decent jobs and rewarding occupational activities makes them victims of the illicit sex trade. The girls are sold as sex slaves, and they suffer hardships, deprivations and brutalization in the hands of their benefactors. Their incomes are given to Maureen their benefactor until such a time she feels they have paid back the amounts expended for their often difficult and hazardous trips to Europe. Meanwhile, Doris sends money to the parents of the girls, particularly the dead ones so as to convince them that their children are doing well, and to forestall undue concerns and questions about them. It is after the girls have paid their 'debts' that they can be free to save enough money to return home, relocate to other countries, or establish their own businesses of network of sex trades among other potential inclinations. In Italy, Fred introduces his wife to prostitution as the means of making it big so that they can quickly go back to establish in Nigeria. Later, he persuades his wife to sleep with a dog because of the once-in-a-lifetime amount that will help them to return prosperous to Nigeria. She gives the proceeds of her dehumanization to her husband for establishment of a business in Nigeria for their future retirement. But the husband uses the proceeds for promiscuous living which later resulted in getting his wife's best friend (Anita) pregnant. His wife is informed by a friend and she returns to Nigeria and shoots both of them before returning back to Italy.

In conclusion, the films *Glamour Girls 1&2* chronicles the sex trade involving Nigerian single women as seen in action of 'senior girls'; where their greed for wealth, causes them to resort to blackmails, betrayals of/by supposed lovers and friends, and performing rituals of love involving use of water washed from vagina to cook for unsuspecting admirer/lover are evident. Similarly in part 2,

young ladies desirous of better life abroad are deceived and forced into prostitution. It depicts women's deceit and betrayal of relations and friends, murder, extensive sexual displays as seen in the bath-tube scene, and other bizarre indulgences like having sexual intercourse with animals.

(2) *Omata Women (2003)*

It is a story of a quartet of beautiful and flamboyant ladies, Chinasa, Agnes ('Ijiele' which mean masquerade), Ifeoma and Nkechi; whose ambitions are to make wealth at all cost as well as dominate their husbands. They form the Onitsha Market Women Association and encourage other

women to belong to their group. Eventually at the end, their immoral and sexual escapades as well as desire for wealth and fame eventually becomes their undoing. For Instance, Nkechi a graduate of law who is desirous to practice her legal profession is persuaded by her husband to go into boutique business (considered a more profitable means of livelihood) in Onitsha market. Unknown to the couple, the market is under the control of the debased and ruthless trio of Chinasa, Agnes (Ijiele) and Ifeoma. Nkechi's shop is patronised by Chinasa and her friends and the trio later persuades her to adopt their lifestyle of sexual depravity cum prostitution as the fastest means of wealth acquisition and fame. When her husband finds out and confronts her on her promiscuous life style, a fight ensues between them during which she pushes the husband down and he dies as he hits his head on the floor. She regrets the consequence of her action and resorts to taking drugs as a result of frustration of being a widow. She soon becomes an irritable and querulous drug addict. During one of her quarrels with her little daughter, she is stabbed to death.

Chinasa, fearing that her husband is likely to discover her secret sexual indulgence with Dozie, which might lead to her eventual disgrace and possible divorce, decides to kill him with the help of hired assassins. The death of her wealthy husband proved profitable to her as it is not only a means of protecting her pride but a means of inheriting his massive wealth necessary for her flamboyant lifestyle. Agnes (Ijiele) her friend had drawn her attention to this advantage of her husband's death and she is happy she took her advice. Chinasa's greed for more money leads to the killing of her lover Dozie and taking his money. She later seduces immature Ejike who has just been settled by his master with the sum of N1.5 million, and compels him to hand over the money to her. Ejike seeing that Chinasa is unwilling to give him his money, complains to his relations and they invited her to the village to swear an oath at the shrine of Ogwugwu. She agrees thinking that the power of the deity is no longer potent. After swearing that she did not take Ejike's money, Ogwugwu strikes her dead; ending her ignoble sexual acts, greed and wickedness.

Agnes, who prefers to be called Ijiele (a masquerade) is desirous to be free to live her life of promiscuity and depravity undisturbed. She casts a spell on the husband Nduka which renders him submissive to her and makes him incapable of rational reasoning expected of the man of the house; to the surprise of Orimili (Ifeoma's husband) who wonders at the subservient attitude of Nduka towards his wife Agnes (Ijiele). Even though she is known to be a very domineering and vindictive person, many do not know that she is a lesbian. She practices her sexual proclivity (lesbianism) with Ifeoma. Eventually, a misunderstanding ensues between her and Ifeoma over the latter's

heterogeneous sexual relation with her landlord. When Ifeoma made it clear that she will not allow Ijiele control her life, Ijiele reveals the incident to Orimili who sends Ifeoma away to the village, with instruction to her to remain there if she hopes still be his wife. Ifeoma eventually ends her marriage with Orimili, but decides to avenge on Ijiele for the shame and indignity she is subjected to as a result of Ijiele's betrayal. One day, Ifeoma accost Ijiele and pours an acidic substance on Ijiele's face which destroys her face and beauty; resulting in permanent disfigurement. When this happened, the husband Nduka regained his freedom from the spell cast on him, and begins to wander what happened to him. Ijiele realises to her chagrin that her supposed indomitability is finally crushed unexpectedly by one whom she considers docile, and that her being head of the house occasioned by her husband's induced servitude has finally ended.

In conclusion, *Omata Women* (2003) relates Nigerian women's desperation for wealth, popularity and power. It is a narration of women's promiscuous undertakings, materialistic dispositions, diabolic enslavement of spouses, intimidation and stealing, selfishness and betrayals, greed and cold blooded murder, in addition to sexual perversions, revenge and drug addiction etc.

(3) *The Wedding Party 1 & 2 (2016 /2017)*

The Wedding Party 1 centers on the wedding of a couple wealthy families albeit different cultural backgrounds: Dozie Onwuka (the musician Banky Wellington), son of an Igbo electronics tycoon and Danni Coker (Adesua Etomi), daughter of a wealthy Yoruba oil mogul. While preparing for the wedding, Danni's friends tease her of being sexually inexperienced as she had vowed to remain a virgin until her wedding night. She is not bothered and promises to take the matter up with Dozie after the wedding. Meanwhile, Dozie on the other hand revel over his escapades with his friends at the bachelor's party the previous night; where they had female companions in attendance. Meanwhile, the mothers of the couple are locked in a status competition. The bride's mother, Tinuade Cooker is unhappy that her name is omitted in the program, while that of the groom's mother Queen Obianuju Onwuka is in the programme. At the reception venue, she is forced to play the second fiddle by entering after the Onwukas. She is however happy that the meal cooked by the local Yoruba chef employed by her family ironically attracted greater patronage than the fancy meal prepared by a popular modern chef at the instance of the Onwuka's. Meanwhile, Sola who is already drunk is invited to give his Best man's speech at the reception, and he ended up presenting the groom (Dozie) as unfaithful and irresponsible. Danni runs outside ashamed of thing said by Sola about her husband. Dozie is angr at Sola but

runs after his wife to placate her. Obianuju realizing how deeply her son loves his bride, join the others to look for Dinni.

Unlike Tinuade and her husband Dele who are happy that their daughter Dinnu is getting married, Obianuju is unhappy that her son is marrying someone from another tribe and who is beneath his class, even though her husband approves of the union. Also, while the Yoruba parents (Dele and Tinuade Cooker) are warm towards each other (even though Dele is hiding the fact of his dwindling finances), yet both are committed in their excited effort to ensure a hitch free wedding. However, the Igbo parents (Chief Felix and Queen Obianuju Onwuka) are bitterly estranged and cold towards each other. Chief Felix' adultery is found out by his wife which leads to his wife's coldness and arrogance towards him. However, through the incidence of a thief who is hiding in one of the rooms, and who holds the two parents of the couple at gun point, Tinuade Coker is told by the husband of his dwindling financial resources and Chief Onwuka apologized to his wife over his infidelity and professes his love for her. With the thief eventually overpowered, the parties reconcile their differences. The missing bride is eventually found and Dozie begs her forgives with promises of making her happy forever. The bride eventually accepts his apology and the movie ends happily.

Part II

The Wedding Party 2 (2017) is a sequel to *The Wedding Party* (2016). In the film, Nonso (Enyinna Nwigwe) takes Deardre (Daniella Down) on a date to a hotel in Dubai. Deardre excuses herself to visit the ladies and in her absence, Nonso observes the rejection of an engagement ring by a lady who walks away, followed by her suitor who angrily flings the rejected ring away. It falls near Nonso who bends down and picks it up. Just then Deardre enters and seeing his posture of one knee on the ground holding a ring in his hand, presumes that he is proposing to her, and quickly says 'yes' and moves closer to him. Momentarily confused, Nonso smiles and puts the ring on her finger amidst applause from the onlookers.

Back in Lagos, Nonso confides in his brother Dozie and his friend Sola about his accidental proposal to Deardre and his willingness to marry having discovered that he really loves her. The news of his intended marriage came as a pleasant surprise to his parents (Chief Onwuka and Obianuju), but is strongly opposed by Ada (Patience Ozorkwo) the elder sister of Chief Onwuka and an aunt to Nonso on grounds of tribal differences. Her view is aligned to that of Mr. Winston, a British aristocrat who is opposed to his daughter marrying a commoner from Africa. With

Deardre's persistence, her parents finally give their approval and visit the Onwuka's in Nigeria for the traditional wedding.

The innocent mistake by the bride in drinking from the cup of palm wine held by the husband was seen as a taboo by the Onwuka family, particularly Ada who noted that it was an abomination. The ire of Mr. Winston is provoked and he recounted the indignity done to his lineage by Deardre condescending to marry from people beneath them. But with Mrs. Onwuka's determination to ensure her son's happiness, supported by her in-law Mrs. Coker, the Winston's are informed that the marriage will still go on despite the mistake of Deardre. Both families later agree with the choice of the couple for the marriage proceedings to hold at Dubai.

During the party organized prior to the wedding at Dubai, the news of the accidental proposition of marriage by Nonso eventually gets to Deardre through Sola and she calls off the wedding. But with Nonso's assurance that he really loves Deardre and wants her as his wife, the Winstons and the Onwukas along with Solla and Deardre's granny, persuades her to ignore the past and pursue her happiness by accepting Nonso back into her life. Nonso later proposes, and Deardre finally accepts to marry him. As the preparations for the marriage resumes, Danni, Dozie's wife is rushed to the hospital where she gives birth to a set of twins (a male and a female). The film ends with the successful formal marriage of the couple in Dubai and the celebration of families and friends afterwards.

In conclusion, *the Wedding Party 1 & 2*, is a two-part story of flamboyant inter-tribal weddings between children of rich families and the status competition that arose between the mothers of the couple (in part 1), and competition over tribal affiliations between families of the couple (in part 2). The films recounts some of the challenges experienced by the couple which nearly truncated the weddings, and how friends as well as parents of the couple diligently strived and reconciled the parties. It comments on the love and concern the parents have for their children and the sacrifice they are ready to make for their children's happiness. In addition, aspects of Nigerian people's culinary culture in both part 1 and 2 provide opportunities for laughter amidst cultural exchanges and interactions between families and friends. The films *Glamour Girls part 1 & 2* remains popular among film audience for the display of affluence and its promotion of unity and understanding between people of divergent cultural backgrounds through marriage.

Films Compliance to Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers in Nigeria

The study shows that out of the three films under study, *Glamour Girls* and *Omata Women* did not comply with the guidelines for film makers set out in the Code of Ethics and Production for filmmakers while *The Wedding Party 1&2* complied with the stipulations of the code.

(i) *Glamour Girls 1 & 2* is a display of amorous scenes, sexual objectification of women, indecent dressings, pornography, excessive greed, heartless betrayals and vulgarity in contradiction of our culture and national values. As noted in the film, Helen the sex worker and the 'senior girls' (Doris, Sandra, Jane and Maureen) are used to ridicule and objectify women as sex objects for the pleasure of the men, as well as heartless individuals whose propensity for wealth precludes interest in marriage and family life. Such depictions are in contradiction of the guidelines in the Code of Ethics against portrayal of indecent, obscene, pornographic, and immoral acts that are likely to offend human sensitivities; and the degradation and sexual humiliation of women thereby outraging the standards of public decency. Thus, most of the women are idle and depend more on sexual escapades with men for financial stability; thereby given the erroneous impression that most single rich women in Nigeria make their money through sexual promiscuity.

(ii) The film *Omata Women* is closely related to *Glamour Girls* in the sexual objectification of women, as well as degradation of married women in the film. Thus, the film contradicts the requirement of the code to respect the sensitive values and standards of society. Chinasa's killing of her husband to gain his wealth and killing of Dozie to acquire his money and Agnes' (Ijiele) spell on her husband and to continue in her promiscuous sexual undertakings, present married women as untrustworthy, wicked, immoral and greedy beings; can discourage men from marriage, and those already married to become suspicious of their wives. The film cast's aspersion on women associations such as the Onitsha Market Women Association presented as a den of irresponsible, greedy and dangerous women whose outlook on life is to get wealth by all means and to destroy or dominate their husbands. Such perception created in the film can discourage women from joining worthy developmental unions and associations.

In conclusion, the two films (*Glamour Girls* and *Omata Women*), contravened the guidelines for film production as stipulated by the Code. Such immoral films, according to Azeez (2010) portray and position Nigerian women stereotypically and negatively as inferior and morally corrupt individuals ready to expose and use their sexuality despicably to achieve their desires. Uzundu and Ejelonu (2015) corroborates this view and notes that *Glamour Girls* is one of the films through which the appetite for pornographic films was provoked in Nigeria.

The Wedding Party (Part 1&2): The film did not contravene the guidelines for film production stipulated by the Code, instead the film complied with the recommendations of the code by promoting the need for love between persons of diverse cultures as seen in the film; where divergent cultural backgrounds and ethnic affiliation were not significant issue of consideration in and for marriage. The films further demonstrated that even though love is important before marriage should take place, the union involves the approval, support and participation of parents, relations and friends; thereby propagating the desired aspect of our national character, values and customs internally and externally as advocated by the code. It presents and promotes culinary aspects of Nigerian culture through the local Yoruba cuisine of Amala, kpomo, shacky and round-about which was popular and more in demand during the wedding of Dozie and Dumni than the fancy delicacy ordered by the Onwukas (part 1). In part 2, Mr. Winston attempt at drinking pepper soup provides opportunities for laughter amidst cultural exchanges and interactions between families and friends. The film cautions against infidelity and unfaithfulness to one's partner in line with the cultural values of decency and morality advanced by the code. Chief Onwuka begs his wife for forgiveness over his adultery, assuring her that he has turned a new leaf. The film educates the Winstons about Igbo marriage culture particularly as regards negotiation in the payment of bride price and other ancillary demands. From the teaching and guidance on Igbo traditional marriage, Deardre accepts the wine from her father to search out her husband to be who is eventually found and given the wine.

In Conclusion, *the Wedding Party 1&2* complied with guidelines set out in the Code as it provided an opportunity to learn about attitude and belief of other cultures, and to make new friends from different regions thereby promoting national peace and unity as well as global tolerance and understanding between cultures advocated by the Code. The film, the Wedding Party promotes the ideals advocated in the guidelines for film makers by the Code.

Conclusion

The success and popularity of the Nigerian home video films (Nollywood films) notwithstanding, there were (and still are) accusations levelled against the films regarding non-compliance to the Code of Ethics and Production for Film Makers developed by National Film and Video Censor's Board (NFVCB). The Code is designed to enhance the ideals of social responsibility and social relevance among Nigerian motion picture producers so as to ensure high standards in the technical and artistic qualities of their films. Among the guidelines for film

production contained in the Code of Ethics and Production for Film makers, are that films should not encourage indecent, obscene, pornographic and immoral acts, or promote degradation and sexual humiliation of women, thereby outraging the standards of public decency; or encourage illegal or criminal acts as well as racial, religious or ethnic discrimination. Also, that films should have educational and entertainment value and should promote the culture, unity and interest of Nigeria; but should not expose the people of African heritage to ridicule.

This paper anchored on Development Media Theory, used Content Analysis method to examine three purposively selected Nigerian Home Video films (*Glamour Girls*, *Omata Women*, *the Wedding Party 1&2*) to determine whether the films complied with the guidelines for film makers or otherwise. The study found that *Glamour Girls* and *Omata Women* contravened the code of ethics by promoting promiscuity, women's sexual objectification, immorality, heartless betrayals, use of rituals and charms (spells), pornography and associated negative images of women in the films; while the third film under study, (*The Wedding Party 1&2*) complied with the regulatory guidelines of the Code through promotion of unity and understanding among people of different cultural background, and collaboration by couples parents, relatives and friends for a successful inter-tribal marriage. The efforts by the parents as well as the couple to understand and appreciate the views of each other dominates the ideology in *The Wedding Party 1&2*; and shows compliance to stipulation of the code as it concerns attainment of cultural understanding, education, entertainment, national unity, as well as international collaboration and friendship.

The study concludes that despite the presence of NFVCB and the Code set out to moderate film making, most of the films, particularly those of the very recent past, contain obscene and unethical materials that are alien to Nigerian culture and values. Some of the factors responsible for the current trend include non-participation of NFVCB in the pre-production activities of the filmmaker(s), desire to amass wealth by filmmakers through obscene and pornographic films, uninhibited access to the Internet just by possessing a mobile phone, available clientele desirous of indecent, bizarre and outrageous content in films, and increasing number of unemployed graduates eager for any job that can get them out of poverty etc.

Recommendation

This study recommends the following:

- (a) That Film producers should align their filmic contents to the development of the nation through compliance to the ideals of social responsibility and social relevance advocated in and by the code.
- (b) Deliberate effort should be made by producers to project the positive attributes of Nigerian/African women particularly in relation to their achievements, sacrifices and contribution to the growth and development of their families, communities and nation; instead of the ‘current’ trend of women’s sexual objectification in films.
- (c) Filmmakers (Cast and Crew) should be fined and their films banned for promotion of immorality, pornography, crime as well as negatively stereotyping, objectifying, debasing and dehumanizing of women.
- (d) Government, through the National Film and Video Censor’s Board (NFVCB), should periodically sponsor the production of films that will promote and sustain the values of honesty, decency, hard work, unity, integrity, commitment to family and nation as well as respect for self and others.
- (e) Effort should be intensified by parents/guardians to educate teenagers so as to influence their positive usage of the internet.
- (f) NFVCB should improve on its regulatory activities to ensure that films submitted for assessment are properly moderated in line with the recommended ethical standards.

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