Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

OAK FOUNDATION

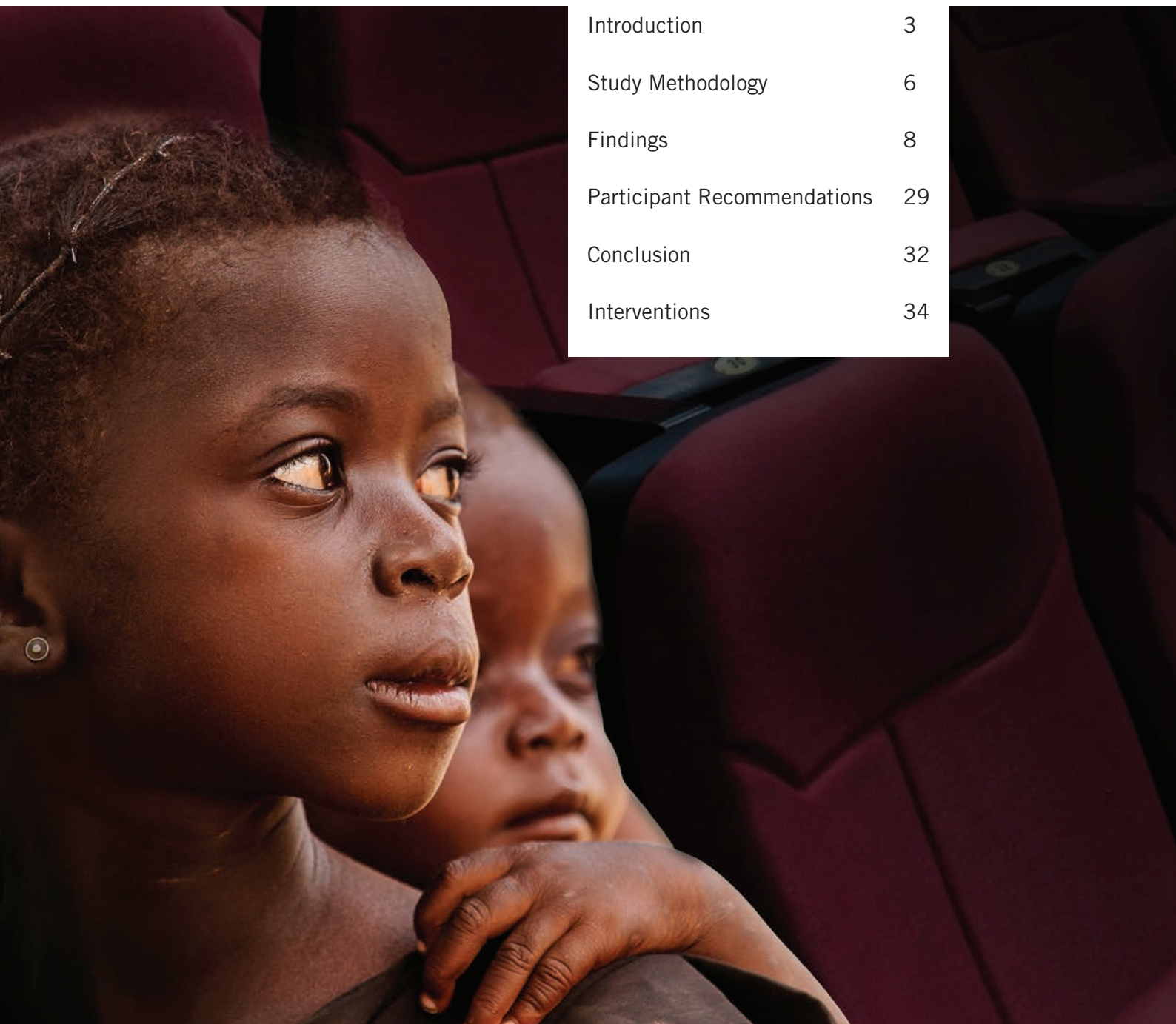# Cinema and Society:
Shaping our Worldview Beyond the Lens

Investigation on the Impact
of Gender Representation
in Nigerian Films

If she can see it, she can be it™

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INTRODUCTION

This study is driven by two primary research questions. First, what do Nigerian people of different backgrounds think of gender representations in entertainment media? Secondly, do Nigerians believe that media representations of gender shape perceptions and aspirations? More specifically, we ask boys, girls, men, and women, in their own words, who their role models are within the entertainment world and why they look up to these people – what is it about their behavior, qualities, lifestyle, and attitude they admire? How is this reflected in their own lives, attitudes, and behavior? How do these role models interact with others? We also asked participants what it means to be a boy or a girl, a man or a woman, in their country. What do they think is expected of them? Where do these ideas come from? How, if at all, have they changed over time? How have these expectations affected their choices? How do these expectations affect their perceived opportunities? We honed in on specific scenes from movies to ask how participants relate to the characters and the situation and whether this reflects normal life in their country. The findings from this qualitative study provide a rich picture of the state of film/television in Nigeria and how it affects the goals and aspirations of everyday Nigerians. These questions fill a gap in existing research on media effects in Nigeria. Previous studies have documented gender bias in Nigerian media, but our study is the first to examine whether everyday Nigerians are aware of this bias and whether they think it influences opinions and behaviors.

This study is important because it establishes a link between media content and gender equality in Nigeria. Across the globe, gender gaps persist in health, finance, education, and politics that impede economic growth and social progress.[1] Despite a longstanding push by the United Nations to champion gender equality, progress remains stagnant in media content worldwide. Gender representation in entertainment media matters. Previous research indicates that while media does not tell people what to think, it does tell us what to think about and how to think about it.[2] Media is a powerful influence in what social issues people focus on[3] and what options they think are available for social change.[4]

The Nigerian film industry, dubbed Nollywood, is massive. It ranks second only to Bollywood in terms of the number of films produced annually, and third (behind Hollywood and Bollywod) in terms of revenues.[5] After a long history of European colonialism and laws against independent filmmaking, Nollywood was born in 1992 when government sanctions were relaxed and relatively inexpensive film equipment became available. The first wide release Nigerian film was Keneth Nnuebe's popular thriller "*Living In Bondage*." The success of this film established that there was a large market for Nigerian films.[6] Since that time, Nollywood has rapidly grown in size, producing between 800 and 1,500

films per year.[7] Unlike African celluloid films, Nollywood "video films" are mostly meant to be viewed on a VCR, so their cost and production quality is often not sufficient for theater distribution.

Watching movies is a popular pastime in many African countries, including Nigeria. As Ousmane Sembène, the father of African cinema put it, "cinema is our night school."[8] Nollywood films are popular across Africa, in the U.K., in the Caribbean, and with African-Americans in the U.S. These films are just starting to get recognition from the international film world.[9]

Researchers and commentators have criticized Nollywood films for representations that portray Nigerians as "backwards." For example, a popular Nollywood storyline features cult images and voodoo that "do not in any way represent African practices of the present generation."[10] Critics have also faulted Nigerian firms for their admiration of Western commercial values that are "often estranged from African realities and purposes."[11]

Nollywood has also been criticized for its conventional depictions of gender roles and violence against women. In our groundbreaking 2014 research study *Gender Bias Without Borders*, we found that filmmakers perpetuate negative attitudes toward women and girls in both developed and developing countries. In general, we found that women are vastly underrepresented in film, and when they are featured, their characters tend to reinforce harmful gender stereotypes.

Nigerian cinema is no exception. A recent content analysis of popular Nollywood films conducted by researcher Naomi Brock shows that women are mostly depicted in traditional gender roles as housewives or as seductresses.[12] Professor J. Highet also finds that women in Nollywood are typically shown as traditional "good wives," religious "Madonnas," or sexy "Jezebels."[13] According to Professor Omoniyi Adeyemi Adewoye and colleagues, "Forms of portrayal and stereotypes of women in the movies reviewed fit into and can reinforce widely held social beliefs and gender role expectations from women in the larger Nigerian socio-cultural environment."[14] Popular Nigerian singer Ejim Omalicha points out that Nollywood films downplay the liberation that Nigerian women have achieved in recent years. "Women characters are cast in such ways that they are either made appendages to men, object of sexual gratification or lust. I think it is time Nollywood re-told the narrative of the woman in the light of contemporary achievements."[15]

Overarching moral lessons are a common part of Nollywood films,[16] which viewers tend to enjoy. However, existing research finds that some of the lessons they offer for women and girls can be disempowering. When women are presented in positions of power in Nollywood films, Professor Agatha Ukata's research finds that they are "punished" for this success through the loss of their beauty, family, and in some cases, their life.[17] In other words, Nollywod teaches viewers that women should not pursue power and,

if they do, it will come at a high price. Researcher Annie N. Duru examines women's representations in Nigerian video films and finds that independent or feminist women are portrayed as selfish and greedy and men are typically shown as heroes who rescue the community from the clutches of these liberated women.[18] Professor Aidan Prinsloo writes that Nollywood films are catering to the social environment in Nigeria where women are nowhere near parity with men with it comes to economics, political representation, or social status; where male children are openly preferred over female children. "By acting as a medium through which such sentiments can be expressed uncritically, Nollywood regularly disseminates patriarchal values to its viewership, which consists largely of women and children, many of whom report enjoying Nollywood films."[19]

Only one study to date, conducted by Professor Chinyere Stella Okunna in 1996, actually asked Nigerians what they think about how women and social issues are depicted in Nollywood films.[20] She found that young people were not inspired by women commonly portrayed as sex objects and housewives in Nigerian films. Our study updates Dr. Okunna's work and is the first study to analyze perceptions of Nigerian media across age groups.
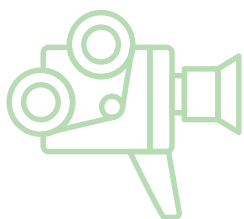
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STUDY METHODOLOGY

We used focus groups to explore the primary questions of this research. Qualitative focus groups allow for deeper insight into research questions than quantitative survey research because they employ open-ended questions in a group setting where participants can interact with one another. Researchers pose the same questions to each focus group, but participants often take the discussion in new directions that furnish a richer understanding of the research questions and generate new themes. Focus groups can provide quick and rich qualitative data or information in the form of narratives or stories about people, but it is important to recognize that focus groups are only a microcosm of a larger picture.

For this study, ten focus groups were conducted from November 18th – 22nd, 2014, in Lagos City, Nigeria at a professional market research facility. Lagos was selected because it is the most populated city in Nigeria. All of the focus groups were audio and video recorded and transcribed in English for data analysis and reporting. Each focus group was led by a professionally trained moderator. Moderators were matched by gender for each group to control for potential gender moderator effects.

Each of the ten focus groups included eight participants. Half of the focus groups included only male participants, while the other half included only female participants. They were selected by age group, gender, and parental status in order to compare how different groups perceive of gender representations in media and their effects. The following focus groups were recruited for this study:

CHILDREN	TEENS	YOUNG ADULTS	ADULTS	PARENTS
Girls, ages 9 – 11	Teen girls, ages 13 – 16	Women, ages 18 – 24	Women, ages 30 – 44	Mothers of children ages 6 – 9
Boys, ages 9 – 11	Teen boys, ages 13 – 16	Men, ages 18 – 24	Men, ages 30 – 44	Fathers of children ages 6 – 9

Focus group participants cannot be said to representative all Nigerians given the diversity of Nigerians and the location of the focus groups in an urban area. Given these limitations, we attempted to make the participants as representative as possible by recruiting a mixture of people from different occupations and socioeconomic levels.

Participants only included Nigerians who have a habit of viewing movies and watching television on a regular basis. Participants were also screened for their level of comfort discussing the personal impact of their most recent movie viewing experience to ensure that they would be active contributors in their group. People who work in media or market research were excluded from the study given their professional proximity to the research question.

Each focus group started with background questions to get the group talking. Next, the moderators asked about societal gender roles and how they are represented in media. At some point during the session, participants were shown two (out of three) short clips of scenes from the films "World of Agony," "Baby Police," and "Sinking Sands" to spark discussions of gender roles. In "World of Agony," the scene is of a father who wants his daughter to marry a wealthy older man whom the girl does not love. The daughter and her mother challenge the father. This scene encouraged discussion of girls marrying young and being denied a chance at finishing their education. The scene from "Baby Police" shows a boy pretending to be a prophet who threatens a grown woman. The clip shows the boy's brother beating him with a stick until he promises he will improve his behavior. The scene from "Sinking Sands" shows an older woman advising a younger woman to leave an abusive marriage before her husband seriously harms her. This clip was only shown to the adult groups. These films were selected based on their popularity and their clear depiction of gender roles. Participants were also asked a series of questions about media influence. The moderators' script can be found in Appendix A.

This study has several limitations. First, the study focuses on film/television, not a full array of entertainment media (e.g., video games, YouTube videos, books, magazines, etc). Our findings cannot be applied to media beyond film/television in Nigeria.

Secondly, a study with 80 participants by definition over-simplifies the experiences of the 174 million ethnically, racially, linguistically, and culturally diverse people who reside in Nigeria. One-quarter of the population of sub-Saharan Africa lives in Nigeria, so while focus groups can provide detailed information about specific topics amongst a small group of Nigerians, they cannot possibly represent the opinions of such a vast and diverse population. Every attempt was made to include a diversity of voices in the focus groups, but the small number of participants by definition limits the representativeness of the findings.

Lastly, study findings are limited by social desirability, a tendency for participants to respond to questions in a manner that reflects desirable or "good" behavior. Although moderators did their best to minimize this phenomenon, some participants may have given socially desirable answers instead of their honest opinions in order to avoid the appearance of sexism.
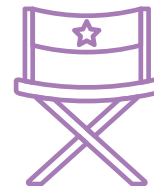
FINDINGS

This section is organized around findings for five key themes that emerged from focus group discussions:

- **Media Preferences**
- **Media Influence**
- **Societal Gender Roles**
- **Women in Film**
- **Domestic Violence**

For each theme, we describe the most common opinions and verbatim quotes from focus group participants. We only include findings that surfaced in four or more of the ten groups, and we highlight disagreements or differences of opinion within and across groups.

Media Preferences: Foreign Films over Nigerian Films

Participants of all ages say they prefer foreign films to Nigerian films because of the relatively lower quality of Nollywood movies. Focus group participants also think that the plotlines of Nigerian films are often too predictable, so they prefer the suspense found in foreign films.

"[Foreign films] are more advanced. Their producers have more experience. They calm down before they shoot their videos. Our producers don't do enough research, and they're always in a hurry."
– Kola, male, age 16

"I prefer White movies to the Nigerian movies these days because of the way things are going, we just have this general character in terms of movie production, like we know where the movie will end, we know the beginning, so there is no suspense. I feel such kinds of films will make me feel bored watching it." – Olamilekan, male, age 20

"I prefer American movies. The only thing that pisses me off in Nigerian movies is if you watch the movie for about five minutes, you've already known what the end is going to be like. Also, Nigerian movie makers repeat stories with different casts." – Olaitan, male, age 36

"I like movies that are creative in nature and suspense packed, but some Nigerian movies, one could tell the end from the beginning." – Oluses, male, age 35

Participants of all ages think that the production and acting quality of Nigerian films is improving.

"They're trying. The way they produce their movies now is better than it was before."
– Chukwuemeka, male, age 18

"Our Nigerian film industry is really trying and improving nowadays." – Israel, male, age 37

"The videos of today are now improved and of a much of better quality than in the olden days."
– Ezenwa, male, age 42

"Our home movies have improved from the level they were before; their emotions and their feelings are more real now. Now, you can see our actors/ actresses crying more convincing tears."
– Moronkeji, male, age 15

"The Nigerian movie production is really improving because of the concept of their videos. Everything is upgrading." – Lanre, male, age 23

"Lately, Nigerian movies have been coming up." – Ifejuowo, male, age 30

Despite a general preference for foreign films across focus groups, young adult participants say they enjoy watching Nollywood films because they reflect Nigerian culture and events and inspire them to overcome hardships.

"That is why I like watching it and the funny part of it, at times we don't need to forget our culture."
*– Eze, male, age 20*

"I love Nigerian movies because of the traditional aspect." – Ayotunde, male, age 22

"It teaches us a lot and makes us know that if we meet ourselves in a particular situation, we can help ourselves." – Diamond, female, age 18

"I love watching Nigerian movies too because it teaches and exposes us to things that happen around us." – Odeh, male, age 21

"Locally made films deals with culture. It takes you back and reminds you of where you are coming from. When you watch them, you begin to know about culture." – Abubakar, male, age 18
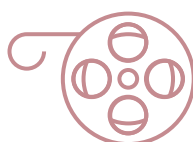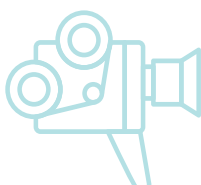
Media Influence: Good Morals, Bad Habits

Mothers say that the bad influence of Nigerian media is increasing because new social media makes it more difficult for parents to monitor their children's media consumption. Participants in the father and mother focus groups believe that Nigerian media has a great deal of influence in the lives of children and adults that is both positive and negative.

"It influences them a lot; both positively and negatively." – Funke, female, age 37

"It all still boils down to the type of impact our movies have been having on our people. I've actually adopted some changes as a result of movies I've seen." – Olaitan, male, age 36

"After my son watched a certain movie, he was heard telling his sister that 'if he slaps her, that the slap will affect her inner brain.'" – Charity, female, age 40

"Because when children see such things, they would want to practice it." – Akwaja, female, age 30

"Some children are rascals. After watching certain movies, they'll want to do what they've seen." – Ikpe, female, age 35

"Children can learn from movies, because they learn quite fast these days." – Tolulope, female, age 39

"They believe that what is showcased on TV screens is real. Many times they learn new trends and attitudes from TV." – Vivian, female, age 33

Adult participants praise Nollywood movies for bringing Nigerian families with busy lives together in an entertaining and relatively inexpensive way. Participants like the family closeness that comes from viewing media together and the moral lessons presented in Nigerian films. However, they are also concerned about children learning bad habits and behaviors (violence, sexuality) from Nigerian film and television. We analyze participants' ideas about family connectedness, the influence of moral stories, bad habits, and violence and sexuality below.

FINDING: Family Closeness
Adults say that movies play an important role in Nigerian family life by promoting family closeness.

"Movies are a medium through which families stay together; depending on the type of movie you are watching. It creates closeness and unity." – Wilson, male, age 37

"The reason why most people would watch movies at home is because of the time. Like me, my routine includes my work, my house, my church, my family. The time I have is restricted to my house and church." – Obi, male, age 35

FINDING: Moral Stories
Participants of all ages especially appreciate the moral lessons and life guidance they learn from Nigerian movies. Some participants say that movies teach them valuable practical lessons about education, health, and safety and they like learning about Nigerian culture as well.

"A good movie is if it teaches moral lessons." – Adelabu, male, age 18

"Nigerian movies teach us about the culture of Nigeria unlike other White countries where they don't even have a culture and have nothing to protect. The Nigerian movies teach us how to behave well in the society and also guide us through life." – Mubarak, male, age 10

"When you are watching a movie, it passes a message with the purpose of educating. It's like when you are trying to listen to news. Every movie has its own message." – Okenwa, male, age 37

"I learn from true life stories because it teaches us moral lessons." – Amaka, female, age 18

"Movies are supposed to be about educating people." – Michael, male, age 33

"We are talking about movies that pass along good messages." – Ifejuowo, male, age 30

"It teaches me about teenagers and what they do and the way we should behave."
– Ebere, female, age 20

"They taught me how I will relate with my own family, look after my children and train them up."
– Ebere, female, age 20

"I like interesting movies that teach us about life and the things that go on in life because at times the Nigerian movies we watch teach us about life." – Babalola, female, age 13

"It taught me about morals." – Deborah, female, age 11

When asked about specific moral lessons learned from movies, participants came up with a long list. Movies have taught them to avoid being jealous, selfish, and vengeful, not to steal, and to be less tribal focused. It has also taught participants to be faithful, honest, authentic, good to others, and to have aspirations.

"[The film] taught me not to be jealous in life about my friends or anyone around me."
– Dare, male, age 9

"[I learned that] it is not good to be selfish." – Damilola, male, age 10

"[A movie] taught me that it isn't good to steal because someone was stealing and it didn't end up well."
– Bolu, male, age 9

"Take for instance a child that steals. If that child should come across a movie that teaches or speaks against such, it could go a long way in altering that child's negative behavior."
– Tolulope, female, age 31

"I learned that it isn't good to take revenge" – Okikiola, male, age 11

"It inspires us not to be tribalistic." – Edith, female, age 36

"It's all about learning to be faithful and honest in everything that we do." – Tolulope, female, age 31

"What I can really say about it is that I should try not to fake personal things; I should be my real self." – Njoku, female, age 16

"It teaches us a lot about not being disobedient." – Timileyi, male, age 13

"It has made me understand that I can be whatever I want to be." – Everest, male, age 16

"It teaches us that we have to endure and always do good unto others." – Kikelomo, female, age 42

"[Movies] teach me to love and appreciate what I have." – Damilola, male, age 40

Some participants mention that movies teach them valuable practical lessons about education, health, and safety.

"It teaches us to go to school to be educated." – Vanessa, female, age 9

"It teaches about health; how many cups of water to drink, if you are having stomach pain."
– Temidayo, female, age 9

"Safety. It teaches us how to cross the road." – Amira, female, age 10

FINDING: Bad Habits

Participants across age groups say they are concerned that Nigerian movies also have negative influence on young people. In particular, they express concern that media teaches children to use bad language and smoke cigarettes. Participants in the children's focus groups (ages 9 – 11) mentioned this as often as participants in the adult focus groups.

"They don't teach us anything good. Like the use of bad languages." – Damilola, male, age 10

"Most movies use all these swear words like 'fuck you,' 'fuck it,' 'motherfucker,' etc. Those words are actually American slang but because we want to copy them we'll start using them not knowing that they are foul words." – Ebere, female, age 20

"The movie had a negative impact on my children. It took me time before I could convince my children to stop using such slang." – Joy, female, age 30

"Like some youth, when they watch movies that have scenes where the characters are smoking, some guys go and do it." – Taiwo, female, age 21

"Some children watch all those stupid films and some children go home to practice it, which is so bad." – Adeniyi, female, age 11

Mothers agree that the negative influences of Nigerian media have increased because of the recent rise in social media use that makes it more difficult for parents to monitor their children's media consumption.

"The internet. Our kids are now downloading and seeing what they are not supposed to see." – Olivia, female, age 36

"Corruption through social networking. Many of our young people have been introduced to bad behavior." – Temitope, female, age 33

FINDING: Violence and Sexuality

Participants across age groups are especially concerned about the impact of violent and sexualized content in Nigerian media. Some participants link violence and sexuality in Nigerian media to what they see as a larger societal moral decline.

"The movies that feature sex affect the girls, while the ones that show case violence and fraudulent acts affect the boys." – Joy, female, age 30

"If we are to be honest with ourselves, there is a moral decline in our society. And if we are to stem this tide, movies have a large role to play in what needs to be done. Our movies are impactful, and they can play an even greater role if improved upon." – Michael, male, age 33

"Children are moved by what they see, and if they are watching a movie where they are fighting, quarrelling and even kissing, the child might want to practice it in the absence of the parent." – Ezenwa, male, age 42

"I don't really allow my kids to watch home videos because some movies are rated 'above 18,' and such films usually contain explicit scenes such as kissing and such. Even when my young girl watches cartoon films and sees a scene of a boy and a girl kissing, she covers her face while describing such scene as portraying 'rubbish.'" – Vivian, female, age 33

"Concerning Nigerian movies, I don't really watch them; because they are all about kissing and sex." – Tolulope, female, age 31

"They are too explicit. They contain too much nudity." – Temitope, female, age 33

"For me, it is all these films in which guns are being used. Guns have created problems for adults." – Jesse, female, age 35

"Nigerian movies have a high level of violence." – Ayotunde, male, age 22

"To me, it's high because they way they mistreat people in some Nigerian films is too much. You'll see someone going blind, and they are beating the person, etc." – Eze, male, age 20

"In Nigerian movies these days, that is what they are portraying. Like in campus settings, you'll see them fighting, killing, and all the cultist stuff." – Olamilekan, male, age 20

"Many of our young kids tend to re-enactact out the violent scenes they see in our movies." – Passion, male, age 32

"Nigerian movies, compared to the English home videos, contain more violence. It's adversely impacting our society." – Obi, male, age 35

"To me, I think, the violence is what is causing this killing and fighting we have in this our society. The fighting of a thing started when this movies started coming out." – Bunmi, male, age 20

"People actually imitate what they see in movies, not everybody will have the mentality of fighting, but what they see is what they will do." – Victor, male, age 21

Children and teens say that their parents do not let them watch pornographic films, highly sexualized films, horror films, violent films, or films that show homosexuality.

Moderator: "Why do you feel they restrict you from watching those movies?

"They do so because they know it will corrupt our behavior." – Ayo, male, age 11

"It will damage our lives." – Okikiola, male, age 11

"It will destroy our lives." – Damilola, male, age 10

Moderator: Are there any kinds of movies you're not allowed to see?

"They go naked on the bed." – Olarunbo, female, age 15

"They masturbate." – Babalola, female, age 13

"They undress." – Iloyodu, female, age 14

Mothers confirm that they monitor their children's media consumption in order to avoid exposing their children to violence and sexuality. Mothers agree that religious films are a good alternative for their children.

"I select the type of film they watch and we watch them together. But I prefer Bible-based films." – Tolulope, female, age 39

"I allow them to watch cartoon movies on weekends. I don't allow them to watch any other type of movie [than religious]." – Charity, female, age 40

"My kids and I watch more of Bible story videos." – Funke, female, age 37

"[My kids watch] Bible stories and educational movies that teach them about mathematics and how to use a computer." – Charity, female, age 40
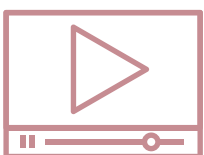
Societal Gender Roles: Media Inspires Progress

Focus group participants agree that Nigerian society is changing in terms of gender roles and expectations, and some attribute this to the influence of media. Girls and women are getting an education and are moving into the paid workforce at higher rates than ever before. Most participants prioritize girls' education, but some participants think it is less important than boys' education. Girls and women continue to perform most household chores, but they also report aspirations to be professionals. Participants had mixed reactions to the idea of fathers marrying their daughters to older men before they have a chance to complete their education. In this section of the report, we describe focus group responses to the themes of education, chores, occupational aspirations, and fathers marrying off their young daughters.

FINDING: Education
The vast majority of participants across gender and age stress the importance of education for Nigerian girls.

"They used to say the females will finish their education in the kitchen, but not now."
– Njoku, female, age 16

"To me, they both need education. Because girls also take care of the home so long as the money is there. And if the girl didn't get any formal education, there will be some kind of inferiority treatment from the man's side and the man might begin to treat the girl badly because she didn't get educated and has no money of her own." – Ayo, male, age 11

"Almost all the girls want to be educated today." – Favor, female, age 16

"You need education to obtain your destined career." – Moyin, female, age 16

"If the man dies, the husband's people might come and take away his property and suppose she doesn't have any career of her own which means she won't be able to take care of the family ones the man is dead." – Okikiola, male, age 11

"Education has a lot to do; because it is going to make her know her options as a female, career-wise, marriage-wise, socially, and economically. In other words, giving her self-esteem that cannot be abused. And also, giving her an insight into what the future holds and to help her set her values. Someone who is career- driven/oriented would not be forced to consider marriage at her own expense."
– Wilson, male, age 37

"Education is good. Nowadays, not every woman depends on her husband." – Babalola, female, age 13

"Education has made me bold. It has helped many of us to speak English fluently. It has helped me in my second job as an MC at events." – Kikelomo, female, age 42

"Women are now doctors, lawyers, etc." – Tolulope, female, age 31

"Though females don't get educated as much as the males, it is better than what it was like in the old days." – Bimbo, female, age 31

However, some participants in the boys' focus group think that education is more important for boys than girls.

"I think the boy needs Western education more than the girls because the boys are stronger and more active than the girls, and girls are fragile." – Ayo, male, age 11

"I feel it's the boys because they are the ones who make the money available for the woman. They are the head of the family." – Mubarak, male, age 10

Some participants report that traditional cultural beliefs still present barriers to education for some Nigerian girls.

"The major obstacle is their personal belief. If a lady sees herself as someone who needs/deserves education, she'll get it. I'm talking about personal aspirations. Another obstacle is family pressure – who to marry and all that." – Olarenwaju, male, age 41

"Cultural and religious factors also have to be considered. In the Northern parts of the country, it is believed that ladies cannot contribute to the economic welfare of the family. Once you are of a certain age, you given out for marriage. It is believed that their main responsibility is to give birth."
– Akinola, male, age 40

"She may come across several challenges like pregnancy. She would have to drop out of school in order to take care of the child she is carrying. But a boy wouldn't drop out. He would just receive a small punishment and continue with school." – Moronkeji, male, age 15

"Most fathers believe there are more advantages in training their male children." – Ikpe, female, age 35

FINDING: Chores

Participants report a large gender gap in chores at all ages. Girls, female teens, and women say they are performing most of the chores in the household, including cooking, taking care of male siblings, washing the family dishes, washing their clothes and the clothes of male siblings, fetching water, and cleaning the house. Boys and men confirm that girls and women do most of the work in the household.

"I wash the plates, I cook, I sweep, I dress the bed, I dust everywhere, and I play."
– Favor, female, age 9

"I wash clothes and plates. I dress the bed and make the house clean before my parents come back."
– Vanessa, female, age 9

"I wash the plates, I cook, and I arrange everywhere." – Adeniyi, female, age 11

FINDING: Occupational Aspirations

Participants across groups think of careers in gendered terms: that certain jobs are primarily for women and other jobs are primarily for men. When asked which jobs are for men, participants most frequently say bankers, doctors, accountants, police officers, and soldiers. When asked which jobs are for women, they commonly say teachers and nurses.

Moderator: "Who can be a nurse?"

"The person will be a woman." – Dare, male, age 9
"It will be a lady or a woman." – Basit, male, age 10
"It will be a girl." – Mubarak, male, age 10

Moderator: "Are there jobs that aren't for women?"

"The ladies are too fragile and won't suit some jobs." – Mubarak, male, age 10

"They will also be fragile in fields like construction and engineering." – Bolu, male, age 9

"Women can't work in construction companies because it will really not be good for you."
– Ayo, male, age 11

"Most jobs that are too tasking are not really good for the females because it will take them out of the family and won't give them time." – Israel, male, age 37

"I will advise her to be a nurse but not banking because most young bankers are wayward and are not married." – Ezenwa, male, age 42

Despite gendered ideas about who is fit for what job, girls' career aspirations are not constrained by traditional gender roles. More than half of girls (ages 9 – 11) want to be doctors, a trend they attribute to the influence of media.

"I watch those doctors on TV." – Deborah, female, age 11

"From TV." – Clever, female, age 10

"TV shows." –Temidayo, female, age 9

"Doctors on TV." – Favor, female, age 9

Like young Nigerian girls, half of the female teen participants also say they want to be doctors when they grow up. They also want to be nurses, accountants, and lawyers. In other words, despite traditional ideas about what jobs are fit for men and women, the career aspirations of young Nigerian females do not fit these preconceptions. They want to enter a variety of occupations that are seen as male domains.

Young boys aspire to be scientists, engineers, pilots, footballers, bankers, and doctors, while teen boys plan to be engineers, politicians, performing artists, and accountants. So while young Nigerian females express a desire to move into male-dominated fields, young Nigerian males still plan to go into male-dominated fields.

Male adult participants perceive Nigeria as becoming less gendered in terms of occupations and societal roles.

"It was before when we thought that ladies will end up in a man's kitchen, but now Nigerians are trying to wipe out that mentality." – Victor, male, age 21

"Now in the engineering field, we have females there. Now in the political world, the females are dominating it." – Olamilekan, male, age 20

"I don't think there is something the males would do that the females cannot do now."
– Eze, male, age 20

"Instead of a lady doing that thing you are doing, she will be the one supervising you."
– Lanre, male, age 23

"Let's talk about politics. Before now, you wouldn't see a woman going into politics. Now a woman has actually come out to declare herself for president. Women are Speakers of certain Houses of Assembly…Women can vie for any political position; and people can trust women now."
– Obi, male, age 35

"Even in offices, women are getting faster promotions than men." – Okenwa, male, age 37

Despite this progress, young women say media discourages them from moving into professional positions because of the way professional women are portrayed.

"Sometimes, from some movies, they'll show all the stress the woman goes through, after all the office work. They won't have time for their children or husband." – Georgina, female, age 21

"As for me, TV is where my idea comes from is that being a career woman affects your family." – Taiwo, female, age 21

"I watched this movie where the couple was not always at home, their kids hardly knew them. Then the housemaid started doing a lot of bad things." – Adeshwea, female, age 22

"I learned that if you are too attached to your job, you will not give your family the attention they need."
– Ifeanyi, female, age 16

FINDING: Forced Marriages

Participants were asked to respond to a movie clip from the film "*World of Agony*" in which a father pressures his daughter to marry a much older man in exchange for money. The mother in the scene stands up to the father on behalf of her daughter. Participants acknowledge that such marriages are a relatively common practice in parts of Nigeria.

Participants are divided within and across groups about whether the father's actions were justified. Participants report that forced marriages are a common practice in parts of Nigeria. Some participants support this practice if the family needs money, while other participants vocally condemn this practice.

"*The father is doing what he is doing because of poverty.*" – Chukwuemeka, male, age 18

"*The lady herself doesn't like the man. But the father has looked around him and seen that things are tight for them.*" – Friday, male, age 13

"*The father wants someone that can provide for the family.*" – Timileyi, male, age 13

"*And it's because the family is poor.*" – Favor, female, age 16

"*Maybe the father does not have the money to sponsor the girl's education.*" – Njoku, female, age 16

"*Wanting his daughter to marry a wealthy man, for me, this is good.*" – Olamilekan, male, age 20

"*To me, the father is more interested in who he believes can best take care of his daughter; considering the poverty situation they're currently going through.*" – Akinola, male, age 40

"*The man is poor. He needs something to lift himself up. I don't blame him.*" – Okenwa, male, age 37

"*The girl's parents are poor, that is why the father is coercing her to get married to an old man.*" – Edith, female, age 36

"*The man needs money, that's all.*" – Kolawole, male, age 31

"*He is only trying to tell the daughter to marry a man probably because of the condition of the family.*" – Damilola, male, age 40

Others disagree. They think that the father in the scene is not doing right by his daughter. They think the father is being greedy. They praise the mother for stepping in on the daughter's behalf.

"I love the firmness of the mother. She did the right thing. She stood by the daughter." – Kikelomo, female, age 42

"It is wickedness on the part of the father to tell his daughter to go and marry an old man like himself." – Bukola, female, age 37

"That man is greedy and wretched. He had already collected money." – Tolulope, female, age 31

"[The father is] not good." – Vanessa, female, age 9

"There is nothing good about the father." – Amira, female, age 10

"The film is trying to call it out that parents should not force their children to marry an elderly person, but they should marry whomever they want." – Ayotunde, male, age 22

"It's very bad for you to push your daughter to marry somebody she doesn't like." – Lanre, male, age 23

"To me, the man is being selfish. He's not actually considering the welfare of the daughter." – Kehinde, male, age 18

"They do not care about the girl's happiness." – Amaka, female, age 18

"The father is being selfish." – Olamide, female, age 20

"Parents should not force their daughter to marry who they do not want." – Ebere, female, age 20

"It isn't good for parent to impose people on their children." – Ezenwa, male, age 42

"The man is only putting into consideration the present situation, neglecting the future, while the wife is looking at the future and the girl's happiness." – Kazeem, male, age 39

"On the part of the mother, the man might look at her behavior as disobedience, but she is trying to make the right choice for daughter. But the father doesn't see it that way. He is selfish." – Funke, female, age 37

Women in Film: Scantily Clad and Second-Class

Participants across age groups say that women in Nigerian films are portrayed as scantily clad "prostitutes" or "harlots," and as second-class citizens compared to male movie characters.

"Sometimes like prostitutes." – Clever, female, age 10

"Sometimes they dress naked instead of dressing decent." – Temidayo, female, age 9

"They dress indecently. Some of them only wear pants and a bra. Sometimes they will just be naked, which is bad." – Vanessa, female, age 9

"They are portrayed as prostitutes." – Taiwo, age 14

"The general way they portray females is like harlots. Ladies that don't show their nakedness in broad daylight in movies are not going anywhere." – Lanre, male, age 23

"They don't portray them well. They make them look like harlots." – Victor, male, age 21

"In Nollywood, 88% of it you will see the ladies doing something that is not pleasant. You can see sexual things, seduction and so on. So those are the major characters that they give our ladies these days, which is not okay. The general way they portray our ladies in the Nigerian movies is bad." – Ayotunde, male, age 22

"I would expect portrayals of half-dressed ladies in the name of fashion." – Akinola, male, age 40

"Many women are given roles that require them to expose certain sensitive parts or areas of their bodies. Other women in movies dress or appear more decent." – Theresa, female, age 41

"If you are given a role to dress in skimpy clothes and you refuse, you definitely won't get that role anymore." – Olivia, female, age 36

"They expose their body, forgetting the fact that they can actually send their message without showing off their body." – Adeyemi, male, age 31

"Sometimes as prostitutes." – Emeka, male, age 32

"In some movies, some ladies wear bum shorts. In fact, they're almost naked."
– Bimbo, female, age 31

Some participants across gender and age groups notice that women are also commonly presented as inferior to men in Nigerian films.

> "Nigerian movies portray our women as inferior to men." – Wilson, male, age 37
>
> "I would describe the Nigerian female in Nigerian movies as inferior. They are not given due attention to actually discharge professionalism." – Daniel, male, age 32
>
> "I agree with him; they are portrayed as being inferior." – Olarenwaju, male, age 41
>
> "Most times [women have a] very bad stigma in movies." – Ezenwa, male, age 42

Some participants also say that while movies mostly show women in sexualized and supporting roles, Nollywood has the potential to challenge more traditional gender roles and empower women as well as inspire men to respect women.

> "What I enjoyed about the movie is that we young ladies should not be in a hurry to get married."
> – Bukola, female, age 37
>
> "The movie I watched called 'Unforgiveable' where a man turned the wife into a punching bag and didn't show her love and attention. Later, the woman died, and he was filled with regret, but it was already too late. It really taught me to pay attention to my wife and never treat her wrong."
> – Kolawole, male, age 31
>
> "It can make [women] stand up for their rights." – Georgina, female, age 21
>
> "When they started showing women's empowerment movies, you see women in the society now coming up and taking up big roles." – Adeshwea, female, age 22
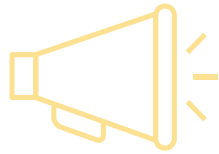
DIRECTOR

CAMERA

DATE   SCENE   TAKE

Girls and female teens say they try to imitate the women they see in Nigerian movies. They especially like female actors who are intelligent, stylish, and carry themselves well.

"Sometimes I just stand in front of my mirror, looking at myself and talking to myself."
– Ifeanyi, female, age 16

"It's not all about her shape but the way she speaks, the way she acts. She's so intelligent."
– Iloyodu, female, age 14

"I love the way she talks at times, and sometimes I practice it too. She talks silently but what she says is always meaningful." – Njoku, female, age 16

"I like the way she speaks, the way she dresses, and the way she carries herself."
– Moyin, female, age 16

"She looks and acts smart." – Lasiu, female, age 13

"I want to imitate her roles in movies, she can act different roles and she doesn't expose her bodies in movie like other actresses." – Favor, female, age 16

Domestic Violence: Media is an Intervention

Many participants think that domestic violence should be shown in Nigerian entertainment media to raise aware of this pressing issue. Adult participants were shown a clip from "Sinking Sands" that depicts a husband physically abusing his wife. In the scene, an older woman counsels the wife to leave the marriage before she is seriously harmed or killed. Participants of all ages think that domestic violence is a common issue in many Nigerian marriages and most adult participants condemn this behavior.

"It happens very often." – Abubakar, male, age 18

"Like 50% or 45% occurring in marriages these days." – Bunmi, male, age 20

"Domestic violence is what is going on everywhere now, and that is one of the causes of broken homes in the society today." – Olamide, female, age 20

"Wife beating is what is happening in Nigeria, especially in this Lagos." – Moronke, female, age 32

Participants disagreed with the appropriate way to respond to domestic violence. Most participants condemn the domestic violence depicted in the clip and agree that it is important for Nigerian media to show this problem in order to discourage it.

"This type of movie is for adults. There are so many men out there who beat women. If they watch such movies, it might change them." – Bukola, female, age 37

"From my own perspective, most people who watch such movies and fit into that character, it might cause a change in them. When they see how the characters in such movies end up, they will have a rethink." – Edith, female, age 36

"Pertaining to domestic violence, women are always scared to come out. But I've seen any movie that teaches women that you should come out, talk, and speak for yourself before the man kills you." – Tolulope, female, age 31

"It has great impact. A man beats his wife constantly will pay the price for such actions if she dies." – Bukola, female, age 37

"To me watching that is sending a message that beating my wife is bad or making her sad." – Eze, male, age 20

"To me it has a positive effect because I can't stand it when a man is beating his wife. This gives me more of a reason to love her. For every married man to watch this, even if he is doing that, he will be sober." – Orosholu, male, age 20

"Show it, yes, to educate them through the heart." – Chioma, female, age 23

"Educate those that do it because they don't think it's bad." – Olamide, female, age 20

"It educates the women because if they do not show it in movies, some women will feel like it's a normal thing. Their children will grow up seeing their father beating their mom, and they will grow up with the mindset that it is right for their husbands to beat them. It will continue from generation to generation, but with the movies now, it creates awareness that it's not right." – Adeshwea, female, age 22

Some of the older men and women (ages 30 – 44) were less critical of the domestic violence shown in the clip of "Sinking Sands." They thought that the wife should stay with her abusive husband for religious reasons.

"From the Christian point of view, if that elderly woman was a Godly person she wouldn't have given that young lady the kind of advice she did. She would have encouraged her to start praying for the husband."
– Daniel, male, age 32

"I believed it's not good to desert a spouse you started well with from the outset, because he has suddenly changed to become a drunk, mad, or bad person. All that is required is for you to stay prayerful and hope on God." – Theresa, female, age 41

PARTICIPANT RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants had many ideas about what they want to see less of and more of in Nigerian movies. They want to see more social issues covered in Nigerian films, more uplifting content, less violent and sexual content, and more movies for kids. We address each of these recommendations below.

More Social Issues

First, participants agree that social issues are important to show, and they offered many ideas for topics they would like to see more of in Nollywood. In addition to more coverage of domestic violence, they want to see more films that address government corruption and politics more generally, terrorism, and public health issues.

Politics/Political Issues

"We don't have movies based on politics." – Passion, male, age 32

"Personally, I would love it if our movies could promote a reorientation of the average Nigerian man towards governance and politics. I've observed that most people have a wrong orientation of what your duties are as a citizen." – Michael, male, age 33

"Most films these days only talk about our personal lives and not about the development of our nation." – Bunmi, male, age 20

"Yes, we would like to have something of such because, like he said, the movies we watch nowadays are just individual or family issues. Probably if we have movies about what is generally affecting the country at large, definitely the president and ministers do relax at home. They watch all these movies so probably they'll have a change of mind through those movies." – Abubakar, male, age 18

"Movies about corruption, like those governors that embezzle our money." – Diamond, female, age 18

Terrorism

"Most movies that are being produced in Nigeria leave out the major points like our major issued in Nigeria are terrorism." – Ebere, female, age 20

"They can bring out a movie where they talk about terrorism and how to stop it because I think the government can actually pick some things from the movie. Movies can also empower women and help in the society on how we can conquer Boko Haram." – Adeshwea, female, age 22

"It's a very great idea because, in Nigerian movies these days, I've not seen anyone come up and trying to act boldly on things that are happening in Nigeria in terms of terrorism and so on." – Victor, male, age 21

"About all this terrorist stuff, they should increase it [in movies]." – Diamond, female, age 18

Public Health Issues

"We don't have movies that dwell on matters such as female genital cutting, HIV/AIDS." – Olaitan, male, age 36

More Inspiring Films

A second theme that emerged across focus groups is the desire to see more inspirational story lines in Nigerian film. Participants of all ages say that rather than watching films that reflect Western commercial values or criminal behavior, they want to watch educational stories that show self-improvement and inspire viewers to overcome hardships.

"More of inspirational films like life changing films, I think it will help the country like when you are changing yourself, somehow in some way, you can change the society." – Odeh, male, age 21

"For me if the film is educative and if at the end of watching one could learn something meaningful from it, because to me the dress code of the person acting isn't important." – Adeyemi, male, age 31

"Inspirational movies that concern you and your country not just personally." – Orosholu, male, age 20

"They should be encouraging." – Lasiu, female, age 13

"Films that are supportive." – Ifeanyi, female, age 16

"A storyline that a guy is from a background that is not really well to do, then he struggles to get to the top, and people are trying to stop him but at last, at the end of the movie he gets there. Things like that help to encourage people." – Orosholu, male, age 20

Less Violence and Sex

As noted above, participants also want to see less violent and sexual content in Nigerian films.

"If it isn't sexually explicit, when there is no use of foul languages, when the dressing portrays decency, and if it doesn't have violence." – Damilola, male, age 40

"They should reduce the sex in it." – Amaka, female, age 18

"Movies that portray a mother, father, and children in happy scenarios without showing nudity in dress and sexual immorality." – Akwaja, female, age 30

More Content for Kids

Participants across age groups are unanimous in their call for more Nigerian films for and about kids. They say that such movies are virtually non-existent because most films are aimed at an adult audience with content that is inappropriate for children.

"Please can you bring cartoons to Nigeria for us, because anytime they are showing a bad film [our parents] will send us away." – Favor, female, age 9

"Movie producers should produce more of movies that impact positively on children." – Ikpe, female, age 35

"I've noticed that our home videos are more of adult films than children films (18+)." – Nkechi, female, age 41

"They should do more of children movies." – Tolulope, female, age 39

"They should make movies for younger ones just like the foreigners with the likes of 'Home Alone,' 'Baby's Day Out,' 'Daddy's Day Care,' etc." – Eze, male, age 20

"I can't mention children movies that have been made." – Bunmi, male, age 20

"It's important because my cousins would rather watch cartoons and stuff, but we have to be represented here in Nigeria. So the kids are not represented at all." – Abubakar, male, age 18

"There are some [foreign] channels that are only meant for children in America, so Nigeria should produce a channel that is meant for children not only cartoons but movies too." – Taiwo, female, age 21

"They should make movies for kids." – Olamide, female, age 20

"Children are not well represented in Nigerian movies." – Akinola, male, age 40

"The movies we have in Nigerian are mainly for adults." – Michael, male, age 33

CONCLUSION

This study investigated what Nigerian people of different backgrounds think of gender representations in entertainment media and whether they believe these representations affect worldviews, aspirations, and behaviors. Focus group discussions converged around six primary themes. This conclusion summarizes the major findings for each theme.

Media Preferences: Foreign Films over Nigerian Films

Nigerians across focus groups say they prefer foreign films to Nigerian films due to less professional film quality and predictable plotlines. They prefer high-budget foreign films that offer suspense. With that said, many participants also report that the production and acting quality of Nigerian films has improved significantly in recent years. Participants also stress that they enjoy watching Nollywood films because they reflect Nigerian culture and are relevant to their lives.

Media Influence: Good Morals, Bad Habits

Adult participants praise Nollywood movies for bringing Nigerian families with busy lives together in an entertaining and relatively inexpensive way. They believe that Nigerian media has a great deal of influence in the lives of children, and parents are especially likely to think this. They see the influence as both positive and negative.

On the positive side, Nigerian films typically teach a moral lesson that viewers appreciate. When asked about what lessons movies teach, participants say they have learned to be less jealous, selfish, and vengeful, not to steal, and to be less tribalistic. Participants have also learned to be more faithful, honest, and authentic, to treat others well, and to have aspirations from Nigerian movies. Some participants say that movies teach them valuable practical lessons about education, health, and safety.

On the negative side, adult participants express concern about children learning bad habits and behaviors from Nollywood movies. Participants express concern that Nigerian movies teach children to use bad language and smoke cigarettes. Participants in the children's focus groups (ages 9 – 11) mentioned this negative influence as often as participants in the adult focus groups. Mothers agree that the bad influence of Nigerian media is increasing because new social media makes it more difficult for parents to monitor their children's media consumption.

Focus group participants across age groups are especially concerned about the impact of violent and sexualized content on children. Some participants link the violence and sexuality in Nigerian movies to a larger societal moral decline. Parents say they restrict their children from watching pornographic films, highly sexualized films, horror films, violent films, and films that depict homosexuality. Mothers say that religious films are a good alternative for their children.

Societal Gender Roles: Media Inspires Progress

Focus group participants agree that Nigerian society is changing in terms of gender roles and expectations. Most focus group participants think it is important for girls to receive an education, but some participants disagree. Some participants note that cultural beliefs still pose barriers to some Nigerian girls getting an education, including the idea that girls should get married young because their main responsibility is to give birth.

Nigerians of both sexes say that their society is becoming less gendered in terms of occupations and societal roles. Despite this progress, young women say they are discouraged from moving into professional positions because of the way it is portrayed in entertainment media. Also, most participants think there are "women's jobs" and "men's jobs." Despite gendered ideas about who is fit for what jobs, most girls and female teens say they want to be doctors when they grow up. They attribute this career aspiration to doctors they see in foreign films and television.

Participants report a large gender gap in chores at all ages. Girls, female teens, and women are performing most of the chores in the household, including cooking, taking care of male siblings, washing the family dishes, washing the clothes of male siblings, fetching water, and cleaning the house.

Women in Film: Scantily Clad and Second-Class

Participants across age groups say that women in Nigerian films are portrayed as scantily clad prostitutes and as second-class citizens compared to male movie characters. Some participants also say that while movies mostly show women in sexualized and domestic roles, Nollywood has the potential to challenge more traditional gender roles, empower women, and teach men to treat women well.

Girls and female teens say they try to imitate the women they see in Nigerian movies. They especially like female actors who are intelligent, stylish, and carry themselves well.

Participants were asked to respond to a movie clip from the film "World of Agony" in which a father pressures his daughter to marry a much older man in exchange for money. Participants acknowledge that this is a common practice in parts of Nigeria, but were divided on whether the father was justified in his actions. Some participants think the father's actions were justified because he is poor and needed the money, while others labeled him as "greedy" and uncaring for forcing his daughter's hand in marriage.

Domestic Violence: Media is an Intervention

Adult participants were shown a clip from "Sinking Sands" that depicts a husband physically abusing his wife. Participants say this is a somewhat common problem in Nigerian marriages and most adult participants condemn it. Some of the older adult men and women (ages 30 – 44) were less critical of the domestic violence shown in the clip of "Sinking Sands." They thought that the wife should stay with her abusive husband for religious reasons.

INTERVENTIONS

Recommendations for interventions are provided by:

Dr. Maureen Eke, Nigerian Film Critic

Dr. Luther-King, Wellbeing Foundation

Provide education and information about gender discrimination. Some of this exists already, but we need more and this education must include everyone – women, men, girls, boys, and parents. The curriculum needs to change to address this.

The media should promote gender equity by challenging gender stereotypes. If the media is perpetuating some of these stereotypes, then it too should be held accountable and must help to dismantle them. Some of these films can carry information about gender equity, but the danger of doing this is a revolt from filmmakers or viewers who may not want such intervention messages in their films. I would rather have these messages than not.

We all need to speak out against violence against women. This addresses the section where some of the men and boys think that an abused woman (wife) should remain in the relationship, because it is her responsibility as a woman or wife. I have conversations with my young female relatives about this. We have to find ways to assure young women that not being married or not having children at a certain age is not the end of the world. I also have been having this conversation with the young female students and women (including several African young women) that I mentor here—tough talk, but, necessary.

Government policies about gender equity has to change or improve. Nigeria is doing something, but we need more. The problem is with the rural communities. So, a combination of changes in the national policies, education, and grassroots activism will help. Again, the media can do lot to help in this area.

Interventions from Bisi Amagada, former Editor, Sunday Observer (a National Nigerian Weekly), and Was Columnist, Femininescope, her own creation in the same newspaper. She's now Principal Partner at Bisi Amagada & Associates (a media consultancy outfit), and Executive Director/CEO of the Media and Gender Empowerment Initiative (MEGEI), an NGO. She's also Publisher/Editor-in-Chief of her NGO's magazine, MEGEI NEWS. An awardee of Fellow Nigeria Guild Of Editors (FNGE), she lives and works in Nigeria.

While giving a 'pass mark' to Nollywood producers and the team that has contributed to its success story so far, a critical look and deep analysis of the level attained in global ratings still leaves much to be desired in many vital areas. Coming third behind Hollywood and Bollywood in terms of revenue, and second to Bollywood in terms of numbers of films produced annually (discussed in the early part of this Report), should not be the highest limit for a body that is easily rated as the first and leading entertainment media industry in Black Africa.

Nigeria is known as the Giant of Africa. If by divine providence her citizens are also 'crowned' with the first position in Africa's entertainment industry as 'earned' by Nollywood, then, at the very least, a lot of efforts should be put into remaining number one in the sphere of entertainment media for the greater part of this century.

There's great concern about this, because other African countries too are working hard to equal and beat the present record of Nollywood and, if care is not taken, it will only be a question of time before it happens.

The Super Eagles of Nigeria, the most senior football team, topping the Flying Eagles and Golden Eaglets in that order, was the toast of lovers of soccer/football in Africa and globally. Please don't ask me what the latest FIFA ranking of the once-dreaded "King of African Soccer fields" was at the last rating.

These days, I concentrate more on the power-play at FIFA headquarters where Sepp Blatter, the erstwhile FIFA boss is now waiting with bated breath to know his fate as the elections for his successor and the charges he's facing are decided.

To avoid decline in productivity, output revenue generation, and global rating and importance, I have suggested a few tips I believe can keep Nollywood firmly in the present position or even be 'shot' to higher heights!

The areas to concentrate and work on to achieve maximum results are:
1. Quality of production
2. Content of materials in terms of personnel, effects, etc.
3. Equipment
4. Government support
5. Stakeholders funding (i.e. financial backing)
6. Economic rejuvenation through well laid-out marketing strategy, policy, etc.
7. Loyalty and commitment to professional bodies like Actors Guild of Nigeria and others.

The above and more can be achieved by following these suggested steps:
- More schools and facilities for editing and post-production skills can be established to expand and improve opportunities for development and expansion.

- Deliberate efforts should be made to improve some very poor and wrong subtitling of conversation in Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa (the three major Nigeria languages) movies to English. The essence of translation is to facilitate communication with people who do not share the primary language of communication with the communicator.

- Secondly, sub-titles must be explicit enough to give the viewers a clear understanding of the movies they are watching, both for the educational and entertainment value. This is the only way to give satisfaction to the audience and get them coming back again for more.

- Nollywood must begin to engage in different storylines, plot-lines, and themes that appeal to the appetite of the majority of their viewers. Contemporary social and political issues promoting moral lessons, family-values, and "soul-searching" ingredients will arrest the attention of majority of Nigerian parents and, consequently, the children.

- Attempt at featuring only commercially-motivated plots and storylines monotonously, without promoting and interjecting ideas that enable most viewers take away some positive lessons that will motivate them to sustain traditional values, may not give expected "rich harvest of cash" when the chips are down.

- Capacity building /training of actors and actresses will give opportunities for innovations and creativity. This will enhance standards of performance and is a sure recipe for quality and progress for Nollywood personnel and products.

- Networking or the exchange of professionals from more experienced entertainment industries abroad to mentor local artists, and sending fresh starters to be engaged as interns in universities that offer theatre arts courses or degrees, will go a long way in breeding professionalism in Nollywood entertainment media.

- Government support and cooperation is an action Nollywood must vigorously pursue in a country like Nigeria with a growing entertainment industry. There are many reasons for this. For instance, it is only with government backing and support that piracy, one of the greatest challenges threatening the credibility of Nollywood films and videos, can be effectively checked and controlled. It is only government law-enforcement agencies that can effectively and legally impose stiff penalties on pirates caught and allowed to prosecute for piracy without fear or favor.

- Government intervention funding (like the three billion naira initiated by former president Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan) should be sustained to assist Nollywood in order to develop and improve its own movie production village.

- The government can establish film institutes, pump in more research funds, and encourage a good working relationship between Nollywood and National Censors Board for protection and safety whenever the crews are out shooting at different locations. They stand to gain much more from this government agency.

- Nollywood producers should have a media plan for promoting and marketing their movies. Effective pre-viewing and promo of "ready for release" movies for public viewing should be a must strategy for Nollywood. This includes advertising through billboards, printing of posters, handbills, and flyers to be pasted on busy streets and distributed to commuters in city buses, train stations (where available), markets, shopping centers, and city malls.

- Reviews in newspapers and magazines: responsible critique and analysis by entertainment columnists of newspapers. Radio and television, spam Facebook, and other free-to-use social network websites will "whet" the appetite of movie/cinema lovers; this will guarantee excellent sales on release of the product to the public, especially if the quality and content of the products on the screen match the advertisements heralding the coming of the movies.

- This will further increase the GDP and will be a good payback measure to a supportive government funding efforts.
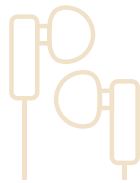
- Stakeholders? They are all over the place these days. With the incoming of the new government (since 29th May, 2015), a silent but swift "war" is on-going in the financial world of many who have comfortable bank accounts in Nigeria and could previously bring in foreign currency of any amount from their overseas businesses to the country.

- Somehow, things are no longer quite the same and a lot of already "imported foreign money" may not easily be kept in individual banks just like that these days. The government is insisting on some tight measures, which may not be convenient or easy to accept by people who never had problems banking their money, be it millions or billions in these years past.

- The Central Bank of Nigeria now has new financial guidelines. The rich ones who are interested in Nollywood movies/films and have plenty of money abroad (or in the country as well) can help the industry by investing in modern and sophisticated equipment to push and elevate Nollywood productions to the next level. Good business discussion and signing binding agreements mutually acceptable to both parties can do the magic!

- For good measure, professional discipline, and patriotism, a good Nollywood actor/actress must belong to Actors Guild of Nigeria or any of the other entertainment media professional bodies.

APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR GUIDE
GLOBAL GENDER IN MEDIA IMPACT STUDY
Discussion Guide

WARM UP	10 MINS

EXPLAIN THE PROCESS:
Moderator introduction. Explain two-way mirror, recording, etc. There are no right or wrong answers.
We want your honest opinions. Very important to be open/honest with your feelings.

FOR PARENTS GROUPS ONLY:
What are the ages and genders of your children? (Each parent should consider their child(ren)
when answering questions, with the focus being on their daughters.)

RESPONDENT WARMUP:
I'd like to find out everyone's name, age and what are some of the things you like to do for fun (movies,
television, games, books, live shows, etc.)!

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR/MOVIES   40 MINS

Rotate order of questions across the different groups

What do you feel is expected of you in different roles in your life? (As a student, in your family, in your community, religion, etc.) Are expectations different depending on the role?

SAMPLE OF QUESTIONS TO PROBE:

Do you have chores? What types of chores do you do?

Do you read books? What types of books do you read?

What are some of the characters like in those books?

How important is education? Is it important for everyone to receive an education?

If not, who is education not important for?

What occupation would you ideally like to have?

(CHILDREN: What do you want to be/do when you grow up?)

Do you feel there are any obstacles to having that career/job? What are they?

Are only certain people suited for certain jobs?
For example, when you think of a nurse, who do you picture? What does that person look like?
How about for a police officer? For a teacher?

Where do you get the idea of what a nurse, police officer, teacher looks like
– experience, books, movies, T.V. shows?

FOR PARENTS, GENERAL ONLY:

Do you feel there are any obstacles to goals or dreams that you want to achieve?
If so, what are those obstacles and are they able to be overcome?

PROBE

Thinking over the course of your lifetime, how have gender roles changed?

How have they remained the same?

Has the fact that you are a [man/boy, woman/girl] impacted your life positively and/or negatively?

In what ways?

MOVIE SCENES   40 MINS

Moderator NOTE:
These scenes are meant to open up a discussion about gender roles. The focus of this section is to get the respondents to discuss their feelings about the characters behavior and if/how the situation the characters are in relates to their own lives.

I'd now like to show you a scene from a movie. It doesn't matter if you've seen the movie before or not. Make sure you watch carefully because we'll be talking about what you thought afterwards.

Scene #1- MALE/FEMALE INTERACTION SCENE
How do you feel about the characters in the scene?

PROBE
What specifically did you like/not like about the interaction the characters had?

Do you relate to any of the characters?

What do you think about their appearances?

Do you think that any of the characters should have responded differently in the situation?

Why?

I'd now like to show you another scene from a movie. Again, it doesn't matter if you've seen the movie before or not. Make sure you watch carefully because we'll be talking about what you thought afterwards.

Scene #2- DOMESTIC RELATIONS SCENE
What are your thoughts/feelings about this scene?

Describe the relationship between the characters.

PROBE
Are the characters/relationships believable?

Do you relate to any of the characters?

How do you feel about the situation they are in?

Did you find anything in either of the scenes you just saw disturbing?

Did anything in either scene make you uncomfortable?

What do you think about each character's behavior in these scenes?

MOVIE SCENES CONTINUED   40 MINS

PROBE FOR EACH CHARACTER:

Is it clear why they are responding in the way in which they are?

Are their reactions appropriate given the situation they are in?

In what ways are they appropriate/not appropriate?

What would be a more appropriate response?

IMPACT OF MEDIA   30 MINS

For General and Parents ONLY

What is the role, if any, of local media – specifically movies and television – shaping attitudes and ideas about gender roles within your society?

What should their role be?

What is the impact of locally-made entertainment?

Is it generally positive/negative?

How does locally-made entertainment (movies and television) impact men and women in society?

Is it different based on whether they are a man or a woman? If so, in what ways?

In what ways, if any, do you think that locally-made entertainment has an impact on children?

On their ideals of the world? Is it typically a positive or negative impact?

In what ways?

Now we want to talk about local media's impact on health issues.
Are there any movies or television shows you've seen that discussed a health issue that you found particularly interesting or informative?

What are your general thoughts about these types of issues being included in movies or television shows?

Have you ever sought out more information for a health issue based on something you saw in a movie or television show?

Have you ever shared information you saw in a movie or television show on a health related topic with others?

Have you viewed a movie or show specifically because it dealt with a health issue that was important to you?

WRAP UP   5 MINS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

APPENDIX B: GENDER INEQUALITY IN NIGERIA

In 1999, Nigeria amended its Constitution to prohibit discrimination based upon sex and, in 2008, officials implemented the National Gender Policy. The Nigerian government has pledged to end discriminatory practices that are harmful to girls and women, but customs and religious laws continue to restrict women's economic, political, and social rights in the country. Nigeria has three sets of laws – civil, customary, and religious – so when civil laws against gender discrimination come into conflict with customary and religious laws, these disputes work their way through the courts. Additionally, certain states in northern Nigeria follow Islamic (Sharia) law that explicitly limits women's freedom of marriage, inheritance, and movement. For these reasons, Nigeria faces major hurdles to achieving gender equality.

When it comes to education and employment, Nigerian girls and women participate in these spheres at much lower rates than boys and men. Boys are significantly more likely to be enrolled in grade school than girls (69% compared to 58%). Nigerian men are significantly more likely than Nigerian women to be employed in the labor force (64% compared to 49%), women are paid less for the same labor. Nigeria women make 76 cents for every dollar a Nigerian man makes, and the pay gap has grown larger since 1985. The county has seen a slight increase in the number of women moving into the labor force in the past five years, but few women have moved into management positions (19%).

Nigerian women remain vastly underrepresented in positions of political power. Only 7% of seats in the Federal House of Representatives are held by women and only 4% of local leaders are women. Women hold one-in-three ministerial positions, but the country has never had a female president. In recent years, national and international organizations have hosted forums and conducted research in an effort to increase the number of women in Nigerian politics. The National Democratic Institute concludes that women are dissuaded from running for office due to the highly competitive nature of Nigerian elections (that sometimes involve violence) and deep-seated prejudice against female political candidates.

Nigerian women face considerable inequalities in everyday life. The country has a high maternal mortality rate due to limited access to decent medical care, especially in rural areas. Nigerian women also face high rates of domestic violence due to longstanding cultural acceptance of this behavior. Nearly 81% of Nigerian women say they have experienced verbal or physical abuse from their partners. On a positive note, public support for domestic violence is declining and 65% of Nigerian men now say they oppose violence against women.

Nigerian women also experience high rates of sexual violence. In 2014, Nigeria made international headlines when the Islamic Jihadist group Boko Haram kidnapped over 200 girls from a school in the town of Chibok, many of whom were used as sexual slaves. This extreme case raised public awareness of the larger issue of gender inequality and sexual violence against girls and women in Nigeria. Marital rape is still legal in the country and nearly 80% of Nigerian girls and women say they experience sexual assault or rape during their lifetime. In 2013, the country passed the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Bill, the first national law aimed at reducing gender-based violence. More specifically, this law includes an expanded definition of rape, harsher sentences for sexual assault and rape, more institutional support to prevent further violence (e.g., restraining orders), and support and compensation for survivors of sexual violence. This law has yet to see strong enforcement given that it is competing with religious and traditional practices that also have legal standing.

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