The Influence of Nollywood Film's Costumes on the Dressing Pattern of Federal University of Lafia Students

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of Nollywood films' costumes on the dressing patterns of undergraduates at the Federal University of Lafia (FULAFIA), Nasarawa State. The study employed a quantitative research approach where data was collected through closed-ended questionnaires. A total of 97 students were chosen as the study sample using Taro Yamane's sample formula. The study's data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages with the aid of Microsoft Excel. The study's findings showed that 99% of respondents were exposed to contemporary Nollywood films, which made them wear indecent clothing. The result also revealed the major factors influencing the students' dressing patterns, which include fashion and pleasure, imitating Nollywood actresses as role models, and social and peer group influence. The study recommended that the University management ensures the implementation and enforcement of a dress code, which would be safeguarded by both the academic and non-academic staff and security personnel of the University. Also, the mass media, as an important agent of socialization, should, from time to time, sensitize and enlighten youths about the dangers and negative consequences of indecent dressing.

Keywords: Costumes, dress code, Indecent dressing, Nollywood, sex-for-grade

Introduction

The Nigerian film industry has become a strong component of Nigeria's popular culture. It has established for itself the exceptional characteristic and capacity to meet both the educational and entertainment needs of the viewers in and outside the country (Abah, 2022; Umar, 2022). The Nigerian films are being patronized

by the political class, the elites and the low peasantry class in rural Nigeria. Ernest-Samuel and Uduma (2019) describe Nigerian home video as a strong vehicle that has become a huge export of Nigeria's popular culture that emerged as a powerful and popular medium of communication in the country.

However, despite the industry's enormous renown, few observers comprehend the historical difficulties that have produced its current form and structure. An analysis of the history and origins of the Nigerian home video may undoubtedly lead to its contemporary reality or the reality that it wants to project. The existing reality of the Nigerian films, as well as their potential future accomplishment, may be traced back to the history of filmmaking in Nigeria (Aduku, 2018). According to Azeez (2019), film in Nigeria began with the colonial administration, which formed a film section as part of the information department. After independence, Nigeria inherited this, which became part of the Ministry of Information. Azeez (2019) further notes that the production of Nigerian indigenous films in movie film format began in Nigeria in the late 1980s. Similarly, Ogaraku (2022) believes that *Living in Bondage*, which was produced in 1991, was considered the first Nigerian Home Video which was produced in large quantity on VHS tapes for sale in the local market. *Living in Bondage* shared a narrative of how a guy exploited his wife for money rituals and is being chased by this deceased wife. This narrative notion was quite popular at the time in Nigeria, when money ritual was the dominant culture. No day went by without someone being presented with stories and photographs of beheaded victims, with body parts taken for ceremonial purposes (Dyikuk, 2020).

Onyenankeya, Onyenankeya, and Osunkunle (2019) see film as veritable element that holds important position in both the lives and culture of people. In the same vein, Onuzulike (2018) contends that movies are highly important in people's lives as they contribute to transmission of their popular ethos and have significance influence globally. Currently, there are over ten million audiences who patronize Nollywood films, and majority of them are affected, in one way or the other, by the subjects treated in Nigerian home movies including modes of their dressings which professionals refer to as film costumes. According to Ihunwo (2021), film costume enables actors/actresses turn into realistic characters on television screen and could assist a director to tell a meaningful story (Dmytryk, 2018). Umar et al. (2022), citing Asemah (2011), notes that people in Nigeria and other African countries were influenced by foreign film cultures due to their frequent contact with Nollywood films that prioritized western films

dressing patterns compared to the indigenous ones. Currently, the Nollywood costumes are associated with nudity and nakedness with tendency of spreading immorality among people including university students (Epochie-Olise,(2017).

Statement of the Problem

Apuke and Dogari (2017) observe that, in recent years, the dressing and clothing style of the younger generation has changed. They dress in a strange and awkward ways. The female younger population prefers to dress half-naked; they prefer to wear trousers and skimpy shirts or tee-shirts that reveal their tummy, a body hug that shows all the contours in their body frames, or a mini-skirt with see-through tops, whereas the boys, while still wearing shirt and trousers, wear them in various bigger sizes compared to their nominal sizes and sag their trousers below their waist line, connoting gangsterism (Apuke & Dogari, 2017; Olise & Ekpenyong, 2020). The problem of indecent dressing among Nigerian university students in the campuses is currently becoming alarming (Fareo & Jackson, 2018). There is hardly any higher institution of learning in Nigeria that is immune to such problem. Hence, this study was conducted with a view to finding out the influence of Nollywood film's costumes on the dressing pattern of undergraduates at the Federal University Lafia.

Objectives of the Study

The major aim of this study is to examine the influence of Nollywood film's costumes on the dressing pattern of Fulafia students. This aim could be achieved through the following objectives:

i. To determine the extent to which the students of the Federal University of Lafia are exposed to contemporary Nollywood films.
ii. To investigate the factors influencing the dressing patterns of undergraduates of the Federal University Lafia.
iii. To ascertain the effects of contemporary film's costume on the dressing pattern ofstudents of the Federal University of Lafia.

Questions

i. Are the students of the Federal University of Lafia exposed to contemporary Nollywood films?
ii. What are the factors influencing the dressing patterns of undergraduates of the Federal University Lafia?
iii. What are the effects of contemporary film's costume on the dressing pattern ofstudents of the Federal University of Lafia?

Film as a Medium of Communication

A **f**ilm, or motion picture, is a series of still images that create the illusion of moving images. These moving images are created by photographing actualscenes with a motion picture camera by photographing drawings or miniature models using traditional animation techniques and by combining some techniques with other visual effects(Nicholson, 2019; Thompson & Bowen, 2009). Erlidawati and Rahmah (2022) see film as a motion picture which is a visual art form used to simulate experiences that communicate ideas, stories, perceptions, feelings, beauty, or atmosphere through the use of moving images. Erlidawati and Rahmah (2022) further viewed film in a technical way as they consider it to be a form of mass communication that combines several sorts of technology, such as photography and sound recording, as well as arts such as theater, literature, and architecture, as well as musical arts.

Totawad (2019) equally sees film as a very powerful medium of mass communication through which different people like producers, directors, scriptwriters, songwriters, and a host of others, communicate with diverse audiences. By the virtue of its technicalities, a motion picture has the ability to reach thediverse audiences simultaneously. The set of people involved in filmmaking produce movies for consumption by mass audiences or viewers while packaging an idea that would communicate messages to the audience and not to individuals (Plate, 2017). Furthermore, Bieniek-Tobasco et al. (2019)see audiences as an important pillar in the process of active communication. The actions on the screen do not take place between actors in a film; rather, the action takes place among the actors and the audience(Simanjuntak, Barus, & Resmayasari, 2021). Contributing to how film communicate with audience, Merleau-Ponty (2019)points out that a sound **movie** is not a silent film inflated with words. It equally serves as a medium of non-verbal communication. In this regard, a motion picture or film speaks through silence, facial expression, and body language to convey an effective message to the audience.

Film Costume as Tool for Communication and Transmission of Cultural Heritage

Film costumes are considered powerful tools for communication and the transmission of cultural heritage in modern society. The film costumes worn by the artists have been categorized under non-verbal communication due to their power to convey a meaningful message to the audience. Worth (2016)notes that the use of different costumes in a film could enable a viewer to easily understand

the intended message a film director tries to pass on without any attached verbal message. Costumes worn in a movie give the audience a clear picture and an audible message inherent in the particular set of costumes. The attire used in the film diffuses stimuli in image form to the receivers with the intent of modifying the behavior of those who come across it(Bugg, 2014; Ryan & Lenos, 2020). By implication, as youths watch films and come acrosscertain dressing patterns that they admire, they quickly adopt such dressing without having any second thought. Worth (2016)stresses that film costumes convey different signals from the visual perspective of communication. In this regard, the film costumes communicate thousand words like the verbal communication channels do.

According to Peters (2007), film costumes are considered a form of non-verbalcommunication that sends messages without any attached words. Bowen (2013) opines that, film costumes are used to express an individual's personality and also help to communicate the following important messages such as gender identification**, social status, occupation, marital status, ethnicity and political affiliation, among others.** Although, costumes are powerful tools that are used in films to convey important messages about people's cultural heritage, unfortunately, many actors and actresses wear indecent, skimpy attire, which is often used in Western Hollywood and Bollywood films. This, however, justifies the presence of cultural imperialism in the Nigerian film industry, in which foreign costumes are given preference over indigenous ones.

Theoretical Framework

Cultural Imperialism

The study is anchored on cultural imperialism theory, which was founded by Herb Schiller in the 1970s in his effort to further develop the scope of the media situation at that time (Schiller, 1976). Asemah (2011) sees cultural imperialism as a term that is used to explain the imposition of Western cultures on developing countries. Garcia et al. (2018), as cited in Umar et al., (2022), notes that the cultural imperialism theory was used to explain the emerging influence of the United States and its commercial media system around the world. The theory is particularly focused on the ways in which Western culture was being spread to developing nations using the mass media with the sole intention of dominating their cinemas and cultures (Schiller, 1969). However, most of the films produced by the Nigerian Film-making Industry use Western costumes more than the local traditional attire (Adeoti & Salawu, 2018). This justifies how the Western world succeeded in their mission of imposing their cultural values on underdeveloped

African countries, including Nigeria (Asemah (2011). With regard to how foreign cultures adulterated our indigenous ethos, Asemah (2011:117-118) notes that:

> Many people in the developing countries now prefer the Western culture to their own. This is made manifest in the way we dress, the kind of food we eat and even mode of worship in churches…a situation where African jeans are termed illicit, our mode of dressing criticized as uncivilized and all that stuff, while the West engages itself in the replacement of our socio-cultural values with theirs. Nigerians especially the youths now imitate values like gangsterism, pornography, drug addiction, rape, semi nudity, etc. These values have very dangerous effects on the third world youths, who ignorantly mimic them as a way of life.

Research Methodology

In this study, survey research techniques were used to examine the influence of Nollywood films' costumes on the dressing patterns of students at the Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The wisdom behind choosing a survey technique, as noted by Rahi et al. (2019), is that the data collected through close-ended questionnaires could assist researchers in either describing, exploring, or even explaining in detail any given phenomenon under investigation. Thus, the survey research technique is suitable for this study. The population of this study is the 3708 Level 3 undergraduates of the Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State, who were admitted in the 2020–2021 academic session. A total of 97 students were chosen as the study sample across eight faculties using Taro Yamane's sample formula. The instrument for collecting data was divided into two parts. The first part contains demographic information about the respondents, while the second part contains twenty (20) items on the influence of Nollywood film's costumes on the student's dressing pattern, the effects and factors that cause indecent dressing among students, as well as the ways forward to tackle the problems associated with indecent dressing. The data for the study were analysed using the descriptivestatistics of frequency counts and percentages with the aid of Microsoft excel. The following segment describes how the study samples were drawn using Taro Yamane's:

$$N = \frac{N}{1+N\,(e)^2}$$

Whereas:

n = Sample size sought
e = Margin error $(0.10)^2$
N = Population size 3708

$$n = \frac{3708}{1+3708\ (0.10)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3708}{1+3708\ (0.01)}$$

$$n = \frac{3708}{1+37.08}$$

$$n = \frac{3708}{38.08}$$

n = 97.3 approximately 97

Table 1. Distribution of Students Admitted into Fulafia in the 2020/2021 Academic Session

S/No	**Faculty**	**Number of admitted students**
1	Agriculture	440
2	Arts	540
3	Basic medical science	400
4	Computing	480
5	Education	420
6	Medicine	390
7	Science	568
8	Social Science	470
	Total	**3708**

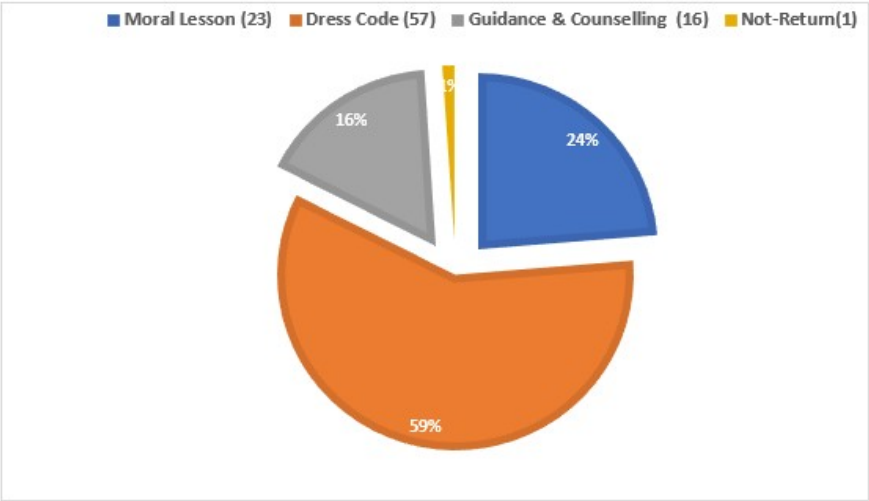
Results Presentation and Analysis

Table 2. Students' Exposure to Contemporary Nollywood Films and Its Effects

Students' exposure to Nollywood films			**Effects of Students Exposure to Contemporary film costumes**		
Options	Frequency	Percentage	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	96	99%	Change in dressing pattern	63	65.%
			Seduction of lecturers and	22	23%
No	0	0%	**awarding marks for sex**		
Non-Return	1	1%	Poor academic performance	11	11%
Total	96	100%	Non-Return	1	1%
			Total	97	100%

Source: Data collected from the respondents 2023

The data presented in Table 2 shows that 96 respondents, representing 99%, are exposed to contemporary Nollywood films. The data presented in Table 2 also reveals that 63 respondents, representing 65%, held that a change in their dressing pattern was the major effect of their exposure to contemporary film's costumes. 22 respondents, representing 23%, opined that the effect of students' exposure to contemporary film's costumes, which leads to indecent dressing among students, causes seduction of lecturers and awarding marks for sex. Similarly, 11 respondents, representing 11%, relate poor academic performance to the effect of students' exposure to contemporary film costumes.



Source: Data collected from the respondents 2023

Figure 1. Possible measures to curtail the effects of students' exposure to contemporary film's costumes

Figure 1 shows possible measures that the respondents believe would curtail the effects of students' exposure to contemporary films' costumes. 57 respondents, which are the majority, representing 59% of the respondents, believe that the implementation of a dress code would reduce the effect of contemporary film costumes among undergraduates at the Federal University of Lafia. 23 respondents, representing 24%, believe that moral lessons could be taught as a remedy, while 16 respondents, representing 16%, agree that guidance and counselling would be a way forward. Only one respondent, representing 1%, did not return a questionnaire. As could be observed from the collected data, most of the students welcomed the establishment and implementation of a dress code in an effort to reduce the effects of students' exposure to contemporary film costumes.

Table 3. Factors influencing students' dressing patterns

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Comfort and convenience	4	4%
Fashion and pleasure	**7**	7%
Imitating of Nollywood role models	49	51%
Social/environmental influence	13	13%
Peer group influence	23	24%
Not-Return	1	1%
Total	**97**	**100%**

Source: Data collected from the respondents 2023

The data presented in Table 3 shows the responses from the respondents on the factors influencing their dressing patterns, especially the dressing adopted from contemporary Nollywood films. The highest number of respondents (49), representing 51%, are of the view that imitating Nollywood actors and actresses as role models is what influenced their decision on their dressing pattern; 13 respondents, representing 13%, said social and environmental factors influence their dressing pattern, while 7 and 4 respondents, representing 7% and 4%, said fashion, pleasure, and comfort are what influence their dressing patterns, respectively. The data presented show that imitating Nollywood as role models and Peer group influence have a significant influence on the dressing patterns of the undergraduate students of the Federal University of Lafia.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the influence of Nollywood films' costumes on the dressing patterns of undergraduates at the Federal University of Lafia. As noted in the available literature review by Fareo and Jackson (2018), the problem of indecent dressing among Nigerian university students on campus is increasing and is currently becoming a problem that needs to be addressed. The available literature also confirmed that Nigeria's film industry gives more priority to Western styles when it comes to costumes in movies, which are associated with nudity and nakedness and have a tendency to spread immorality among university students. The data analysis in Table 2 is in line with current reality, as it shows that 99% of respondents were exposed to contemporary Nollywood films, which made them wear indecent clothing. The findings also show the effects of the students' exposure to contemporary film costumes, which include a change in the students' dressing pattern from decent traditional attire to indecent dressing, the seduction of lecturers, and the awarding of marks for sex.

The study equally found the factors influencing the students' dressing patterns, which include fashion and pleasure, imitating Nollywood actresses as role models, and social and peer group influence. The study found possible measures that could assist in curtailing the effects of students' exposure to contemporary film costumes. The measures include the implementation of a dress code, the teaching of moral lessons, guidance, and counselling, among others.

Conclusions

The study examined the influence of Nollywood films costumes on the dressing patterns of undergraduate students at the Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State. Although film is considered a vehicle for safeguarding cultural heritage, unfortunately, film producers in Nigeria prioritize foreign costumes in their contemporary films. The demonstration of indecently dressed actors and actresses has encouraged indecent dressing among young Nigerians, including university students. This indecent style of dressing is affecting the moral fiber of the academic progression in our citadel of learning, to the extent that some lecturers are being lured by the students' nudity to exchange sex for grade. This trend is unacceptable and needs to be addressed by the relevant stakeholders.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations are made to help curb the negative influence of contemporary Nollywood films on the dressing patterns of undergraduates at tertiary institutions:

1. University management should ensure the implementation of a dress code, which would be safeguarded by both the academic and non-academic staff and security personnel of the universities. In this regard, the university management should establish a disciplinary committee to handle cases of indecent dressing among students and staff.
2. The mass media, as an important agent of socialization, should, from time to time, sensitize and enlighten youths about the dangers and negative consequences of indecent dressing.
3. The Nollywood actors and actresses should understand that millions of youths outside the industry regard them as role models; therefore, they should dress decently during acting and in real life so that the youths emulate their good and worthy character.
4. The management of tertiary institutions should organize regular symposiums, seminars, conferences, workshops, and public enlightenment programs to enlighten students on the need to dress decently in both classroom and their homes.
5. Parents and elders should consider it a sacred duty to teach their wards good morals relating to dressing as embedded in our religions.
6. Religious clerics should also engage in regular sermons and preaching, as well as counselling the youth on the dangers associated with indecent dressing.

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