HOME VIDEO AS NIGERIAN IMAGE MAKER

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Abstract

The home video is a medium of communication which many individuals, people and organizations can utilize for different purposes, advantages (and disadvantages). It has been recognized as a popular culture which not only mirrorizes and tells stories of the societies which it subsists; the films depict the lifestyles, attitudes, environments and activities within and around them. The films are produced by the people of the milieu who can put forth actual representations and portrayals with defined objectives without bias, exaggerations, misrepresentation and/or underrepresentation. With the view that the Nigerian film industry has grown to become an important phenomenon which has attracted diverse kinds of people and interests as a result of the home video phenomenon, it is expected that the home video can serve as a possible loud speaker for the purpose of projecting the Nigerian image in positive lights just as the advertisers and marketers would. For the purpose of this study, fifty (50) video films televised by television stations in Lagos and Africa Magic (a cable network station) were watched and content analyzed. The study was underpinned within the frameworks of agenda-setting and cultivation theories. The findings of the study reveal that the video makers have undoubtedly done a great deal to portray the traditional settings, cultures and lifestyles, flamboyance and religious persuasions of the Nigerian people. Very little has been done to project the nation's natural environments, agricultural and mineral resources as well as monumental and historical centers; the nation's symbols like flags, coat of arms and currencies amongst others are also rarely projected. Negative attitudes like witchcraft, occultism/cultism, ritualism, violence, thuggery and hooliganism, corruption and get-rich-quick tendencies amongst others seem to be overrepresented and exaggerated in the films and could be contributing to the increasing embarrassing actions and attitudes meted to Nigerians (especially honest and decent travelers) outside its shore. This is why the home

video makers need to effectively play the role of the nation's image maker to rebrand and project the nation and its people in better light yet truthfully, pragmatically and affirmatively.

Keywords: Home Video, Image maker, Portrayal, Representation

Introduction

Popular opinion, based on UNESCO report (2009), holds that the Nigerian film industry, popularly called Nollywood, which is dominated by home videos is currently rated second in production of films after Bollywood (India) and over Hollywood (America). Whether this claim is true or not, the truth is that Nigerian films (home videos) are widely watched. It is largely a direct –to- video industry because they are few producers who work in celluloid. The industry has grown from obscurity to become an important phenomenon which has attracted not only world acclamation but has brought scholars, reporters, reviewers, journalists, investors and different kinds of people to the country. Some of the people come to investigate, invest, and observe the industry or network with its people. (Adenugba, 2007)

According to Ekwuazi (1991), the film is a cultural index; a cultural reflector, a socializing agent and therefore the instrument of cultural dynamics. He further explains that the film constitutes an industry whose production is directly ideological. What this means is that the film, in this case, - home video projects what it seeks to communicate to its audience, what it seeks to sell, what it wants its audience to understand and what it wants its audience to imbibe.This is why it is pertinent to review the home video as an image maker for Nigeria. Adenugba further opines that as "film is a popular culture and as expected, it must mirrorize, recreate and tell stories of the societies in which it subsists. The Nigerian film industry is no exception." It has been able to project Nigeria extensively to the world; which as a matter of fact is the reason why the Nigerian motion picture industry is a beehive of activities for research, investments, visits and so on."

The Problem

Adenugba posits that the producers of films all over the world use what is in vogue to develop their plots (in terms of messages and themes), in dressing, language and lifestyle amongst others. As we consider their roles as image makers in the country, a casual review prompts us to ask if the viewing audience who would never have been to Nigeria would be able to distinguish an individual actor's personality, manner of dressing, language and lifestyle as a citizen of the country from the national identity and culture. Further issues these would raise could be – if the actors and actresses, either on set or off set, are truly representations of the Nigerian personality, and to what extent? There were occasions when

certain film actors/actresses have been attacked and/or molested in the public simply because of the roles that they had played in some home videos. It is true that certain characters in the home videos have gained the sympathy of the viewers while others have been seen as villains and have escaped being lynched by the public when offset. This implies that the viewers do not always separate the actors' personalities of the real persons. If this is the reaction of the audience to the actors, how would the viewers, especially foreigners and nationals react to Nigeria and its people in view of the portrayals and representations they see in the home videos? Further questions this brings to bear are – how does the home video serve as the nation's image maker? How effective have the home video makers served to project the Nigerian image, especially to the foreigners and nationals who have never been in the country? Fairlex Free (Online) Dictionary defines image maker as "one who uses the techniques of advertising or public relations to create a favorable view of a person or institution". The image of the nation can effectively be seen through the culture, representation and identity of the nation; then, what cultures, representation and identity of the nation are being advertised, marketed and sold through the home videos and to what extent?

Mcquail (2005) posits that society and culture are inseparable; one cannot exist without the other. Media and what they produce can be considered as part of the culture. The media which is the domain of society refers to the material base (economic and political resource and power) to social relationships (in national societies, communities, families, etc.) to social roles and occupations; they are socially regulated (formally and informally). The domain of culture refers primarily to other essential aspects of social life, especially to symbolic expression, meanings and practices (social customs, institutional ways of doing things and also personal habits). Akangbe (2008) opines that culture is a summation of an individual and collective life of a society which comprises its idea, behavior, social, religious and political particularities, sentiment and expression. He further identifies the obvious indices of culture as religion, language, philosophy, polity, technology, architecture, engineering, customs, dance, drama, and dressing, amongst others. All these can be identified in all the home videos. On his part, Gauntlett (2002) explains that "identities are complex constructions; apart from gender being one part of an individual's identity of self, ethnicity is another important aspect of identity which could be felt more central to self-identity of each individual and might be made significant by extreme social circumstance (such as community); other aspects of identity include class, age, disability and socially." According to him, factors that could contribute to a sense of identity include education, urban or rural

residency, and cultural background, access to transportation and communication, criminal record, prosecution or refugee status. Katherine Hamley (undated) posits that identity is something that is constructed over a period of time and can constantly be updated or changed completely. The home video therefore has been one of the popular media towards identity (image) construction and deconstruction and status conferral. Many people (youths and adults alike) have learnt a lot (lifestyle, dressing, language, etc.) from the home videos. The home video truly serves to mould lives indirectly; it is the mirror of our society.

In view of the above, the world has undoubtedly come to know and appreciate the cultures, identity and image of Nigeria through the characters (dressing, lifestyle, language, etc), settings (environment and sceneries), storylines and themes as well as their prominence. Does Nigeria as portrayed in the home videos appeal to the viewers outside the country to the extent that they would want to visit the country either as adventure, sight-seeing or to establish business relationships or would the viewers feel the country is not promising enough? The answer to this question is seen in the image construction and deconstruction of the nation and its people through the home videos.

The Obasanjo administration, having understood that the image of a nation to a large extent determines its destiny embarked on programs towards its rebranding. Thus, the then Minister of Information and Communications, Professor Dora Akunyuli who spearheaded the project of Nigeria: Good People, Good Nation, apart from her interactions with other sectors of the economy, had reached out to film makers to as much as possible reflect Nigeria in positive lights in the movies. This is in view of the fact that the story of any country can best be told by the citizens of that country; movies like District 9 – a sci –fi blockbuster which projected Nigerians in very distasteful manner would always be misleading and damaging. The power of movies and television broadcast which the home video has through its message and reach cannot be underestimated. Thus, filmmakers are expected to utilize same for the benefits of the Nigerian nation and its people. It is in this wise that the home video is considered as a medium of advertising, marketing and to a large extent rebranding the nation. This can be done through offerings and contents of the video films produced in the market. By this, it is understood that amongst the functions and roles of the home video are those akin to public relations and the advertiser.

Literature Review

As a celebrated emergent art, a veritable and accessible means of communication, the home video which has been described as a burgeoning industry and a success story (Ekwuazi, 2003; Alawode, 2003) has been widely viewed by researchers, reviewers and other media

practitioners. Akeh (2008), Akande (2010), Alawode (2007) and Adenugba (2007) amongst others have done extensive works on the home video its relevance in the Nigerian socioeconomic development. The Akande's works are a collection of articles which he published at different times spanning December 21, 2008 to September 25, 2010 in The Nations Newspaper. They are reviewed amongst others in this study.

Video Films as Tool for Promotion

According to Akeh, the film was introduced to the country by the colonial imperialists with the agenda of propagating British ethos, values and norms. Early films in Nigeria were mostly based on documentaries and newsreel which impacted tremendous influence on the targets. They included scenes of coronation of the king of England, King Edward VIII at West Minister Abbey, scenes of a steamer moving through water, the conjugal dispute of steeple chase. A brief glimpse of Alake of Abeokuta was shown in 1904 during his visit to England. The films shown by the colonial masters and the missionaries were the means of propagating their government and religion. During the Second World War, films were used widely by the British government for propaganda effort to make people in the colonies to understand why they should fight in the wars. Mobile cinemas were used all over Nigeria to communicate the news of the successes of allies and defeat of the Germans.

Ekwuazi (1991) further identifies the objectives of all the films (and all were documentaries) produced by the Colonial Film Unit (CFU) as: -

(a) *To show/convince the colonies that they and the English had a common enemy in the German; to this end, about one quarter of all the films made by the CFU were war related.*

(b) *To encourage communal development in the colonies.*

(c) *To show the outside world the excellent work being done in heathen parts under the aegis of the Union Jack. (Daybreak in Udi is a good example).*

Between 1941 and 1950 (the CFU ceased production in the middle fifties), there were eight main types of films in the distribution/exhibition circuit:

(i)*Films to show the military might of the British Empire and of Britain in particular;*

(ii)*Films to stimulate interest in the World War and encourage Nigerians to contribute morally and materially to the war efforts;*

(iii)*Films to stimulate interest in food and cash crops (agriculture);*

(iv)*Films to direct peoples' mind to London, the imperial center;*

(v)*Film to stimulate interest in the Empire;*

(vi)Film depicting government activities;

(vii)Health propaganda films;

(viii)Films showing development in education

All those films exhibited a common feature: in intent, content and execution; they were all based on propaganda. The films which the Nigerian audiences were exposed to before independence were deeply rooted in colonialism. Ekweme (2000) tells us that there were two main approaches to production at the time: - the affirmation and glorification of the colonizer's culture as better and the negation or mockery of the colonized culture.

According to Akeh with the attainment of independence came the emergence of the feature film in Nigeria with its first production titled *Moral Disarmament* which was produced in 1957 by the Federal Government of Nigeria; followed by *Bound for Lagos* in 1962. Shell BP of Nigeria sponsored the production of *Culture in Transition* in 1963. Then CFU became Federal Film Unit (FFC) but retained most of the functions of CFU. The objective and searchlight later shifted from colonialism and the need for independence to restrict neocolonialism. Emphasis showed black as beautiful, a thing to be explored and enjoyed while the colonialist came to be seen as rapists of rich culture of Nigeria and indeed Africa.

Home video as Nigerian image maker

Akeh posits that the era of foreign films in Nigerian homes has gone, and now is the time that Nigerian situations as presented by Nigerian actors and actresses are seen not only in Nigerian homes but all over Africa and the rest of the world. He goes further to celebrate the fact that indigenous Nigerian film makers have evolved the video film culture as an affordable means of (re) presenting the Nigerian nation to the silver screen. Haynes (2005) puts succinctly:

Nigerian video film is … what is on television in Namibia, and on sale on the streets of Kenya. In Congo, they are broadcast … In New York, Chinese people are buying them. In Holland, Nollywood stars are recognized on the street by people from surname and in London, they are hailed by Jamaicans.

Thus Ekwuazi (ibid: 160) asserts that a film industry that aspires to be in the vanguard of national development must do the following as rightly eulogized by Osofisan (1986:49).

- *Raise the level of consciousness through liberating the spirits and strengthening the minds of its people;*

- *Be political, that is - must deal in a positive manner with the existing conditions of oppression;*

- *Educate, that is - educate to bring out that which is already within, 'give knowledge and truth;*

- *Clarify issues, by enlightening participants as to why so many negative conditions and images exist in their community in order to eliminate the negative condition and strengthen the positive condition*

- *Lastly, it must entertain.*

According to Akande (2008), home video business is a medium of all media in the image project that Nigeria desires. He reveals that names like Ramsey Nouah, Genevieve Nnaji, Omotola Jalade – Ekeinde, Sola Sobowale, Kanayo Kanayo, Desmond Elliot, Nkem Owoh and a host of other stars are ready, faster and most circulating tools for international diplomacy and cultural exportation than the coverage of the Nigerian television and newspaper.

In his article –*'Americans don't watch Nigerian films' (*January 25, 2009), he reports the opinion of Marc Wishengrad, the Emmy nominated Director of Photography and pioneer trainer in the popular SHOOT workshop of the Nigerian Film Corporation (NFC) in Jos. According to him, People throughout the world know what life is like in America without ever setting their feet on its borders which is because movies tell stories of common people and the way they live. "I had little or no idea of what life was like in Nigeria because Nigerian films are not like American movie theatres."

Explaining that the above statement is attributed to a filmmaker who is given to researches and has knowledge of film industry in other parts of the world than America, then you can imagine what an average American, European, Indian would have to say about whether or not they have an idea of Nollywood or what it stands for; thus, he suggests that it is possible that other types of films which have unique stories about African history and experience may attract foreigners. To confirm this, he reports his interaction with Hollywood filmmaker, Ron Lavey in Canada in 2008, who was feeling excited to be working on a Ken Saro Wiwa's story. This rekindled a comment Marc (above) had earlier made:

It will be a wonderful day when Africans tell their own stories, filling the silver screen with their personal stories and not looking to emulate the Hollywood style but to look at how stories have been told within one's culture.

On his part, Adenugba says that culture is an essential aspect of aesthetics, particularly because film subsists in culture and also because it is made for an audience that has a culture, whether the audience is culturally inclined or not. Hence the film tends to reflect the culture or nuances of the philosophy of the society that produces it. Films from China promote the culture of that nation and its people. Films from India reflect the music, dance, dressing and beliefs of the Eastern nations; movies from the United States of America highlight the values and patterns of daily life of that country. Nollywood movies uphold the ways of life and happenings of Nigeria. Films are cultural ambassadors of the society in which they are produced; film is an instrument of cultural proclamation. Each society tells its story. The cultural context of a film helps to explain where the film maker's allegiance lies – whether it lies with the culture or something else other than a sense of belonging or inclination to his realm.

In Tunde Oladunjoye's article of April 18, 2004 in The Guardian titled *'Cannes Film Festival knocks: where is Nigeria?'* the essence and role culture plays in societal development are captured as follows:-

> *I am not aware of any nation that has been able to achieve development without proactive promotion of its essential cultural components, for example, you cannot separate the culture of Japan from that country's economic and technological achievements.*

Adenugba further states that not only does culture facilitate development, it also provides ample raw materials for the film maker to work with. Folklores, myths, fabrics, legends, folk music, folk dance, costume, folk architecture, ritual practices, kingship rites; and other elements and aspects of culture are ready materials that the filmmaker can explore, borrow, adapt or use verities in his work. He recognizes Lagbaja, Asa, Yinka Davies, Fela Anikupola-Kuti, and King Sunny Ade as Nigerian musicians who have blended their indigenous cultures with music … that thrill even the foreigners. Tunde Kelani's works give glamour in films because of his appropriation of culture in storytelling, costume design, set design, music, props, gestures, expression and use of language. Adenugba give examples of cultural hits as: - *Igodo* (Don Pedro –Obaseki, 2000), *Saworoide* (Tunde Kelani, 2001), *Sango* (Obafemi Lasode, 1996), *King Solomon's Mine* (Compton Bennett and Andrew Marton, 1950)

He further explains that culture serves as a basis of realism in movies. A work that is built on cultural nuances and conventions of a society is better accepted as an original statement about that society than those that do not. `He cites examples of – *Dangerous Twin*

(Tade Ogidan, 2004), *Rattle Snakes I, 11, 111, 1V* (Amaka Igwe- Isaac, 1991-1996) as text books about Nigeria in contemporary times while films like *False Alarm* (2006), *Chameleon 1and 11* (2006) are refuted by critics as non-representation of Nigeria because of the un-Nigerian story nature in *False Alarm,* the conflict is between a Nigerian 'FBI' and Chief Lord Lugard Donko. Adenugba then concludes that the thrust of his argument is that every film should reflect as faithfully as possible to the limit that funding and technicalities would allow the culture of its society or the society that is being depicted; only then that the film can gain from the enormous aesthetic benefits that the culture provide for film making.

In Akaoso's article posted online (December, 12, 2009) which is a reaction to Prof Akunliyi's assertion that the Nigerian film industry has contributed to the nation's poor image, he says it is misplaced and out of reality. Rather he asserts that Nollywood has done a lot within a short time of its existence to place Nigeria on the map of international film industries.

According to him, over the years, the industry has promoted certain identities and images about the country which in a way have helped to boost the country's reputation. He posits that Nollywood was instrumental to shooting up the socioeconomic profile of the country especially during an era in which the nation was notorious for military coups and political instability. He infers that the production of films in the military epoch, which explore the lives of Nigerians, shows the world that Nigerians are innovative, creative and balanced irrespective of the social upheaval in the country. It also negated the bad image which was generated in the international press about the nation during the period. He adds that the Nigerian motion picture industry has helped to change the perception of the rest of the world about Nigeria and indeed the whole Africa through the films produced. Many people outside the continent especially those who have never set their feet on its soil have come to understand that Nigerians and Africans do not live on trees or walk about naked (as had been speculated previously) nor are we bloodthirsty and cruel but we are just like other people in other countries of the world who could be bad, good, greedy, nice because people are people regardless of their nationalities and locations. Furthermore, the industry has shown to the world that our nation is undeniably the giant of Africa.

As reported by Christian Putsch in Time magazine (July 20, 2011), "anyone who really wants to understand the hardship, dreams and ambitions of the people in Nigeria should take in one of Imaseun's movies." Nollywood movies most often tell gripping stories about love and betrayal, upward mobility or power of good over evil. Quoting Imaseun, "we

tell stories Nigerians can identify with … unlike Hollywood movies, ours don't always have a happy end. The world's not fair, so why should we pretend it is?"

Alawode's work (2007) seems to lay the foundation for this study as it addresses a lot of the relevant issues. It provides a springboard to build on and to enhance this study. Reviewing findings from the study, the Nigerian environment as portrayed in the home video is usually clean and tidy. The portrayals do not reveal tourist centers (attractions) like animals, parks, zoos. Cattle ranges, waterfall or springs, network of roads like flyovers, Nigerian currencies and flags, swimming pools and rivers, hills and mountains, forest, deserts and savannah amongst other things which should reveal the nation and its scenery. He compares the Nigerian videos with those of Americans which tell people everything about America through representations of the country's identity in the videos. He puts succinctly that "hardly would one watch three American videos before one settles down to its environment's representations – the American flag, the capitol, the top hat and Stetson hats, the baseball game and even its unique language amongst others."

Theoretical Framework

The study is situated within the framework of Agenda setting and cultivation theories. Through the explanation of agenda setting theory offered by McCombs and Shaw (1972) which Folarin (1998) summarizes, the mass media predetermine the issues that are regarded as important at a given time and in a given society. They also have the power to determine what people are thinking about without having the power to determine what they actually think. The elements through which the media undertake such roles as revealed by the theories are:-

(i)   quality or frequency of reporting

(ii)   prominence given to the reports – through headline display, pictures and layout in newspapers, magazines, films, graphics or timing on radio and television

(iii)   the degree of conflicts generated in reports, films, etc

(iv)   cumulative media - specific effects over time.

Following this, with continuous interaction with home video films, the viewing audience would be drawn to give thought to the messages or the medium.

According to Demers, Saliven, Potter and Hobert (2001), cultivation theory originally propounded by George Gerbner and expanded by Gerbner and Gross (1976) says that TV has been the main source of storytelling in today's society. They classify those who watch for four or more hours a day as heavy watchers and those who watch for less hours as light

viewers. According to the author of *Mass Communication from Theory to Practical Application* (undated), cultivation theorists posit that TV viewing can have long term effects that gradually affect the audience. The primary focus falls on the effects of viewing in the attitudes of viewers as opposed to created behavior. Many times, the viewers are unaware of the extent to which they absorb media; often viewing themselves as moderate viewers when in fact they are heavy viewers. The theorists suggest that TV and media possess a small but insignificant influence on the attitudes and beliefs of society about society. Those who absorb more media are those that are more influenced. The home video can indeed affect the viewing audience to think in the manner the elements are portrayed. The home video is an ancillary that exhibits its offerings through the television receiver which has been the scapegoat of cultivation studies and media violence among others. Simply put, video tells its stories through the television screen.

Method

The research method for gathering primary data for the study was content analysis. Fifty (50) home video films were carefully selected and watched from televised video of the television stations in Lagos and Africa Magic (a cable network station). They were analyzed by the researchers. The last thirty (30) minutes of each of the films were adopted for analysis. A coding categorization which captured variables like language, story lines/themes, lifestyle, foods, gender portrayal, beliefs/norms/values, attitude to other people, natural environment, nature of recreation and relaxation was designed. The categories were mutually exclusive. A coding guide was also created to establish uniformity and/or consistency. Data from the films watched were transferred into standard coding sheets using nominal values. One hundred and sixty (160) subjects/ cases were identified. Data analysis was done quantitatively.

Results And Discussion

Considering the home video as a medium for Nigerian image making, viewers can get to see and know the country through the portrayals and representations of the home videos. Based on fifty (50) home video films, researchers attempted to examine how the home videos have served to project the image of Nigeria to the viewing public. Of all the films watched and analyzed, 2% were epic, 4% - comedy and 94% - feature. Even though all the television stations except TVC and Africa Magic did not display information on year of production, the researchers did not consider it relevant for the study hence did not reflect same for analysis. 2.5% of the total contents represented urban-slum settings, 28.1% were rural while 69.4% had urban setting.

Portrayals of buildings in the home video films showed duplexes/mansions as predominant represented by 22.5%, storey buildings (15.6%), bungalow and skyscrapers (11.3% respectively), office complex and shopping complex (8.8% respectively), clay/mud/thatched (5%) and stadium (1.9%). 15% had no buildings.

Table 1: Types of building/Appearance

Buildings	Masterpiec	Beautif	Normal/Ordina	Dilapidate	Ugly/shabby/unhygie	No	Total
Duplex/Mansion	25 (15.7%)	11					36
Skyscraper			18 (11.3%)				18
Storey building		25	18 (11.3%)				43
Mud/thatched/cl			3 (1.9%)		2 (1.3%)		5
Office complex		10	4 (2.5%)				14
Shopping		2 (1.3%)	12 (7.5%)				14
Stadium			3 (1.9%)				3
Indescribable				3 (1.9%)		24	27
Total	25 (15.7%)	48	58 (36.3%)	3 (1.9%)	2 (1.3%)	24	160

Table 1 shows that of the duplexes/mansions in the home videos, 15.7% was masterpiece/elegant and 6.9% was beautiful. The storey buildings were either beautiful or normal/ordinary represented by 15.7% and 11.3% respectively. Skyscrapers represented by 11.3% were all normal/ordinary; 6.3% of the office complexes were beautiful while 2.5% were normal/ordinary. The shopping complexes represented by 1.3% and 7.5% were beautiful and normal/ordinary respectively. 1.9% of the buildings which represented mud/thatched/ clay was normal/ordinary while 1.3% was ugly, shabby and unhygienic. 1.9% of the contents were dilapidated buildings.

Table 2: People and their Appearance

People	Flamboyant	Exotic	Modest	Rich	Poor	Total
Male Adults	15 (9.4%)	4 (2.5%)	23 (14.9%)	19 (11.9%)	5 (3.1%)	66 (41.3%)
Female	12 (7.5%)	8(5%)	20 (12.5%)	15 (9.4%)	5 (3.1%)	60 (37.5%)
Children				7 (4.4%)	3 (1.9%)	10 (6.3%)
Male (group)	5 (3.1%)					5 (3.1%)
female	3 (1.9%)	3 (1.9%)				6 (3.8%)
Mixed	3 (1.9%)	4 (2.3%)			2 (1.3%)	9 (5.6%)
Mixed				2(1.3%)	2 (1.3%)	4(2, 5%)
Total	38 (23.8%)	19 (11.9%)	43 (26.9%)	43 (26.9%)	17 (10, 6%)	160 (100%)

Table 2 shows Nigerian people portrayed as adults and children (males and females were viewed singly and/or in groups. In the case of children, there was not much difference in appearance between the males and females hence none was created. 9.4% of the male adults were flamboyant; 2.5% were exotic, 14.4% were modest while 11.9% were rich and 3.1% were poor. The female characters were 7.5% flamboyant, 5% -exotic, 12.5%-modest, 9.4% - rich and 3.1% - poor. Contents with children only constituted 4.4% -rich, 1.9% - poor. Male

in groups were seen as flamboyant in 3.1% settings and women were portrayed as flamboyant and exotic in 1.9% cases respectively. In groups of men and women shown together, they were seen as flamboyant in 1.9% settings, exotic in 2.3% and poor in 1.3% cases. Combinations of adults (male and female) with children were portrayed in 1.3% settings as rich and poor respectively.

Representing the people in their social classes, 36.3% of Nigerians constituted the affluent, 12.5% - poor and middle class respectively, 10% natives, 9.4% represented traditional rulers/council; people at the lower level and political class were 8.1% respectively and 3.1% constituted a mix of different classes of people. The attitudes of the people were identified as follows: - in 10% cases, peoples' attitudes were domineering and dependent respectively; in 9.4% cases, they were passive/docile/weak/indifferent; 8.8% were cruel/hostile/violent/hateful/spiteful and friendly/loving/harmonious respectively; portrayals in the films revealed that in 8.1% cases, they are discourteous and cooperative/supportive respectively; 6.3% were independent, 5.6% were corrupt, 4.9% were honest, 2.5% were uncooperative while 0.6% were unthankful.

Table 4: People/lifestyles

People	Traditional/ Indigenous	Foreign	Conservative	Cultured	Decent	Corrupt\ Indecent	Flirtatious	Gay	Modest	Total
Male	15 (9.4%)	9 (5.6%)	17 (10.6%)	2 (1.3%)	2 (1.3%)	8 (5%)	13 (8.1%)	5 (3.1%)	6 (3.8%)	77 48.1%
Female	12 (7.5%)	6 (3.8%)	14 (8.8%)	2 (1.3%)	3 (19%)	4 (2.5%)	7 (4.4%)		7 (4.4%)	55 34.4%
Children				2 (1.3%)		1 (0.6%)				3 (1.9%)
Male (group)	4 (2.5%)			2 (1.3%)	3 (1.9%)	1 (0.6%)				10 (6.3)
Female (group)	5 (3.1%)				3 (1.9%)					8 (5%)
Mixed adult (male/femal	5 (3.1%)									5 (3.1%)
Mixed (male/femal e						2 (1.3%)				2 (1.3%)
Total	41 (25.6%)	15 (9.4)	31 (19.4)	8 (5%)	11 (6.9%)	16 (10%)	20 (12.5%)	5 (3.1%)	13 (8.1%)	160 (100%)

Table 4 shows portrayals of Nigerians in the home video films analyzed ranging from traditional/indigenous represented in 25.6% of the settings, conservative – 19.4%, flirtatious – 12.5%, foreign and indecent - 9.4% respectively, modest – 8.1%, decent – 6.9%, cultured – 5% and Gay – 3.1%. The above table further reveals that Nigerian males dominated the video scene with 48.1% representing over 34.4% female representations. Nigerian people have more showings as individuals rather than groups. Children (1.9%) and mixed /sex groups have minority showing. Largely, it shows that Nigerians are portrayed as traditional/indigenous people in one out of four (4) cases represented by 25.6%, as conservative in 19.4%, as flirtatious in 12.5% cases, as corrupt/indecent in 10% cases, as foreign in 9.4% cases, as modest in 8% cases, as decent in 6.9% cases, as cultured in 5% cases and as gay in 3.1% cases.

The people are further portrayed through dressing in 30%; language – 10.6%, beliefs were represented in 9.4% cases; 7.5% cases through food, music and as fetish in 6.3% respectively, singing and dancing – 1.3% respectively; sexuality – 5% and African traditional religion (ATR) and ceremony – 3.1% respectively. 16.3% had no representation of Nigerian lifestyle. In most cases, characters in offices were shown dressed in suits and other formal clothing.

Based on the contents of the home videos analyzed, settings which had trees/plants/farms constituted 26.3% cases, 3.8% had streams/seas/rivers. There were hills/mountain in 1.3% settings, 67.5% had no representations of any sort. Tourist centers and attractions like waterfalls, caves, mountains, resort centers and historical and monumental places were rarely seen. Forms of recreation/relaxation identified were as follows: - indoor games represented in 1.3% cases, 1.9% showed games like table tennis and snookers and swimming respectively, Nigerians were revealed at the beaches, sight-seeing, outdoor games and partying in 3.1% respective cases.

Discussion

The home video makers deserve to be commended as the nation's image maker. Considering portrayals and representations expressed through the buildings and their appearances, appearances of people and their socioeconomic status, the film makers' objectives seem to be to show Nigeria as a beautiful place with elegant, flamboyant and gorgeous people who live in affluence and are very comfortable. Films with traditional and historical background seem to be intended to exhibit the nation's cultural and historical potentials and values. While projecting Nigeria as a beautiful place with beautiful people, the

filmmakers have not failed to show the negative aspects of the Nigerian people in terms of values and lifestyles.

Producers of the Nigerian home videos show Nigerians as very religious people. In almost all the films, different kinds of religions [African Traditional Religion (ATR), Christianity and Islam], practiced in the country are effectively revealed in the video films; directly or indirectly, through obvious depictions of their practices or subtly suggested in discussions, it would be impossible for viewers of Nigerian home video not to know that Nigerians believe in God through diverse forms of persuasions. Traditional practices in different Nigerian cultures are usually indicated, suggested or clearly projected or explained in the films. *Super Story: Sister Sister* (serial film), is rich in both urban and cultural practices. *Evil Finger* (2005) gives indications of communal and family bonds in the African (Nigerian) context. In this film, a younger brother of someone married to a rich man is employed in the brother-in-law's company where he is highly placed with benefits he does not deserve by virtue of job designation. The role of the kinsmen is depicted as the sophisticated daughter of the rich man consults her father's relations in the village to summon her uncle (mother's brother) to answer to charges of defrauding and killing her father. This film also reveals that notwithstanding people's level of sophistication and foreign exposure and lifestyle, Nigerians can choose to settle matters through traditional means. Through spiritual means, the native doctor summons the culprit to the village to answer to charges against him as demanded by the late man's daughter. *Stronger Than Pain* (2008) is one film that has almost everything as traditional. Apart from the outfits, all the cooking and eating instruments are traditional. The drinks – palm wine, manner of cooking, water pots, settings and lifestyles truly reveal a typical Nigerian native village. In almost all the home videos with traditional settings, the maidens would always be shown going to/or returning from the streams (through footpaths) with water pots on their heads. Not very many home videos are shown without actual portrayals or subtle suggestions of witchcraft and fetish practices. Portrayals in *Who will tell the President* (2001) seem to depict every aspect of Nigeria – ranging from the story line through the lifestyle of the people to geographical landmarks (including natural structures – like caves, streams, rocks, forest and farmlands). It is also the first and only Nigerian film watched for analysis which gives expression of activities in the air space. In most cases, when people are shown eating in home videos, they usually eat jollof rice or white rice and stew. Only in few cases do we see people eating melon soup with garri and sometimes pepper soup as in *Super Story – Sister Sister* and *Stronger Than Pain.* Nigerian cultures are undoubtedly revealed in the films packaged in the home videos.

The story lines/themes, lifestyles, foods, norms and values, and even manner of dressing reveal the ways of life of the people; sometimes, indigenous languages are introduced into the film plots through interjection of vernacular (to identify the cultural settings of the story). Such languages include Yoruba, Igbo, Efik- Ibibio, Hausa and Ijaw. In films with traditional and royal settings, the portrayals of the traditional institutions are usually shown with their representations as dressing, guards and other types of traditional aesthetics. Politicians, traditional title holders (people addressed as 'chief') and some wealthy men most often appear in traditional clothing like 'agbada'; women in urban settings often dress in flamboyant traditional attires for parties and meetings. Both men and women in traditional settings are usually attired in outfits that depict the cultures of the settings.

In an attempt to show Nigeria as a beautiful place, the houses in films are mostly masterpiece, elegant and beautiful with people living in affluence and in urban settings; the low and middle level people live as comfortable as the very rich. Most of the houses in the urban setting, where the exteriors were portrayed would often have gates and gatemen who would open them to allow access to visitors. Nigerians are therefore projected as being highly security minded. In the film – *Evil Finger,* it is suggested that anybody can live in any kind of house as desired. This is deduced from seeing a manager whose salary was N150, 000 per month in 2005 (when the film was produced) lives in a mansion. In the film, *Two Sides of a Coin* (a serial film, currently running)*,* the house of a rich man's driver look like that of a middle class person. This conveys the impression that at whatever level, Nigerians can live so comfortably.

Trecia Esigie's serial film, *Pradah* (serial film, 2012 – still running) depicts Nigeria in so many ways. The film makers employ Nigerian film, music and football stars in the cast; scenes of activities within the football teams and film productions are clearly revealed apart from the issues of cultural and family values which are also projected. Challenges in the Nigerian society which include living above people's means of income, negative dependence on rich relatives, armed robbery and rape are not left out in the story lines/themes. In this film, the Nigerian colors and flags as well as monumental settings like stadium are portrayed.

Settings in Lagos, the commercial capital of Nigeria usually dominated projections of the home videos. Apart from the beautiful sceneries, the producer of *Super Story: Invitation to Thunder* effectively depicts the struggle to board commercial buses at the bus stop in highly concentrated locations like Oshodi or Orile is revealed. In *Spare my life* (2009), busy Lagos in its bustling and hustling characteristics is revealed. It can be assumed that Nigerians are groomed as children to be courteous as a young boy is shown opening a door and

allowing his sister enter first before him in the serial film – currently running, *Two Sides of the Coin*.

Despite the negative portrayals of the lifestyles and attitudes of Nigerians, the producer of *Sound of Love* (undated) reveal that Nigerians can be patriotic as a Nigerian houseboy to a foreigner – Francis Duru called Silas protects Nigerian image from being battered by his bosses (husband and wife), who have been fraudulently dispossessing people of their hard currencies. The house boy is asked to pose as a bank manager when their victims arrive. He agrees but intimates the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) officials, who lay surveillance on the culprits and arrest them. The film is an exceptional positive contribution towards rebranding the Nigerian image.

Indigenous Nigerian languages are often introduced into the plots of the films through interjection of vernacular (to identify the cultural setting of the story; such languages include Yoruba, Igbo, Efik – Ibibio, Hausa and Ijaw. In films with traditional and royal settings, portrayals of the traditional institutions are usually shown with their representations as dressing, guards and other types of traditional aesthetics.

Despite the positive depictions of the country and its people in the home videos, very little is done to reveal the nation's tourist centers/ attractions and its socioeconomic potentials in the story lines/themes as well as in actual portrayals. Abuja, the nation's capital city is barely projected in the home videos.

Conclusion

The home video is a very powerful medium which has served to enhance the economic development of the nation. The stories of the nation and the cultures of its people and diverse potentials and opportunities available in the nation are portrayed through the home videos.

Through the portrayals in the home videos, investors can be persuaded to come to the country or dissuaded from coming; tourists can be informed of places of excitement to visit; the history and cultures of the people can be preserved. The film makers should understand their roles as the nation's image makers and strive towards enhancing the nation's image in their portrayals and representations. Apart from projecting elements like the agricultural produce, natural resources, mineral resources, tourist centers and attractions amongst others, which the film producers should necessarily highlight in the video films, they should attempt to suggest how products and services from Nigeria can be exported in the story lines. Portrayals of places of excitement like Protea, Hilton, Sheraton and other top hotels in the country along with tourist and historical centers should be depicted in the Nigerian home

videos. Just as it would be unimaginable to see France without Eiffel Tower or America without representations of its environment like the American flag, the eagle, capitol, the top hat and the Stetson hats, the baseball game and even its unique language amongst other elements, the Nigerian home video makers should attempt to project and advertise the nation and applicable elements in their productions. They cannot however be justified to accept all the applause they receive if elements that represent Nigeria and its essence are not effectively projected in the home videos.

It is indisputable that certain portrayals in the video films have increasingly projected the nation in very bad light thereby tarnishing the image of the nation and causing embarrassment to its citizens, especially travelers as well as robbing the nation and its people of profitable opportunities amongst the comity of nations. This is why the home video makers need to consciously realize their role as image makers and ensure that they undertake genuine rebranding and realignment for the nation; such should not be cosmetic but rooted in truth, pragmatism and affirmative. They need to show Nigeria as a tourist destination, a place to invest or a source of consumer goods.

Note

All the tables were adapted from: Sunday, Uduakobong (2012), Nigerian Image in the Home Videos, Unpublished PG.D project, Adebola Adegunwa School of Communication, Lagos State University

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