

**AUDIENCE RECEPTION TO CLIFF-HANGING NARRATIVES OF
SELECTED NOLLYWOOD MOVIE SERIES (A STUDY OF UNIBEN
MASS COMMUNICATION STUDENTS)**

BY

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DECLARATION.

This project is based on a study undertaken by me in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin under the supervision of **Dr. A. UCHENUNU**. All ideas are product of my personal research and the views of others are duly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research was carried out by Elizabeth Otabor Osamudiamen with matriculation number ART1701576 of the Department of Mass communication, University of Benin, and it is adequate in scope for the award of Bachelor Degree in Mass Communication (BARTMAS).

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Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Almighty God who faithfully gave me the strength and courage to go through this programme despite the challenges and troubles faced.

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I am grateful to God Almighty who gave me the grace to face this great task and go through with it. My enormous gratitude goes to project supervisor, Dr. A. Uchenunu , for his constructive criticisms and necessary suggestions during the course of this study, which earned this work its success. Thank you for the opportunity. I am also thankful for the efforts of my lecturers for their steady knowledge given to me during my programme which led to the overall success. Thank you all for the impacted knowledge to serve. I appreciate my parents, Mr. Alexander Otabor and Mrs. Patience Otabor, for their constant support in my academics, their love and encouragement that has brought me up to this point. Thank you Mom and Dad for making me what I am today. I am also appreciate my siblings, Ms. Blessing Otabor, Mrs. Gloria Ekorhi and Mr Christian Otabor, Ms Mary David and my little niece Deonora Ekorhi for their constant support, prayers and words of encouragement to me when the going seemed tough .

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ABSTRACT.

This project examined the reception of audience to cliff-hanging narratives as perceived by Mass Communication students of Uniben. The study was investigated to explore the reasons behind audience reactions and to know their reception of cliff hanging narratives, how audience receive series production from Nollywood. This study was able to point out that Nollywood movie producers have failed to see the importance of cliff-hanging narrative in a plot as they rush into production without carefully drawing out a good cliff-hanger that will be able to keep their audience glued to the story, hence they produce movie series with weak cliff-hangers, unable to seize the audience's attention. The survey design was adopted for the study with the aid of 9-item questionnaire administered to 155 respondents purposively selected from the four levels in the department of Mass Communication in the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State. Data obtained were analyzed and presented with the aid of Frequency Tables, Simple Percentage and Mean Scores. Therefore, the study concludes that audience do not show much interest in Nollywood movie series as a result of the poor implementation of cliff-hanging narratives, cliff-hangers play very important role in maintaining suspense in a plot in order to ensure the interest and focus of the audience, hence Nollywood producers must be very professional in the production process as they implement the cliff-hanging narrative.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

The Nigerian film industry has improved considerable in its utilization of various techniques and narratives in production which has help build positive responses from its audience, however when it comes to the usage of cliff-hanging narrative for sequel productions the response has been relatively unsatisfactory as sequel productions in most cases do not attract the same numbers of audience as the first production, though playwrights in the industry have been dynamic in their implementation of narrative techniques, responding to change as the world evolves and new things come about, the poor utilization of narrative technique has affected a huge amount of Nollywood productions. Okwuowulu (2016) reports that “studies on Nollywood shows that poor narrative techniques pose a major problem”. Poor Narrative techniques used in many productions have caused the storyline to lose its meaning and failed to retain the attention of its audience. Okwuowulu(2016)describes narrative technique as a method and system through which a film’s story is communicated to the viewers. Thereby, when a story is communicated poorly in a production it loses its overall meaning and purpose, this result to the production of films that fall short in standards. A cliffhanger is hoped to incentivize the audience to return to see how the characters resolved the dilemma.

Cliffhanger is an important tool for film production as it helps the story extensively, forcing the audience to come back for each new segment of a production, it is a very good tool for storytelling and a key tool to be utilized in episodic productions. It is important to note that ‘Cliffhanging’ narratives are one of the numerous narratives that have evidently been poorly utilized in the Nigerian film industry as it is little wonder why a narrative that

commands much have no effect when used in most Nollywood productions. When the cliffhanging narrative is implemented poorly the cliffhanger is all about shoddy craftsmanship, the creepy manipulation by a storyteller who has run out of tricks, but when done well, it can be more surprising, shocking, outraging and pleasurable.

This study, apart from examining the inability of a huge amount of Nollywood productions to retain the attention of its audience in sequel productions, it accesses and looks into why certain series fail to get large viewership. It examines plot, characterization and structure of the series as these factors are key influencers in the implementation of cliffhangers. It previews the power of cliffhangers on productions and its ability to affect its audience, tracing loopholes in previous productions, thereby bringing about an enhancement in its implementation. A survey would be done on mass communication students of the University of Benin with the use of questionnaires to be able to determine audience reception to cliffhanging narrative, to know the views, perspectives, ratings and contributions of the audience to movie endings, plot, and structure, thereby to acquire sufficient information to tackle the identified problem. With detailed literature review, the use of questionnaire and study of selected Nollywood series such as *Hush*, *Ajoche*, *My flat mates*, *Tinsel* and *Jennifer's Diary*, the work focuses on examining the plot, characterization, structure, episodic endings and storylines which ranges from comedy, romance, among others, it also goes further to access Nollywood producers and scriptwriters' narrative skills.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

Cliffhangers appeals to curiosity, the main purpose of employing it is to maintain suspense in the plot in order to ensure the interest and focus of the audience, It acts like a bait to lead the audience from one part to another with more interest than before. Over the years, the Nigerian film industry has improved considerable in its utilization of various techniques and narratives in production which has help build positive responses from its audience. However, when it comes to the utilization of cliff-hanging narrative in Nollywood series, the response has been relatively unsatisfactory as sequel productions in most cases do not attract same amount of audience as the first production. The nagging question here is how do mass communication students in UNIBEN feel and react towards Nollywood movie series. Moreover, no studies have been done in Nigeria to determine the reception of mass communication students towards Nollywood movie series. It therefore becomes necessary for this study to investigate audience reception to cliff-hanging narrative of selected Hollywood series by surveying mass communication students in UNIBEN.

1.3 Objectives of The Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. To measure the impact of cliffhangers in Nollywood movie series production on audience.
2. To know why audience lose interest in Nollywood movie series productions.
3. To establish the reason for the poor narrative skill among producers and scriptwriters.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were drawn for this study:

1. What is the level of impact cliffhangers utilized in Nollywood productions have on its audience?
2. Why do the audience lose interest in Nollywood sequel productions?
3. What is the reason for poor narrative skill among producers and scriptwriters in Nollywood productions?

1.5 Scope of Study

This study will be limited to 400 level mass communication and theatre arts students of the University of Benin. This population has been chosen owing to the level of literacy and experience, not leaving out the ability to criticize. These students have training in courses that relates very well to this topic, I believe from the knowledge acquired, they are more capable to relate and understand more as well to be able give vital information or contribution.

1.6 Significance of Study

This research will help to study audience reception to cliffhanging narrative and its impact on them. It will give movie producers an idea that the audience want and increase their anticipation when they watch Nollywood production and how they see the previous productions.

Also, it will help improve producers and scriptwriter narrative skills, thereby enhancing the production of movies that will reach the expectation of the audience.

In addition, it will bring about growth and improvement in the Nigerian movie industry as a whole.

Furthermore, it will bring about satisfaction on the path of the audience thereby making them happy rather than constantly looking forward only to Hollywood series for entertainment as it is now.

1.7 Limitations of Study

Though this research has achieved its objective, just like other research works, there were some constraints. First, the uncooperative attitude of the respondents towards the researcher in filling the questionnaire was a limitation to this study. Most of the respondents were not willing to attend to the questionnaire on the spot and some were not properly disposed to giving out relevant information to the researcher for reasons best known to them.

In addition, due to the fact that no research had been conducted on this study the researcher was unable to get related research works for the empirical review in Chapter two, hence this factor limited the researcher's access to more information about the study.

Nevertheless, the researcher was not able to gather mass communication students to fill the questionnaires within the ethics of the research. In essence, these limitations do not infringe on the validity of this work, the topic was the passion that helped to achieve the aims and objectives of the research work.

1.8 Definition of Terms

For better understanding of concepts and terms frequently used in this study, there is a need to define them within the context of usage in this study. These terms are:

Audience

An audience is a group of people who participate in a show or encounter a work of art, literature (in which they are called "readers"), theatre, music (in which they are called "listeners"), video games (in which they are called "players"), or academics in any medium. Audience members participate in different ways in different kinds of art; some events invite overt audience participation and others allowing only modest clapping and criticism and reception.

Cliffhangers

Cliffhangers are a stylistic plot device in which a plot twist or shocking revelation occurs right at the end of a chapter or part of a series. This serves to enhance audience engagement by increasing suspense and curiosity which keeps audiences coming back for more.

Movie

Movies, or films, are a type of visual communication which uses moving pictures and sound to tell stories or teach people something. Most people watch (view) movies as a type of entertainment or a way to have fun. For some people, fun(entertainment) movies can mean movies that make them laugh, while for others it can mean movies that make them cry, or feel afraid.

Mass Communication

Mass communication is the process of imparting and exchanging information through mass media to large segments of the population. It is usually understood for relating to various forms of media, as these technologies are used for the dissemination of information, of which journalism and advertising are part.

Narrative technique

Narrative techniques are methods utilized by the creator of a narrative to convey what he or she wants, in other words, it is a strategy used in the making of a narrative to relay information to the audience and particularly to develop the narrative, usually in order to make it more complete, complex, or interesting. Literary techniques are distinguished from literary elements, which exist inherently in works of writing. Narrative techniques are the methods that writers use to give certain artistic and emotional effects to a story.

Nollywood

Originally referred to the Nigerian film industry, it is a term used to address the Nigerian video movie industry which made a debut in the early 1990s. It encompasses movie production in a particular geographical location “Nigeria”. The name ‘Nollywood’ is only part of a global trend.

Reception

Reception is the action or process of receiving something sent, given, or inflicted. It is described as the manner in which a particular thing or situation is accepted and digested.

Student

A Student is a person engaged in study; one who is devoted to learning; a learner; a pupil; a scholar; especially, one who attends a school, or who seeks knowledge from professional teachers or from books; as, the students of an academy, a college, or a university; a medical student; a hard student.

Selection

Selection is the process of picking or choosing the right candidate, who is most suitable for a particular position or situation. In others words, selection can also be explained as the process of getting the candidates and evaluating their qualities, which are required for a specific situation and process.

Uniben

University of Benin (UNIBEN) is a research university located in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. It is among the universities owned by the Federal Government of Nigeria and was founded in 1970.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Preamble

This chapter involves a review of related literature covering the following headings:

- 2.1 History of Cinema.
- 2.2 Emergence of African Cinema
- 2.3 Nigerian Movie Industry
- 2.4 Origin of Cliffhangers
- 2.5 Function of Cliffhangers
- 2.6 Types of Cliffhanging.
- 2.7 Selected Nollywood movies
- 2.8. Theoretical Framework.

2.1 History of Cinema

Cinema storytelling became standardized remarkably quickly within the first two decades of its existence. Cinema does not literally show us movement, but it does show us a fast succession of still images; its origin lies in our need for this illusion of motion and the subsequent industry race to create a movie camera capable of recording and projecting images for the viewing pleasure of its audience. The use of camera in both photography and cinematography is a great feat achieved by early inventors and filmmakers. Cameras are unique in the way they store information and tell about the society, events and peoples. Camera use became popular between 1827 and the 1830s and like today fascinated people whenever it was put to use in capturing shots of people or recording historic moments. Whereas, it is easy to press the button and capture shots on camera, one challenge early cameramen had at the earliest days of it was on how to capture motion. It is in trying to

solve this problem that cinema was invented. In 1891, the inventor Thomas Edison, together with William Dickson, a young laboratory assistant, came out with what they called the kinetoscope. The camera used to capture images for the Edison kinetograph., a device that would become the predecessor to the motion picture projector. Film's profound impact on its earliest viewers is difficult to imagine today, inundated as many are by video images. However, the sheer volume of reports about the early audience's disbelief, delight, and even fear at what they were seeing suggests that viewing a film was an overwhelming experience for many. Spectators gasped at the realistic details in films, the moving image was an improvement upon the photograph, a medium with which viewers were already familiar and this is perhaps why the earliest films documented events in brief segments but didn't tell stories. During this "novelty period" of cinema, audiences were more interested by the phenomenon of the film projector itself, so vaudeville halls advertised the kind of the projector they were using.

The Silent Period

In the silent period movies were originally produced as less than a minute production to the time feature films were firstly produced. The distinguishing factor underlying it is that the movies were produced without spoken dialogue, that is, the pairing of sound with motion pictures(without synchronized sound). The motion picture of the silent era was generally simplistic in nature; acted in overly animated movements to engage the eye; and accompanied by live music, played by musicians in the theater, and written titles to create a mood and to narrate a story. Film of this period were made before the introduction of sound in the late 1920s, Even though this does not mean that all silent movies were devoid of sound, it simply means that it was not possible at this stage to

capture both action and dialogue on camera while filming on set as it is the case today. Hence, film dialogues were subtitled to tell the stories while actions were mimed. Films that were made in this period were called silent but also had some kind of musical accompaniment later infused into them without having synchronized dialogue as a component part of the visuals.

The Sound Era

In this Era sound was introduced in film production, initially sound was thought to be destructive to the movies and most people like Thomas Edison felt it distorted the art of movie entertainment. The first known public exhibition of projected sound films took place in Paris in 1900, but decades passed before sound motion pictures were made commercially practical. The era of sound films started with the introduction of Vitaphone, sound-on-disc system that was developed by Western Electric' Bell Laboratories in New York City, and eventually bought by Warner Brothers in 1925. It was in 1927 that the film, *The Jazz Singers*, an Academy award winning feature film, directed by Alan Crosland, was released and broke the silence of the silent period by introducing the sound era. The sound era lasted from 1928 to 1990.

The Present Epoch

This era refers advent of technology in filmmaking. Technology has expanded the nature of filmmaking and liberalized everything about the art, it comes with the introduction of digital recording and cinematography that has displaced the analogue

format. This era began in the 1990s and has expanded, encompassing so many features without cancelling out everything about celluloid film production. This digital technology era introduces a phase where filmmakers, rather than capture images on celluloid film stripes just like it was done before, film images are now captured and stored on microchips planted in the belly of the camera. The standard for digital film production and projection today has been set by the Digital Cinema Initiatives (DCI) Consortium in the USA to ensure a high level of standard in film image quality and projection. The conglomerate utilizes a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) to store collection of film files in order for handling and transfer to distribution points easy and stress free.

2.2 Emergence of African Cinema

African cinema dates back to the 20th century, cinema came to Africa after its invention in France in 1895, where its development was shaped by European colonialism and the postcolonial aftermath. Until independence, filmmaking in Africa were funded, directed and distributed by Europeans and Americans. It was only after independence in the 1960s that an independent, indigenous film industry was able to develop. *Afrique Sur Seine* was the first film to be made in Africa in 1955, it was directed by Paulin Soumanou Vieyra, originally from the Republic of Benin, but educated in Senegal and Paris. Paulin Soumanou Vieyra was the first African graduate of L' Institute des Hautes Etudes Cinematographiques (DEHC) in Paris. There was a French rule in Senegal that prohibited the production of films, however he defied the rule and got permission from Paris, formed a group of students which was known as Le Group Africain du Cinema and produced the first short film ever to be directed by an African. Le Group Africain du Cinema championed consciousness about the preservation of African culture and arts; they hosted

the first African arts festival in Dakar, Senegal, where twenty-six films from sixteen African nations were shown. The Nigerian film industry is the largest in Africa in terms of value, number of annual films, revenue and popularity. It is also the second largest film producer in the world. In 2016 Nigeria's film industry contributed 2.3% of its gross domestic product (GDP).

During the colonial era Africans were depicted by Western film makers as exotic and wild and there was a total lack of interest in native African culture. However, France's goal of assimilating colonial subjects in its colonies into French culture provided aspiring African film directors with opportunities to become involved in film production. After independence these film directors took the lead in African cinema.

Pioneers of African Cinema

The aim of African Cinema when it started was to correct the impression and image the west already built about the continent, most of the films produced were against colonial misrepresentations in order to talk back to the West. Some of the pioneer filmmakers of African cinema include:

1. Paulin S. Vieyra, who formed the called African Cinema group and directed the short film, *Afrique Sur Scene* (1955).
2. Ousmane Sembene of Senegal, called the father of African cinema, who shot so many films including *Le Noire....* (Black Girl), *Camp de Thiaroye*,
3. Ola Balogun of Nigeria
4. Djibril Diop Mambety of Senegal

5. Souleymane Cisse of Mali
6. Edddie Ugbomah of Nigeria
7. Hubert Ogunde of Nigeria
8. Moses Olaiya of Nigeria
9. Haile Gerima of Ethiopia and many others

2.3 Nigerian Movie Industry

The Nigerian Film Industry widely known as Nollywood is recognized as the second largest film producing industry in the world. The Industry is a significant part of the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Sector which contributed 2.3% to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2016. Nollywood is a unique and typical model of a film industry, it came about completely on its own; thrived and flourished into a multi billion naira business. Currently Nigeria ranks second to India's Bollywood, ahead of America's Hollywood, grossing \$250 million yearly revenue, according to UNESCO's recent survey of 99 countries.

It is one of the priority sectors identified in the Economic Recovery and Growth plan of the Federal Government of Nigeria with a planned \$1billion in export revenue by 2020. Nonetheless, existing challenges will have to be addressed to take Nollywood to the next phase. PwC's Global Entertainment & Media Outlook 2017 – 2021 provides deep knowledge and actionable insights on the trends that are shaping the entertainment and media industry. Nigeria's home video industry effectively took off in 1992, following the

successful production of a home video on VHS tapes, titled “*Living in Bondage*” Nigerian Film Censor Board estimated an average of about 1,687 new videos alone in 2007 and it can do more if well organized.

Below is the table of comparative levels of feature length films / videos, production between Nigeria, India and USA. Nollywood, Nigeria's booming film industry is the world's third largest producer of feature films”. The movie industry (which started as Home video market) has been typically accepted to have started - immediately following the success of Kenneth Nnebue’s “*Living in Bondage*. From then on, its expansion and attendant complications are known (by fascinated parties). However, events preceding 1992, are not popular even although a few have tried to trace the history of Nollywood. Unlike Hollywood and Bollywood; Nollywood movies are made on shoe-string budgets of time and money. An average production takes just 10 days and costs approximately \$15,000. Yet in just 13 years, Nollywood has grown from nothing into a \$250 million dollar-a-year industry that employs thousands of people. The Nollywood phenomenon was made possible by two main ingredients: Nigerian entrepreneurship and digital technology. In the late 1980's and early 1990's, Lagos and other African cities faced growing epidemics of crime and insecurity. Movie theaters closed as people became reluctant to be out on the streets after dark. Videos for home viewing imported from the West and India were only mildly popular. Nigerians saw an opportunity to fill the void with products of their own.

Experts credit the birth of Nollywood to a businessman who needed to unload thousands of blank tapes and to the 1992 video release of *Living in Bondage*, a movie with a tale of the occult that was an instant and huge-selling success. It wasn't long before other

would-be producers jumped on the bandwagon. Currently, some 300 producers churn out movies at an astonishing rate somewhere between 500 and 1,000 a year. Nigerian directors adopt new technologies as soon as they become affordable. Bulky videotape cameras gave way to their digital descendents, which are now being replaced by HD cameras. Editing, music, and other post-production work is done with common computer based systems. The films go straight to DVD and VCD disks. Thirty new titles are delivered to Nigerian shops and market stalls every week, where an average film sells 50,000 copies. A hit may sell several hundred thousand. Disks sell for two dollars each, making them affordable for most Nigerians and providing astounding returns for the producers.

Not much else about Nollywood would make Hollywood envious. Shooting is inevitably delayed by obstacles unimaginable in California. Lagos, home to 15 million people (expected to be 24 million by 2010), is a nightmare of snarled traffic, pollution, decaying infrastructure, and frequent power outages. Star actors, often working on several films at once, frequently don't show up when they're supposed to. Location shooting is often delayed by local thugs, or "touts", who extort money for protection before they will allow filming to take place in their territories. Yet Nollywood producers are undeterred. They know they have struck a lucrative and long-neglected market - movies that offer audiences characters they can identify with in stories that relate to their everyday lives. Western action adventures and Bollywood musicals provide little that is relevant to life in African slums and remote villages. Nollywood stars are native Nigerians. Nollywood settings are familiar. Nollywood plots depict situations that people understand and confront daily romance, comedy, the occult, crooked cops, prostitution, and HIV/AIDS. "We are telling our own stories in our own way," director Bond Emeruwa says. "That is the appeal both

for the filmmakers and for the audience." The appeal stretches far beyond Nigeria. Nollywood films are proving popular all over English-speaking Africa and have become a staple on M-NET, the South African based satellite television network. Nigerian stars have become household names from Ghana to Zambia and beyond. The last few years have seen the growing popularity of Nollywood films among the African Diaspora in both Europe and America. In less than two decades Nollywood has become the embodiment of Nigeria's soft power. It has become a phenomenon which has helped in shaping perceptions of Nigeria and the Nigerian society. All this has been achieved largely on the back of the resilient entrepreneurial Nigerian spirit. Nollywood has propagated the Nigerian message farther than the concerted efforts of the government's international diplomacy would have. And outside the continent, it has become a cultural mainstay for the Nigerian and African Diaspora.

2.3.1 The Introduction of the Term "Nollywood"

The term "Nollywood" operated a generalization, an essentialization of the video phenomenon, it reified the basic features of the video production, creating a "catchy" brand. At the same time it produced an illusion, the illusion that something different, something original and "pure" existed behind and despite the label. The "Nollywoodization" of the Nigerian video industry. The name "Nollywood" appeared in Nigeria for the first time in a *New York Times* article by Norimitsu Onishi in September 2002 and was republished by the Nigerian newspaper *The Guardian* few days later. By the beginning of 2003 the Nigerian newspaper *Daily Times* already had a week-end column called "Inside Nollywood" and around the same period the term started appearing

consistently on numerous internet sites and forums. While suggesting this name, Onishi's article explicitly made reference to Bollywood and Hollywood ("Step aside, Los Angeles and Bombay, for Nollywood", is the title of the article), giving a voice to those that in Nigeria and elsewhere were asserting the global influence of the video phenomenon. By doing that, the article also created a brand that quickly became a tool to commercialize the video industry transnationally.

It is important to note, however, that the formulation of the term "Nollywood" does not represent the first time in which the Nigerian video film industry was compared to other film industries in the world. And it does not represent the first attempt of giving it a "hood" attribute either. In fact, the local discourse around the video production was, almost since the production of *Living in bondage* (1992), considering the video phenomenon in terms of "film industry", something that would have soon been able to rival its Indian or American counterparts.

2.4 The Origin of Cliff-Hangers

Cliffhanger is climax interrupted. It literally got its name from leaving characters hanging off a cliff, it is a combination of high stakes, danger, twists, conflict, scene reversals, unknowns and shocks. The phrase comes from the idea of "hanging off a cliff", whatever happens will determine the character's future and the story's plot, leaving audiences "on the edge" of knowing. The term itself was first used in the 1910s to describe serial motion pictures, in which key characters would face perilous situations at the close of the movie. In several notable cases, a character would literally be left hanging off a cliff until their story continued in the film's sequel. This led to the more widespread use of the word cliffhanger to describe the specific plot device of metaphorically leaving

characters and audiences/readers hanging. The origin of the term can also be linked to a Thomas Hardy serial when one of his protagonists, Henry Knight, was left hanging off a cliff.

Cliffhangers are perhaps most common in certain genre fiction, such as mystery, thriller, and adventure films. However, there are examples of cliffhangers in countless works of literature. There is a psychological effect known as the Zeigarnik effect which states that people who have been interrupted in a task remember it better than a completed task. According to the BBC, the Zeigarnik effect which was named after psychologist Bluma Zeigarnik is an experiment conducted by the psychologist in the 1920s where she'd interrupt certain people as they did puzzles, finding that when they were stopped midway through, they were twice as likely to remember what they had been doing in the first place. Thus, there is some psychological evidence that readers and viewers will not only be more interested in what happens next in a serialized work, but will also remember the details better. One of the most important things a story needs to do is keep the reader wanting to find out what happens next. Nowhere is this more important than at the end of a natural stopping place such as a scene or a chapter. Cliffhangers are a particularly popular and widely used device in television, whose success relies heavily on audiences returning to watch week after week with episodes that are "to be continued."

A cliffhanger is the abrupt ending of a plotline that leaves major elements of the story unresolved until the next installment of the work. The earliest examples of cliffhangers come from ancient and medieval literature, but they gained popularity with the serialized novels of the Victorian era, most famously in the works of Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy.

2.4.1 Common Cliffhanger Elements

Character faces a mortal danger

At least one principal character in the film faces serious danger that threatens his/her life as the character fights to overcome while the audience watch in awe, unable to predict the next play down of event. In *Catching Fire*, the second installment in Suzanne Collins's *Hunger Games* series, the novel ends with Katniss's rescue while another principle.

A secret is revealed that changes the lives or fates of the primary character(s): One of the cliffhangers in J.K. Rowling's sixth *Harry Potter* novel, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, involves Professor Snape revealing himself to be a half-blood—meaning one of his parents had magic while the other did not—before he escapes with the Death Eaters.

A principal character must make a choice that comes with high stakes:

This type of cliffhanger closes Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* as Sethe hovers between life and death. She confronts an important choice: rally, survive, and reclaim her own power or allow herself to slip away like the daughter she lost.

A principal character encounters a moral dilemma without a useful resolution:

This is the case in George Orwell's iconic dystopian novel *1984*, which ends with Winston deciding to love Big Brother despite all the atrocities they have inflicted on him—and the world.

2.4.2 Popular Genres That Use Cliffhangers

Though writers use cliffhangers in all genres of literature, there are a few in which cliffhangers are more common.

Suspense Novels

Suspense novels are mysteries, thrillers, adventures, spy fiction, horror/supernatural tales, and any story that relies on tension as a driving force of the plot. As such, they often include cliffhangers to increase the nail-biting atmosphere of the tale and keep readers on edge.

Children's Literature

Children's and young adult literature make abundant use of cliffhangers. Because there is an immeasurable benefit to fostering a love of reading early on, cliffhangers keep young readers interested in turning the page.

Movies and Television

Outside of the literary world, cliffhangers are extremely popular in television and movie plotlines. Soap operas, for example, have long incorporated cliffhangers into their stories. They are especially prevalent in episodes that air on Fridays or, in the case of nighttime soaps, serve as season finales. Cliffhangers are also common in season finales for situation comedies and dramas, as they produce buzz during the show's hiatus and make viewers anxious to tune back in when the series returns. Smaller-stakes cliffhangers like ending a scene with a character asking "Will you marry me?" or revealing an uncovered secret are sometimes inserted before commercial breaks to prevent viewers from changing the channel.

2.4.3 Cliffhangers' Relationship to Sequel Hooks

A sequel hook, or sequel bait, is a plot reference that indicates the possibility of a future story. Appearing in both literature and filmed entertainment, they may be an obvious lead-in to a planned follow-up installment, or they may be more ambiguous and merely raise the possibility of a future sequel. A sequel hook differs from a cliffhanger because, in the former, the story's main plot is typically resolved by the end. Instead of a huge, lingering question, the sequel hook leaves a minor plot point not entirely explained. Sometimes, this is nothing more than an off-hand reference the writer makes. This gives the novel or film a thread with which to continue the story if demand is strong enough

2.5 Function of Cliffhangers

By nature, man is a curious creature. Cliffhangers in any form of literature appeal to our curiosity. The main purpose of employing this device is to maintain suspense in the plot in order to ensure the interest and focus of the readers. It acts as a bait to lead the readers from one part of the text to another with more interest than before. Cliffhangers, undoubtedly, are enjoyable to read at the end of the chapters of novels. However, it can be very frustrating at the very end of a novel, as it leaves readers discontented after all the effort they put in to read the novel. In TV series, where the cliffhanger tool is perhaps most popular, they make use of this device to create effect. The viewers' favorite characters are left in a lurch, and the viewers yearn to know more about their fate. As a result, viewers are likely to want to keep up in the next episode. Cliffhangers are very popular in television shows and movie series. Advertisers have also picked up on the tradition, and have incorporated examples of cliffhangers in certain ads so that potential customers will be interested enough to visit their websites to learn more. Cliffhangers are

arguably most popular in soap operas, which are charged with the difficult task of keeping viewers coming back day after day, week after week, year after year.

2.6 Types of Cliffhangers

An Unanswered Question

This is the most common cliffhanger. Ask a provocative question or make sure that the one that started the scene is still unanswered.

A Loss

The loss can be physical or emotional. It can be a tangible thing or a relationship, but try to make it something that the protagonist thinks he or she can't do without.

Dangle A Carrot

Show the character – protagonist or antagonist – that something he or she wants desperately is there, but out of reach.

A Glimmer of Hope

A pronouncement is made that something that is needed, new, different, or exciting will happen soon.

A Physical Threat

Put the character, or somebody that he or she loves (love interest) in immediate danger. If you have created empathy between your readers and your character, they have to carry on reading.

A Sense of Foreboding

Use foreshadowing and body language. Use signs and symbols. Let your characters know that they will be going off into a dangerous place or a risky situation.

A Ticking Clock

End with a sense of urgency. A deadline has to be met.

An Accident

This can be a physical accident or a slip of the tongue. Set off an alarm. Reveal a secret. Break a leg.

Unexpected News

This includes any important information, or even a person, that shows up unexpectedly. End a scene with the protagonist receiving devastating news

An Unmade Decision

A character has a decision that needs to be made.

Cliffhangers aren't always perfect, or even good. Sometimes, the resolution doesn't beat the setup. But they're still a fun way to engage the audience.

2.7 Selected Nollywood Productions

Shuga Naija

Produced by Desiree Markgraaff is the third season of the television drama series Shuga, dubbed Shuga Naija, was first broadcast on MTV Base from December 2013 to January 2014. The season was written by Kemi Adesoye and directed by Biyi Bandele. It starred Tiwa Savage, Timini Egbuson, it is a multimedia campaign which educates youths on HIV, safe sex and teen pregnancy. It also touches on maternal and child health, family planning, gender-based violence, and women empowerment. The television series, which

consists of eight episodes, was shot and set in Lagos State, produced in partnership with the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA).

Ajoche

Produced by James Omokwe , Ajoche is set in 1918 when the Idoma emerged from the middle belt of Nigeria at a time when culture and tradition were celebrated. It's a tale of war and duty, revenge and honour, love and lust as the people of Ocholuje embrace their destiny, uncovering some bitter truths and harsh realities as they fight for survival. General Apeh hungers for a position of power that he was never destined for. With the help of his servant Bolum, Apeh planned and executed the murder of Odaleko's pregnant wife and took the throne for himself. Alas, he that seizes power forcefully will never conquer it. While others sought refuge from the king's violence, one man sought to bring him down

Jenifer's Diary

Jenifa's Diary is a Nigerian television comedy series, created by Funke Akindele. The series is part of the Jenifa franchise, based on a naive and funny character of the same name. Jenifa's Diary has 22 seasons and is currently active and ongoing.

Jenifa's utterances contain both 'direct' and 'indirect' speech acts. The series tells the story of a native village girl Jenifa (played by Funke Akindele) who desperately wants to get out of her ratchet way of life. In her desperation, she leaves her village and goes to the city of Lagos in order to get a proper education. Toyosi, an old friend is left with no choice than to accommodate her despite the visit being unannounced. Jenifa is unsuccessful with her education but she gets a job at Nikki'o salon on the Island with the

help of her friend Kiki, becoming very successful in her hairstyling career. The comedy series is directed by JJC Skillz and produced by Funke Akindele.

Tinsel

Directed by Wangi Mba-Uzoukwu and Produced by Jaiye Ojo, Tinsel is a Nigerian soap opera that began airing in August 2008. On May 23, 2013, the show's has over 3000 episodes. Tinsel's plot revolves around two rival film companies: Reel Studios, founded by Fred Ade-Williams (Victor Olaotan), and Odyssey Pictures, headed by Brenda "Nana" Mensah (Funmilola Aofiyebi-Raimi). Tinsel is a tale of drama, romance, betrayal and triumph. The show returned for its eighth season on the 25th of May, 2015.

Hush

In recent years, Nollywood has begun creating a number of interesting TV series; one of them is Africa Magic's, "Hush." A large part of the show's success has been the support of the online community, thanks to Twitter. It's fun to actually see Nigerians discuss the show while it's airing live just as we've done with foreign shows like "Game of Thrones," "Empire." The telenovela directed by Tope Oshin and produced by Native Media Limited tells the tale of fashion, politics and man's ambition. Trailing the lives of different members of high society and discovers the power players in fashion, politics and how their worlds collide in the city of Lagos. Hush is based on the struggle for political power, fashion relevance and the intrigue of love and lust. The show which has Richard Mofe Damijo, Olu Jacobs and Thelma ojiji as the lead actors displays the affluence of the rich and mighty and their need for the poor and common. Hush is a creatively written and beautifully produced series. The story of Hush revolves around Bem and Arinola, power-players in fashion and politics respectively. Bem, played by Richard Mofe-Damijo, is one

of Africa's biggest designers based in Lagos State, Nigeria, and Arinola, played by Thelma Okoduwa, is one of the state's fastest rising politicians. The intrigue begins when Bem proposes marriage to Arinola, an action that sets in motion a chain of events propelled by the secrets in their respective lives, secrets that run through the backrooms of secret societies, the corridors of the judiciary and on social media.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

According to Barnum (1990) “a theory is a statement that purports to account for or characterize some phenomena”, a theory is a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena (Kerlinger 1986). The theoretical framework of this study would be based on the Individual Difference Theory, The Uses and Gratification Theory and the Theory of Selective Exposure, Perception and Retention.

Individual Differences Theory

This theory postulates that audience respond differently to the mass media content according to their psychological needs, the theory expresses that the audience are separate individuals who will handle content from the media in a way that is distinct rather than as a uniform audience and that individuals consume the content to satisfy their needs. According to the Oxford dictionary the need may be for information (e.g. providing statistics about players and teams), integrative (offering a sense of belonging to a group of similarly interested people), affective (e.g. by providing excitement), or escapist (helping to release pent-up emotions). This theory posits that when the audience consumes nollywood productions they interpret the message differently and react to the narrative

technique utilized in a production in a differently manner. The theory posits that human beings vary greatly on their personal psychological organization, that these variation begin with a differential biological endowment, it also expresses that human beings raised under different environment are exposed to different points of view, and also that from the diverse environment they acquire different attitudes, values and beliefs which will shape their lives. (Oliseh 2018)

Uses and Gratification Theory

The Uses and Gratification Model was developed by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch. The theory focuses on media use, where the audience make use of the media to solve or to forget their problems, a good example is the use of television show as a form of entertainment, where the audience use television shows as a form of distraction from their problems. This theory posits that the need for audience to forget their problems prompts them to watch television entertainment. According to Katz and Blumler (1974) are of the idea that there is not merely one way that the populace uses media, they believe there are as many reasons for using the media, as there are media users. This theory expresses that each person from the audience have a different reception toward the use of television entertainment in the print media.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology adopted in conducting this research. The chapter is presented under the following headings, research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, validity of the instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted the survey research design. Survey design is explained by Nwogu (2001), as a procedure used in obtaining information from a sample or relevant population that is familiar with the ideas relating to the objectives of the study. In the opinion of Olaitan and Ali (2000), survey design is one which studies large or small population by selecting and analyzing (sample) data collected from the group through the use of questionnaire, telephone or personal interview. The design is therefore appropriate for this study as it tends to obtain data from students in mass communication department of the University of Benin

3.2 Population of The Study

According to Uma (2007), population is referred to as the totality of items or object which the researcher is interested in. It can also be total number of people of an area of study. The population of this study comprised of all the students in the department of

Mass communication in the University of Benin which is made up of year one to four totaling 777.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size for this study was 155 (one hundred and fifty five) students, 20% representation of the entire students of Mass Communication in the University of Benin, the size was selected in order to give all the students equal chance of being selected in the study. Nwana (1981) in Okoro (2001) expressed that if a population is a few hundred , a 40% or more will do for a sample size; if many hundreds (which applies to this study), a 20% sample will do, if a few thousands, a 10% sample will do and if several thousand, a 5% or less sample will do. Hence the Selection of 20% out of the population, 155 students were used to obtain broad response on audiences reception to cliff-hanging narratives utilized in Nollywood productions.

3.4 Sampling Technique

According to Asika (2002) sampling is done by studying a sample or the samples drawn from the population. The purposive techniques and the simple random sampling have been employed in this research study for the collection of data. The simple random technique implies the selection of data in such a way that each event in the population has an equal opportunity of selection hence the reason for utilizing this technique, giving respondents in the defined population equal and independent chances of being selected for the sample.

The purposive sampling technique was also used in this research. According to Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekharefo & Okpanachi “the purposive sampling technique is a

method in which the researcher uses his or her judgment to choose respondents and selects those that best meet the purpose of the study". The researcher purposively targeted a group of people, believed to be reliable for the study. Purposive sampling is usually used in studies like this. Purposive suggests that it is deliberate and the researcher believes that the sample is typical and representatives of a particular group. The advantage of purposive sampling technique over simple random technique is that the researcher uses his research skill and prior knowledge to choose respondents.

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument of data collection is the questionnaire. The questionnaire contains structured questions; the questions designed are to elicit response that would be used in addressing the research questions.

The first part of the questionnaire consists of question 1-5 which was used to obtain the demographic data of the sampled population, the second part of the questionnaire are sets of structured questions that would help to appraise the research question. The questionnaire for research was divided into two parts. Part A represented the demographic feature of the respondents while part B answered the research question. The questionnaires were administered on the respondents by the researcher. The reason for this is to enable the researcher get high percentage of the respondents and also for the result to be authentic and valid.

3.6 Method of Administration Of Research Instrument

The instruments for this study was administered to 155 (one hundred and fifty five) University of Benin students, which constituted all the levels of Mass Communication students in the university. They are:

1. 100 level Mass Communication students.
2. 200 level Mass Communication students.
3. 300 level Mass Communication students.
4. 400 level Mass Communication students.

To reach the students, the researcher distributed the 155 copies of questionnaire among the 4 level of Mass Communication in the University of Benin. The researcher, with assistance from peers distributed 38copies of questionnaires to 38 respondents in each level, and randomly gave 3 respondents the remaining 3 copies to fill. The research study covered all the levels in the department of Mass Communication in UNIBEN. The completed can of the questionnaire were collected on the spot upon completion.

3.7 Validity of Research Instrument

Validity has to do with whether the instrument is measuring what it is intended to measure. According to Streiner and Norman (1996) it is said to be the judgment regarding the degree to which the components of the research reflect theory, concept, or variable under study. The researcher conducted thorough validation of the instrument through the supervision of the project supervisor. Based on face-to-face validity, the supervisor confirmed that the items were proper and able to obtain the required information. As a result of this, the items were marked out as valid and all corrections spotted were effected.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The researcher collected data using the questionnaire. Copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researcher on the respondents. All the respondents were expected to give maximum co-operation, as the information on the questionnaire are all on things that revolve around their study. Hence, enough time was taken to explain how to tick or indicate their opinion on the items stated on the research questionnaire.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The descriptive method of data analysis (Qualitative Analysis) was employed using the simple percentage tables. This method was used because it helped provide answers to the research questions used.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.

Preamble

This chapter presents the data collected and collates via the questionnaires distributed to the respondent, as well as the discussion of findings. The first section of data analysis is the grouping of data according to items in the instrument using frequency tables and simple percentages. The second section discusses the findings of the study based on the research questions posed for this study. It is necessary to state here that the entire 155 questionnaires distributed, were retrieved on the spot. Thus a 100% return rate was achieved and analysis was based on this figure.

4.1 Administration of Research Instrument

	Number	Percentage
Administered questionnaire	155	155
Questionnaire Retrieved	150	150
Questionnaire not retrieved	5	5

The data presented in the table above shows that 155 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents of which 150 were correctly completed and retrieved while 5 copies of the questionnaire were not completed and retrieved. Hence the researcher will make use of the 150 copies of retrieved questionnaires for data compilation.

4.2 Presentation and Analysis of Demographic Data

Table 1: Gender distribution

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Male	63	63
Female	87	87

Total	150	100
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SOURCE: field survey, 2021

Data in table 1 shows that 63(63%) of the respondents were male, while 87 (percentage) were female. According to the data gathered females are more dominant than the male respondents.

Table 2: Age distribution

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
16-22	79	79
23-29	45	45
30-36	21	21
37 years and above	5	5
Total	150	100

SOURCE: Field survey, 2021

From the data representation presented in table 2, it shows that 79(79%) of the respondents were under the 16-22 age bracket, 45(45%) of the respondents were under the 23-29 age bracket, 21(21%) were under the 30-36 age bracket, 5(5%) were under the 37 and above age bracket. This data presentation shows that the 16-22 age bracket were more represented.

Table 3: Marital status

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Single	142	142
Married	8	8
Separated	-	-
Divorced	-	-
Total	150	100

SOURCE: Field of survey, 2021

Data in table 3 shows that 142(142%) of the respondents were single, 8(8%) were married, while none are separated or divorced.

Table 4: Educational Qualification

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE/WAEC/GCE	118	118
DIPLOMA (OND/HND)	42	42
B.Sc/B.A/B.Ed	-	-
Total	150	100

SOURCE: Field survey, 2021.

Data in table 4 shows that 107(percentage) of the respondents are SSCE/WAEC/GCE holders, 42(percentage) are DIPLOMA (OND/HND), while none are B.Sc/B.A/B.Ed holders.

Table 5: Level

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
100 level	38	38
200 level	38	38
300 level	34	34
400 level	40	40
Total	150	100

SOURCE: Field survey 2021

Data on Table 5, indicates that 38 of (38%) of the respondents are in 100 level respectively. 38 of (38%) of the respondents are in 200 level respectively. 34 of (34%) of the respondents are in 300 level respectively and 40 of (40%) of the respondents are in 400 level respectively. Evidently, respondents have some years in level of study to their credit.

4.3 Presentation and Analysis of Psychographic Data

Table 6: Do you watch series?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	117	117
No	33	33
Total	150	100

SOURCE: Field survey 2021

Data in table 6 shows that 117 (117%) of the respondents watch series, while 33 (33%) do not watch series. This interprets that a greater number of the respondents watch series.

Table 7: Are you aware of the following series? [Hush, Jenifa’s Dairy, Shuga Naija]

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	127	127
No	23	23
Total	150	100

SOURCE: Field survey 2021

Data in table 7 shows that 127(127%) of the respondents are aware of the above mentioned series while 23 (23%) are not aware of the existence of the series.

Table 8: Are you familiar with the term ‘Cliff-hanging in the productions’?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	121	121
No	29	29
Total	150	100

SOURCE: Field source 2021

From the table above 121(121%) of respondents are familiar with Cliff-hanging in the productions while 29 respondents (29%) are unaware of Cliff-hanging in the productions.

Table 9: If yes, has these series ‘Hush’, Jennifer’s Diary, changed your idea towards Hollywood series?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	20
No	130	130
Total	150	100

SOURCE: Field survey, 2021

The data in table 9 indicates that the exposure of 20(20%) respondents to these series have changed their idea towards Hollywood, while 130(130%) respondents ideas have not changed.

4.4 Discussion of findings

In order to ensure that the aims of this study were achieved, the three research questions posed for the study were answered with the aid of the data generated from the questionnaire. Apart from section A, which is concerned with the bio data of the respondents, tables in Sections B sought answers to the three research questions formulated for this study from the questionnaire. This discussion is based on the answers to the research questions as collected and collated from the items in the questionnaire by the respondents.

Research Question 1: What is the level of impact cliff-hangers utilized in Nollywood movie series productions have on its audience?

According to the findings of this research work, cliff-hanging narratives utilized in Nollywood movie series production have very little or no impact on its audience. Table 9 gave answer to research question 1. A high respondents state that the utilization of cliff-hanging narrative in the selected Nollywood series has not changed their idea towards Nollywood series while few of the respondents acknowledged that it has changed their idea, bringing about the answer of the research question that cliff-hangers utilized in this production has very little impact on its audience.

Research Question 2: Why do the audience lose interest in Nollywood movie series productions?

Audience lose interest in Nollywood movie series as a result of the poor utilization of narratives, especially the cliff hanging narrative whose function is to serve like an escort that guides the audience from one series to another, keeping them glued to the series to discover the play down of events in the story line. When Nollywood movie series production fail to deliver richly constructed cliff-hangers, the production will be unable to

captivate the interest and attention of its audience, thereby affecting their zeal to keep watching.

Research Question 3: What is the reason for poor narrative skill among producers and scriptwriters in Nollywood productions ?

The Nigerian movie industry is packed with series with poor cliff-hanging narratives and weak plots that cannot hold a good cliff-hanger, let alone the attention of the audience as a result of producers and scriptwriters rushing into production without accurately defining and extensively accessing their project. Their goal is to make fast movie and fast cash. They are more concerned in creating quantity but not quality and this has led to the production of movies that fall short of standard, failing to meet up to expectation, undermining the Nigerian movie industry.

CHAPTER FIVE.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings of this study as well as suggestions for further research.

5.1. Summary

This study dwelt on Audience reception to cliff-hanging narrative of selected Nollywood movies (a study of Mass Communication students in the University of Benin, Edo state). The research was aimed at finding out the level of impact cliff-hangers utilized in Nollywood productions have on Mass Communication students in UNIBEN, to ascertain why audiences lose interest in Nollywood sequel productions and to determine the reason for poor narrative skill among producers and scriptwriters in Nollywood productions. To achieve this, the study was anchored on two theoretical framework which are: Individual Difference Theory and Uses and Gratification Theory. Individual Difference Theory and Uses and Gratification Theory were used to show how audiences react differently to the different contents they view.

The basic assumption of Individual Difference Theory and Uses and Gratification Theory encourages for a strong implementation of narrative techniques (cliff-hangers) as audiences make use of the media to solve and forget their problems hence a good implementation of cliff-hanging narrative would be a perfect distraction for the audience as they react differently to different contents they view

The research covered all of Mass Communication students in University of Benin ranging from 100 level Mass Communication students, 200 level Mass Communication

students, 300 level Mass Communication students and 400 level Mass Communication students. The population was drawn from these selected students because in dealing with the research question of this study, the perceptions or views held by these individuals played a major role when carrying out the study. The random sampling technique was used for the study. The choice of random sampling was to enable the researcher ensure the population participated in the study. The questionnaire was the main research instrument.

155 questionnaires were distributed to the students in the 4 levels of the department of Mass Communication and 150 copies were retrieved. The copies of the questionnaires were distributed in this manner in order to ensure the students that participated in the study are the same proportion as they existed in the population. This was to draw out data/ responses required for the purpose of this study which is aimed at revealing the level of impact cliff-hangers utilized in Nollywood productions have on Mass Communication students in UNIBEN, to ascertain why audiences lose interest in Nollywood sequel productions and to determine the reason for poor narrative skill among producers and scriptwriters in Nollywood productions. A total of (3) research questions were analyzed in this study and the data collected and collated in this study were presented and analyzed with the aid of Simple Percentages. The simple percentages were used to analyze the respondents' personal data, while the mean score was used to answer the research questions and the criterion mean for this study was placed at 2.50.

However, the study was able to reveal audiences reception to cliff-hanging narratives of selected Nollywood movie series

5.2. Summary of the Findings

The findings of this study include but is not limited to:

1. To Measure the impact of cliff-hangers in Nollywood production on audiences as perceived by Mass Communication students, a large number of the respondents believe that the utilization of cliff-hanging narrative in the selected Nollywood series has not changed their idea towards Nollywood series while a few of the respondents acknowledged that it has changed their idea.
2. To know why audience lose interest in Nollywood movie series productions as perceived by Mass Communication students is a result of the poor utilization of cliff-hanging narrative which fails to keep the audience glued to the movie series, uneager to stay for the next episode.
3. To establish the reason for the poor narrative skill among producers and scriptwriters as perceived by Mass Communication students are due to the weak plots that cannot hold a good cliff-hanger, anchor more on creating quantity and not quality and producers and scriptwriters rushing into production without accurately defining and extensively accessing their project in a bid to make fast cash.

5.3. Conclusion

As a matter of fact, the rate of change today is faster, and affects a larger portion of the earth's population, than at any other time in history. Yet despite all these changes, there is still one constant. And this is why cliff-hanging narratives should be one that can hold viewers attention in any Nollywood movie series.

Based on the findings of this work, it could be observed that the producers and scriptwriters should dwell more on providing narratives that are capable of holding the interest of viewers in Nollywood series. It is observed that weak and poorly written scripts and productions are as a result of the quest for quick cash with little or no accuracy in assessment of the project.

Finally, there is a gain saying the fact that a good cliff-hanging narrative is necessary for the growth and success of any Nollywood movie series. Therefore, producers and scriptwriters should work hand in hand and explore all the avenues at their disposal so as to create compelling and catchy content capable of holding the attention of viewers. If Nollywood movie producers and scriptwriters exploit the services a well thought cliff-hanging narrative have to offer, it will go a long way to improving not only the movie making skills of the producers and scriptwriters, it would also ensure the overall success of the movie series in question. Hence, the importance of a good cliff-hanger narrative cannot be over emphasized.

5.4. Recommendations

The following are the recommendations made by the researcher in order to enhance perception of Hollywood series by Mass Communication students are:

1. The Nigerian movie industry should always involve its producers and scriptwriters to learn the effective use of Cliff-hangers and other narrative techniques so that they would be able to effectively produce series that will hold the attention of its audience
2. Movie regulatory bodies like National Film Video Censors Board (NIPR) with support from the federal government should introduce a policy that makes it mandatory for producers to produce series with quality content, emphasizing on more of quality than quantity in movie productions.
3. Due to the environment we live in is constantly changing, producers with the help of the scriptwriters should be sensitive to changes in the society that could be in the interest of the audience

5.5. Suggestions for Further Studies

The following topics are suggested for further examination in order to enhance audience perception towards cliff-hangers utilized in Nollywood series production.

1. Challenges faced by producers and scriptwriters in the production of movie series in the Nigerian movie industry.
2. Investigating the role of scriptwriters in building a structured cliff-hanger.
3. The level of impact cliff-hangers has on its audience in movie series productions.

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APPENDIX QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Mass Communication,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Benin,
P.M.B 1154,
Benin-City,
Edo state,
Nigeria

Dear Respondent,

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF ITEMS IN QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is **Otabor Elizabeth Osamudiamen**, a final year student of the above department and institution. I am conducting a research on the topic: **Audience Reception To Cliff-Hanging Narratives, A Case Study Of Selected Nigerian Movies**. This study is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A) Degree in Mass Communication.

I hereby appeal to you to fill this questionnaire as honestly as possible as your response is required in providing solutions to the research problem.

I sincerely pledge that any information given will be treated with extreme confidentiality and would be used for the research purpose.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,

Otabor Elizabeth Osamudiamen.
Researcher.

QUESTIONNAIRE.

INSTRUCTION: Please complete the questionnaire by ticking [] in the box for the options you consider as most appropriate.

Key: Yes or No

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. **Gender:** Male [] Female []
2. **Age Range:** 16-22 years [] 23-29years [] 30-36 years [] 37 years and above []
3. **Marital Status:** Single [] Married [] Separated [] Divorced []
4. **Educational Qualification:** SSCE/WAEC/GCE [] DIPLOMA (OND/HND) [] B.Sc/B.A/B.Ed []
5. **Level:** 100 level [] 200 level [] 300 level [] 400 level []

SECTION B:

6. Do you watch series? Yes [] No []
7. Are you aware of the following series? [Hush, Jenifa's Dairy, Shuga Naija] Yes [] No []
8. Are you familiar with the term 'Cliff-hanging in the Productions'? Yes [] No []
9. If yes, has these series 'Hush', Jennifer Diary, changed your idea towards Nollywood series? Yes [] No []

