

**THE INFLUENCE OF FILM GENRE ON NOLLYWOOD CONSUMPTION
AMONG UNIBEN STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF EVERYBODY LOVES
JENIFA**

BY

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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

AUGUST, 2025.

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS
COMMUNICATION, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN
CITY, IN PARTIAL FUFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A HONS) DEGREE IN MASS
COMMUNICATION**

AUGUST 2025.

DECLARATION

I declare that this project is based on the study undertaken by me in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under the supervision of Dr. Daniel Ekhareafo. All the ideas are products of my personal research and where the views of others have been used, it is duly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

This is certify that this project was carried out by Mr. ABIWO Marvellous Oluwatofunmi (ART2100857) of the Department of Mass communication, University of Benin, Benin City under my supervision.

Dr. Daniel Ekhareafo
Project Supervisor

Date

Dr. Daniel Ekhareafo
Head of Department

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this body of work to the Lord God Almighty: the giver of life, health, strength and wisdom. Also, I dedicate it to my parents: my reason for all, and every phenom that becomes inspired by this work.

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My foremost appreciation goes to my Creator. You alone are responsible for the success of my sojourn at UNIBEN, and to you I extend my gratitude. This journey hasn't been easy, but you have empowered me to persevere through it, in spite of my valleys.

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AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of film genre on Nollywood consumption patterns among students of the University of Benin (UNIBEN), with the case study being *Everybody Loves Jenifa* (2024). It examined the impact of film genre on Nollywood consumption patterns as well as the influence of social and cultural factors on UNIBEN students' genre preferences. Drawing on the Uses and Gratifications theory and the Play theory of Mass Communication, the research also explored how accessibility and availability of Nollywood films affect its consumption and, the appeal of specific genres on UNIBEN students' Nollywood consumption. Using a survey design, data were collected from a randomly selected sample of 398 students across various faculties and levels of study. Findings revealed that genre plays a huge role in influencing film choice, with comedy emerging as the most preferred genre among respondents due to its entertainment value, cultural relevance, and stress-relieving qualities. Additionally, accessibility via mobile devices and cost-free platforms like YouTube significantly determined viewing habits. Social influence, particularly recommendations and social media trends, also impacted students' consumption decisions. The study concluded that film genre not only affects individual preferences but also reflects broader cultural and social dynamics within the youth demographic. It recommended that Nollywood filmmakers diversify genre offerings while preserving cultural value to effectively engage younger audiences.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Film is such an integral aspect of our lives. It has been observed that nowadays, the younger generation barely eat meals without watching a film, or even relax without the possibility of consuming a film. Nowadays, “Netflix and Chill” is a norm for those in romantic relationships, and it involves bonding over a film. Frequenting cinemas is a surefire way of networking and getting entertained in this day and age, and rightfully so because of the benefits films provide.

According to David Fincher, “In film, we sculpt time, we sculpt behaviour, and we sculpt light” (Warner Bros. Pictures & Paramount Pictures, 2008). We can glean certain fundamental elements that make up “film” from this namely: story, visual art, and sound. If anything, films tell stories, and otherwise communicates ideas, thoughts, emotions, or vibes through characters on moving images, that are generally made with sound. They can be watched on our mobile phones, television, and/or the cinema. Moreover, films are what the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (better known as the Oscars), Golden Globes (Khokhar, 2025) & African Magic Viewers’ Choice Awards (AMVCA) among many others, analyze and award regularly (Njoku, 2025).

Film genre on another hand is one of the many ways films can be classified. According to Ryall (1975, p28) as cited in Dhoest (2017, p3), “Genres may be defined as patterns/forms/styles/structures which transcend individual films, and which supervise both their construction by the filmmakers and their reading by an audience.” This can explain what Langford (2005, p5) meant by “...genre is a process rather than a fact, and one in which different perspectives, needs and interests can and do deliver widely varying outcomes. Genres are not born, they are made.” Ultimately, film genres don’t have a singular meaning, they encompass the different forms and formats that films are released in, which attracts any demographic to watch it. It could come in comedy, thriller, action, romance, animation, science-fiction, fantasy, musical, and some others. As opposed to tragedy and other defined genres, the “comedy” genre in film aims to elicit laughter from the audience. According to Dhoest (2017, p8), “In comedy, the play with expectations is one of the key mechanisms generating humor, viewers expecting to be surprised.”

The Nigerian film Industry or Nollywood, as it’s popularly known, has been attributed with different origins ranging from the Yoruba travelling theatre tradition in the 1950s to 1980s, according to Akande (2020) cited by Badru, Hashim & Adisa (2022) as well as Okome (2007), to an opportune, Idumota-based Igbo trader that reused Taiwan-imported VHS cassettes to record and retail local theatre productions and performances sometime in the 1970s. However, Nollywood in this dispensation, is concerned with the producers, directors, actors, and films themselves, that are established in Nigeria. There’s no single element that can wholly account for Nollywood, but it’s the Nigerian film

industry with all its people, works, and even business structures, that make it up. From nostalgic TV favourites like Wale Adenuga's *Papa Ajasco* to record-breaking cinema blockbusters like Funke Akindele's *A Tribe Called Judah*, Nollywood has come a long way in educating, entertaining and informing the Nigerian audience.

In Nollywood, we have Kunle Afolayan's *Anikulapo* under the historical genre, Temidayo Makanjuola's *Blood Sisters* under the thriller genre, Loukman Ali's *Brotherhood* under the action genre, and many others. It's also worthy of note that these movies are not exclusively a single genre, but some (if not all) are crossovers and blends, of sorts. Furthermore, the platform in which these films are consumed have a role to play. For instance, the drama and reality TV genres as in *Wura* and *The Real Housewives of Lagos* respectively, which come in series, are usually streamed on Showmax.

As far as audio-visual media consumption is concerned in any setting, the younger demographic can never be ignored. A good portion of this audience is made up of tertiary institution students and young adults at large. Because of this irrefutable fact, it's commendable to find the line between these young adults and their Nollywood consumption preferences as regards the film genre. More specifically, this study aims to explore how and why the younger generation gravitate towards certain film genres as opposed to others.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As Africa's most prolific film industry and arguably number two worldwide, Nollywood has showcased so much capacity over the years by offering films that cut across different genres. However, there seems to be a rather considerable viewership of comedy films, when compared to the box office revenue (and therefore, viewership) of other genres, in recent times.

Nollywood produces films across genres like thriller, romance, and comedy, yet comedy films dominate viewership among Nigerian audiences, including UNIBEN students. This study addresses the lack of understanding about why this preference exists, exploring how genre as well as accessibility and cultural factors shape consumption patterns among this demographic.

This study sought to address this gap by examining how film genre shapes Nollywood consumption among UNIBEN students, exploring not just preferences but the practical and social reasons driving their choices.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research work aims to:

1. Examine the impact of film genre on Nollywood consumption patterns among UNIBEN students.

2. Investigate the influence of social and cultural factors on UNIBEN students' genre preferences in Nollywood films.
3. Explore how accessibility and availability of Nollywood films across different genres affect UNIBEN students' consumption choices.
4. Identify the appeal of specific genres on UNIBEN students' Nollywood consumption.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions were answered, during the course of this study:

1. How does film genre impact Nollywood consumption patterns among UNIBEN students?
2. How do social and cultural factors influence UNIBEN students' genre preferences in Nollywood films?
3. How do accessibility and availability of Nollywood films across different genres shape UNIBEN students' consumption choices?
4. What is the appeal of specific genres on UNIBEN students' Nollywood consumption?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is quite relevant because it sheds light on the film preferences of UNIBEN students, which represent young, Nigerian adults as a whole. This insight

would be invaluable for Nigerian filmmakers in their film production and distribution endeavours. It would help them understand audience behaviour so they create films that align with such peculiarities.

Furthermore, this work would contribute to the larger discourse of film studies and Nigerian cinema. Moreover, all students interested in learning about film genres as they relate to Nollywood and her audience will benefit from this work.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study is limited to students of the University of Benin, Benin City, to provide insights into the consumption patterns of the younger Nigerian demographic. They are the young adults enrolled at the University of Benin in Edo State, Nigeria. The University of Benin (UNIBEN) is a leading Nigerian university ranked 6th in Nigeria (Times Higher Education, 2025). It hosts students across Ekehuan Campus and Ugbowo Campus, with departments across 15 faculties (University of Benin, 2025). They come from diverse regions of Nigeria, mostly southern Nigeria though. As undergraduates, they live in hostels or off-campus, with access to digital devices.

UNIBEN students in this study, serve as a bridge between Nollywood's output and the younger demographic of Nigerian viewers at large. Although they may not have to deal with the bustle of Lagos and the serenity cum political affluence of Abuja, these (partly) Benin city residents offer insights that are independent of such hubs. Their genre preferences, use of technology and steady viewership, show how they engage with films,

which directly impacts film consumption patterns. Moreover, this work aims to find out the reasons why the genre of a Nollywood film would determine how much it's consumed.

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used during the course of this study:

Film: This refers to media content, which entails a plot, characters, sound and themes, that is consumed by people. It also refers to movies or cinema (as a media content, not a media consumption platform). It is produced and released by filmmakers worldwide.

Film Genres: This refers to the categorization of films. There are different film genres namely comedy, action-thriller, romance, and historical, to name a few.

Comedy: This entails films that embody elements of comedy: they are funny, witty and entertaining. Funke Akindele's *Everybody Loves Jenifa* is a comedy film.

Nollywood: This refers to the Nigerian filmmaking industry as well as Nigerian films at large. The films created within Nigeria and/or by Nigerian filmmakers make up Nollywood.

Nollywood consumption: This basically means the watching of Nigerian/Nollywood films. This implies how, where and when film consumers watch Nigerian films.

UNIBEN students: This encompasses the individuals enrolled at the University of Benin, Benin city (at the time of this study). They entail students across the various facilities nestled in the two campuses.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter deals with the review of related literature. It aims to cover how this work relates to other published works, and where it falls under a media theory. It is organized under the following subheadings:

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.2 Opinion Review

2.3 Empirical Review

2.4 Theoretical Frameworks

2.5 Summary

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Film

Film is a young medium, at least compared to most other media ... film came into existence only ... a century ago. Yet in this fairly short span, the newcomer has established itself as an energetic and powerful art form (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010). One, or the conventionally used definition of film, is a series of still photographs, projected in rapid succession onto a screen by means of light. The optical phenomenon

known as persistence of vision, gives the illusion of actual, smooth, and continuous movement; a remarkably effective medium for conveying drama and evoking emotion (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2025). Otherwise and in this context, it refers to media content conventionally made of visuals, audio, characters, and story. Also, it can be referred to as “movie” or “cinema.”

The role film plays in any society can not be overemphasized. From the essentials, information, education, entertainment, and mobilization, films impact the lives of their viewers in diverse ways. Furthermore, films are instrumental in telling culturally relevant stories, portraying the lives of people from various backgrounds, and showcasing the talent and skill of those above-the-line as well as those below-the-line respectively, in any society. Films are the only windows, with which some viewers observe others’ lives in a different region, era, continent, and/or ethnicity.

2.1.2 History of Film

A brief look at the history and evolution of film is essential to fully understand it as a concept. In the late 19th century, the Lumière brothers: Auguste and Louis, developed the Cinématographe, for public viewership. Moreover, the late 19th century also birthed the kinetoscope by Thomas Edison, for individual viewing (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010). Notably, these early films were inherently silent. These films served as the foundation of cinema until the 1920s, when synchronized sound came about. *The Jazz Singer* (1927), produced by the Warner Brothers, was the first feature-length film to

successfully integrate sound commercially, leading a global transition by the early 1930s (Cook, 2016).

Colour film, became mainstream with titles like *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010). By the 1970s, the New Hollywood era ushered in auteur films e.g. *The Godfather* (1972) which emphasized artistry over studio formulas (Cook, 2016). The shift from celluloid to digital cameras in the 2000s, enabled filmmakers worldwide, to tell their stories (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010). Digital distribution followed, with Digital Versatile Disks (DVDs) giving way to streaming platforms like Netflix by the 2010s (Tryon, 2013).

Currently, films are now created without particular consideration of technical limits, at least in the New World. There are cinema screens that coexist with mobile devices, and virtual reality (VR) films immerse audiences in interactive formats (Vivarelli, 2023). Film is both a global industry and an intimate experience. What began as a flickering curiosity in the eve of the 20th century, has become a part of modern life across borders.

Just like a painter uses his palette, brush, and canvas to create art that resonates with viewers, the filmmaker uses his script, characters, cameras, microphones, and software to craft a piece that is enjoyed by his audience. As an art form, films are quite subjective: what is laudable by Mr. A beneath the cool, cherry blossoms of Oriental Asia might not be appreciated by Miss B in tropical West Africa. Still, what is opted for by the

coat-wearing Mr. C of Nordic Europe might be somewhat appreciated by Ms. D in the Americas. This distinction in preference may have given rise to genres, or genres themselves might have shaped these tastes over time.

2.2 Opinion Review

2.2.1 Film Genres

Genres are essentially what is used to categorize and interpret works of art. Art in this case is not limited to film, but entails the visual arts and music as well. Pye (1995) as cited in Langford (2005) postulates that “Genre can be described as a context in which meaning is created through a play of difference and/in repetition, one ‘narrow enough for recognition of the genre to take place but wide enough to allow enormous individual variation’.” What this means is, genre classifies films by how similar they are. This similarity could be seen in the storyline, themes, setting, and say, climax of the said films. However, this is no hard way to define genre, because like every other concept in the field of arts, it is ultimately subjective.

Furthermore, films have inherent characteristics namely the setting, theme, mood, target audience, and budget, that could determine the genre. This is why when a certain film shares relatively similar characteristics (as mentioned above) with another, as seen in Loukman Ali’s *Brotherhood* and Jade Osiberu’s *Gangs of Lagos*, it’s safe but somewhat reductive, to say they are the same genre.

In Hollywood (the American film industry), science fiction (e.g., James Cameron's *Avatar* franchise), fantasy (e.g., David Benioff's *Game of Thrones*), historical (e.g., Scott and Franzoni's *Gladiator*), and action (e.g., Gary Scott Thompson's *Fast and Furious* franchise) are some of the leading genres by virtue of viewership, target audience, and online discourse dominance. Another aspect is how genres blend, creating hybrids that defy convention. These crossovers emerge when filmmakers tweak standards, say by adding romance to a comedy in rom-coms. Chris Van Dusen's *Bridgerton* embodies this somewhat, with elements of history, romance and drama.

Notable film genres

Comedy aims to make audiences laugh through humour. It includes funny situations, clever dialogue, and characters that people can relate to. The genre often uses jokes, misunderstandings, or playful actions to entertain, and in some cases, it adds deeper stories about life, relationships, or struggles. King (2002) explains, "Comedy seeks to provoke laughter, often by highlighting the absurdities of human behaviour." Comedy appeals to audiences because it offers enjoyment and a break from daily stress. Jason Moore's *Pitch Perfect* was a funny yet impactful watch, as it touched on the dynamics in female friendships, a cappella singing competitions and good old humour. This form of fun and relatability draws viewers in, especially those looking for light entertainment. It's a genre that suits people wanting both escape and a sense of connection.

Action/Thriller films are generally well-received among film viewers due to their suspenseful and fast-paced storytelling. The unpredictability and action-packed nature of thrillers keep viewers engaged, making them appealing to those who enjoy crime narratives and psychological tension. However, in Nollywood, thrillers have struggled with consistent mainstream success due to limitations in screenplay depth, cinematography, and special effects. Films like Jeremy Saulnier's *Rebel Ridge* and Jaume Collet-Serra's *Carry-On* (2024) gained traction because of their high production quality and fast-paced action.

Romance films evoke mixed reactions among viewers. While some enjoy love stories, others feel the narratives are repetitive more often than not, centering on love triangles, arranged marriages, or predictable rags-to-riches plots. Stanley Obi's *Love In Every Word* (2025) was well-received because it captured societal issues like patriarchy, cross-ethnic tension as well as romance. Other titles include Mark Waters' *Mother Of The Bride* (2024) & Elizabeth Allen Rosenbaum's *Purple Hearts* (2022) which incorporated elements of comedy and musical respectively. Arguably, standalone romantic films don't always maintain viewers' interest unless there's more to them beyond "love."

Historical films seem to be resurging worldwide. They embody tales and epics from the past. While usually insightful on the language, costumes, norms and general vibe of a different era, they aren't always engaged with. However, some well-produced historical films, such as Bolanle Austen-Peters' *House of Ga'a* (2024) and Kunle

Afolayan's *Anikulápó* (2022) have gained recognition for their cultural significance and immersive storytelling. The challenge with historical films, especially those of Nollywood is often the limited budgets and maintaining historical accuracy while keeping the story engaging for modern audiences.

Detective films are known for intricate plots centered on crime-solving, investigation, psycho-analysis and profiling, appealing to viewers who enjoy intellectual stimulation and suspense. These films often feature detectives discovering criminals against all odds. Despite their potential, detective films are not quite widespread in Nollywood because of their niche nature as well as budgeting demands. Hollywood favourites like *Knives Out* (2019) stand out for their captivating storytelling. Improving production quality and incorporating culturally relevant themes in Nollywood, could increase the genre's production as well as consumption among young Nigerian audiences.

2.2.2 Nollywood: The Nigerian Filmmaking Industry

According to Igwe (2015), in the British Council, "the term 'Nollywood' was arguably coined by the New York Times journalist Norimitsu Onishi in 2002 when he observed film-making activity in Lagos, Nigeria." The Nigerian filmmaking industry, stands as a powerhouse, known for churning out around over 2000 films each year, making it the world's second-largest film industry by output, behind only India's Bollywood (UNESCO, 2021). It entails both low-budget video films and high-quality productions that grow by the day, which impacts the African continent and beyond

(Ortega, Ahmad & Chen, 2024). Nollywood began as a small movement but has evolved into a cultural and economic force, telling stories that reflect Nigerians' life to all who have learnt to listen.

Nollywood is arguably believed to have started in the 1990s with Kenneth Nnebue's *Living in Bondage*, a straight-to-video film shot in Igbo, which told a story of greed and betrayal. It was commercially successful on VHS because Nigeria's economy was shaky and cinemas were fading. By the early 2000s, Nollywood boomed, with films produced quickly and sold on CDs. The new wave of filmmaking marked by improved production values, bigger budgets and stronger narrative discipline, has been described as the "New Nollywood." According to Afolayan (2014) as cited in Ezepue (2020, p2), New Nollywood is defined as "a move away from the cinematic ebullience and mushrooming tendency of Nollywood towards a qualitative and aesthetic transformation of the industry." It was arguably kick-started in 2009 by director, Kunle Afolayan with his internationally recognized *The Figurine* (Okiche, 2025).

Some films have left a big mark on Nollywood as a whole. *The Wedding Party* (2016), a romantic comedy by Kemi Adetiba, smashed records with about \$1.3 million at the box office, showing the industry's potential (Vourlias, 2017). Another is *Osuofia in London* (2003), a comedy that mixed Nigerian and British life for laughs, and then, *Lionheart* (2018), Genevieve Nnaji's directorial debut; a trailblazer for the location of shooting (Enugu) and medium of distribution (Netflix).

Nollywood's filmmaking process is unique, characterized predominantly by low-budget productions often shot with digital cameras over a few days in homes or on the streets rather than in studios, released in weeks. Actors might improvise lines, and directors work through tight schedules, yet the output is huge (Jedlowski, 2013). Some even refer to this type of films with low budgets and mediocre plots, that are usually released on YouTube and CDs, as "Asaba Nollywood." Well-funded Nollywood films today are better made, with relatively good sound and visuals.

Nollywood, a "cultural and economic driver," also boosts Nigeria's economy, creating jobs for actors, editors, and traders. However, it's not all that seamless. Challenges like piracy, poor funding, and old equipment slow things down. Ezepue (2020, p3) notes, the shift to New Nollywood reflects a professionalization (or gentrification, metaphorically), but it risks losing the appeal to the low class masses. She also stated, "Lack of expert skill or professionalism remains the major points of criticism against Nollywood filmmakers" (2020, p4).

Nollywood's heart is cultural; it uses the lingua franca, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and Pidgin English, in making stories feel like home. A comedy might poke at a stingy uncle or a semi-literate philanthropist, while an historical shows a wedding with real customs and traditions. This richness makes Nollywood more than films; it showcases Nigeria through the lens of its people.

2.2.3 Film Consumption

Film consumption is essentially how people watch movies and what they gain from it. It includes where they watch (e.g. cinemas, TVs, phones) and how often. It's more than just viewing; it's about picking films that suit their lives and enjoying them. Consumption shows how audiences choose films that match their needs. For students, it's about how they fit films into their schedules alongside lectures, personal study and social relations.

Film audience refer to the group of people watching films (movies and TV series), actively shaping what hits or flops, by their tastes and habits. When well-created films are gobbled up, they tend to have a cult-following, especially when the film is open to sequels, prequels and spin-offs. This can be seen in Konietzko and DiMartino's *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Omoera (2019) notes, "Reception reflects social and cultural ties," especially for industries like Nollywood. This concept frames specific viewers, such as UNIBEN students, in understanding film consumption.

Below are a few factors that affects film consumption among UNIBEN students:

1. **Accessibility:** Cinemas & streaming availability influence film consumption habits. In UNIBEN, there's a relative access to cinemas, compared to other places. Besides, majority of students have mobile phones, and hence, can stream (legally or illegally) from there (Aveyard, 2016).

2. **Cost:** The financial buoyancy of UNIBEN students determines what choices they make. Cheaper options, like pirated films downloading, are opted for, over paid streaming and watching in cinemas usually (Nhan, Bowen, & Bartula, 2019).
3. **Time:** UNIBEN students have lectures to attend, tests/assignments to write, projects to embark on and exams to prepare for. It's up to them to prioritize what's worth their time. That's why some students watch films immediately they're released, some do much later and some don't at all Almoraie, Alothmani, Alomari & Al-amoudi, 2025).
4. **Season:** These past years, there's been a pattern of household filmmakers releasing titles during the Dettu December season. In 2024, Jade Osiberu released *Christmas in Lagos*, Femi Adebayo had his *Seven Doors*, Ayo Makun: *The Waiter* & Toyin Abraham gave her *Alakada: Bad and Boujee* (Okafor, 2025). This could be because many Nigerians, like UNIBEN students and those abroad, go home to cross over into the new year with their families.

The following are some reasons why UNIBEN students consume films:

1. **Entertainment & Relaxation:** It's observable that students, like other young adults, want to have fun. School work can be exhausting, so consuming films is a way to entertain oneself. Films help students unwind (Kudalkar et al., 2024).
2. **Connection:** Consuming films are can be a social activity, if done upon recommendation or with someone else. Students might watch films together,

conversing about them after. With the advent of Tiktok, UNIBEN students and young adults generally, get to consume films and influence others to do so, by virtue of appraisal or critique on this platform (Astleitner & Schlick, 2024).

3. **Culture:** Nollywood's local tales, like family dramas and historical epics feel familiar and keep viewers hooked. When Kunle Afolayan's *Anikulapo* was released, it sent shockwaves over the media because it was fresh, timely and reflective of the old Oyo empire.
4. **Education:** Some UNIBEN students, like this author consume films to learn. This "learning" is not necessarily in the conventional four-walls-of-a-classroom sense. This learning comes about by exposure to a different way of living, vocabulary enhanced by hearing new words/how old words can be correctly used in context, or insight into a new field entirely. Georgia Lee's *Partner Track* offered insight to how the legal world operates in America, just like Kemi Adetiba's *King of Boys* showcases Nigerian politics.

Once upon a time, Nollywood films were only on Compact Disks (CDs), then they were exclusively on the television, but now it's arguably much easier to watch them either via streaming on our mobile phones/laptops or watching on cinema screens. As regards the streaming, there's YouTube, Netflix, Prime Video and Showmax predominantly. However, some Nollywood titles are only accessible on the television. The relatability of Nollywood by showcasing the Nigerian life (or at least, the elite

aspects, giving the average Nigerian what to long for), drives its demand (Onuzulike, 2015).

Opinions on film genres are vital to this study's focus. King (2002) says comedy hooks people by poking fun at life, which is ideal for students wanting a laugh. Onuzulike (2015) ties this to Nollywood, noting its works about how family and struggle fit Nigerian youth tastes. But Adejunmobi (2015) warns Nollywood repeats themes like love and riches too much, risking boredom and stunting creativity, even if viewers keep watching. This distinction shows that Nollywood genres both attract and test audiences. This is so because, the familiarity of comedies and other similar genres make viewers watch them, but that can create an impression that Nollywood is good for only these genres, risking the industry's reputation.

Consumption habits call for more discussion. Miller (2016) opines that Nollywood's quick, cheap films can lack depth, possibly pushing some away. However, Nollywood has come so far, and what are prevalent aren't necessarily "quick and cheap films." Moreover, the advent of streaming has surely improved Nollywood consumption by virtue of access, but it hasn't done much to diversify film genres as the platform was (at one point) saturated with historical films. Furthermore, the timing of blockbuster releases and the platform in which they're released, can't be overlooked in this study. UNIBEN students like every other set of Nigerians, would likely watch them of their own

volition, or as a social activity. The placement of Nollywood films in cinemas is commendable, but streaming unavailability can be problematic.

Osei-Mensah (2025) reports *Everybody Loves Jenifa* as a record smasher, with almost ₦2 billion box office total from Nigeria (and West Africa, at large), indicating its relevance with students and by extension, Nigerians. Funke Akindele's reaffirmation of comedic expertise as shown in the film, with herself as the main character, is iconic. Yet, Joe (2024) calls it "big but predictable," relying on Akindele's star power over new ideas. Likewise, Taofeeq (2024) opines "It's a festive crowd-pleaser that leans heavily on nostalgia and fan service." It's undoubtedly a favourite, though debatable if a masterclass in popularity or artistry.

In other Nollywood works, Niyi Akinmolayan's *The Set Up* is lauded because of its masterful execution as a thriller & Kayode Kasum's *Afamefuna: An Nwa Boi story* is timely and insightful for showcasing the Igbo apprenticeship system. These titles explore Nigerian stories that are somewhat niche but well-received. Moreover, they are both available to stream on Netflix, which is commendable when compared to those only on cinema screens. These perspectives collectively suggest that genre influence is a blend of accessibility, cultural connection, and inherent appeal, indicating UNIBEN students' Nollywood consumption to be determined by both choice and circumstance.

2.3 Empirical Review

A. Badru, H. Hashim & R. M. Adisa (2022) on “Evaluation of Factors Influencing Audience Perception of Nollywood Movies.”

In this study, the stratified random sampling is used on Lagos state residents, to determine the sample of 384 from a population of 15 million, in which 367 were deemed valid. Furthermore, 59.1% of the audience are youth, aged 18-34 and 52.6% of them had attained tertiary education. From the audience, it was found that 23.2% of them preferred comedy over the action, tragedy, horror and romance genres. Also, 60.8% of them found Nollywood movies to be funny and amusing.

Moreover, this study relates to this research work in that it offers insight, however little, on the role of comedy and amusement in the perception of Nollywood movies. However, the study is done on random Lagos state residents and as regards Nollywood films as a whole, whereas this research work is concerned with only UNIBEN students and the influence of film genres on Nollywood consumption.

The study concludes that Nollywood films play certain roles on the information, education and entertainment of the audience and that film genre alone is not a trigger for watching Nollywood movies. Also, it recommends that further studies be done on audience attitudes and expectations when seeing a movie and how media literacy in Nigeria impacts the film industry.

O. Okome (2007) on “Nollywood: Spectatorship, Audience, and Sites of Consumption.”

Okome’s study is a qualitative research that examine the audience reception and consumption patterns of Nollywood films. The study specifically investigates how Nollywood has shaped the viewing habits of local audiences, focusing on its evolution, cultural relevance, and the dynamics of spectatorship in Nigeria.

The study’s findings reveal that Nollywood films are deeply intertwined with everyday life. Okome argues that the industry’s success is largely due to its ability to capture local experiences, struggles, and aspirations in an engaging manner. The study also highlights that audience participation is active rather than passive, as Nollywood viewers engage with films critically, often forming opinions and interpretations that shape their social understanding.

This study aligns with the present research by emphasizing the role of Nollywood in shaping audience habits and film preferences. Both studies recognize that genre influences how audiences engage with films. However, Okome’s research differs from this study in that it does not analyze students as a target audience, nor does it focus on a single genre like comedy. This current research narrows it down by focusing on UNIBEN students’ genre preferences.

The study recommends that Nollywood should continue prioritizing audience engagement by balancing entertainment with cultural storytelling. Additionally, Okome

emphasizes the need for more academic studies on how Nollywood's unique distribution model influences its global reach and local consumption habits.

U. Onuzulike (2016) on “Audience Reactions to the Different Aspects of Nollywood Movies.”

This study made use of reception analysis to examine how Nigerians, perceive different aspects of Nollywood movies. Data were collected from 116 participants, comprising 38 Nigerian-based students and 78 South Africa-based Nigerians.

The findings showed that culture was the most appreciated aspect of Nollywood movies. Comedy was also highlighted as a significant appeal, particularly among Nigerians in South Africa, who engaged with Nollywood. The study also noted that nostalgia played a role in how the diaspora audience engaged with Nollywood, as they sought films that connected them to a familiar Nigerian identity.

The study aligns with this research work, in its examination of audience preferences for Nollywood genres, particularly the role of comedy as a relevant appeal. The emphasis on cultural identity and humour in Nollywood films tells why UNIBEN students, might favour comedy films. The distinction lies in how Onuzulike compares Nigerian and diaspora audiences rather than focusing on a specific student demographic. While both studies explore Nollywood consumption patterns, this research work is concerned with UNIBEN students.

The study recommended that Nollywood filmmakers improve production quality and avoid excessive reliance on repetitive themes. It also encouraged greater diversity in Nollywood storytelling, balancing humour with more nuanced narratives. Moreover, the study suggested that further research should explore how different audience segments (e.g. students, working-class adults, and diaspora viewers) interpret Nollywood films differently.

2.4 Theoretical Frameworks

This research work is anchored on two media theories: the Uses and Gratifications Theory and the Play Theory of Mass Communication.

2.4.1 Uses and Gratifications Theory

The Uses and Gratifications Theory was first introduced by Elihu Katz in the early 1970s and later expanded by Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch (Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2022). This theory emerged as a reaction to earlier communication models that viewed audiences as passive consumers of media.

According to Asemah et al (2022), there are five principles which this theory assumes. Firstly, the audience is conceived as active, they consume the media to actualize specific goals. Secondly, audience members largely link their needs with media choices, reducing the likelihood of a direct effect from media messages. Also, the media compete with other sources of need satisfaction. Moreover, audience members are self-aware

enough to articulate their reasons for consuming particular media. Lastly, value judgements about media content should be examined based on individual audience perceptions rather than imposed external assessments.

In relation to this study on Nollywood film consumption among UNIBEN students, the Uses and Gratifications theory is quite relevant. The theory helps explain why students gravitate toward certain film genres, particularly comedy. Comedy films provide affective gratification by offering amusement and emotional release. Affective gratification in that, comedy films are subjectively good and appreciable.

This theory validates the idea that students do not watch Nollywood films arbitrarily but do so based on how well the films meet their entertainment, social, and emotional needs. The consumption platforms that these students already use, will influence what they watch. Moreover, the genres in which Nollywood films come in, would determine whether or not it's watched, because it may or may not satisfy the desires of UNIBEN students.

2.4.2 Play Theory of Mass Communication

The Play Theory of Mass Communication was proposed by William Stephenson in 1967 (Asemah et al, 2022). This theory suggests that people engage with mass media primarily for pleasure and entertainment rather than for informational or educational purposes. Worsfold (2007) as cited in Asemah et al (2022), avers that “play theory hinges

on one primary assumption, which relates to the audience's active involvement in the media consumption process.”

According to Stephenson, and Anaeto et al (2008), in Asemah et al (2022), life consists of two key experiences: the work situation, which involves productivity, self-improvement, and reality-based activities, and the play situation, which includes relaxation, enjoyment, and personal satisfaction. Media consumption, is therefore positioned as part of the play situation, where individuals opt for entertainment, rather than information or education.

A key principle of this theory is that audiences are highly active and engaged in the consumption of media. People tend to seek out content that aligns with their preferences and interests, reinforcing their sense of enjoyment and identity. Research supporting this theory has shown that audiences pay more attention to entertainment-driven content, such as comics, celebrity gossip, and humorous films, rather than hard news or educational material.

In the context of this study, the Play theory of Mass Communication is particularly relevant to understanding why UNIBEN students prefer comedy films like *Everybody Loves Jenifa*. This kind of accessible and culturally relevant films, serve as a source of relaxation, entertainment and social engagement, offering students a break from academic pressures. UNIBEN students consume Nollywood comedies for their humour, light-hearted storytelling, and ability to create shared social experiences.

2.5 Summary

This literature review examines how film genres influence Nollywood consumption among UNIBEN students, with a focus on comedy. It then explores film's evolution, Nollywood's growth from home videos to streaming, and the role of film genre, accessibility and socio-cultural relevance in shaping audience engagement. Comedies are widely consumed, and other relevant genres include thrillers, romance, detective and historicals. The empirical studies confirm genre-driven consumption patterns, though Nollywood's reliance on certain genres is noted. Theoretical frameworks, including Uses & Gratifications as well as the Play Theory, explain students' active selection of films for entertainment, relaxation, and social bonding. This review highlights the need for Nollywood to expand genre diversity while maintaining audience appeal.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is the survey method. According to Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekhareafo & Okpanachi (2022), a survey “is aimed at developing generalised propositions about human behaviours from what is observed in a sampled population.”

This approach is appropriate considering that the goal of the research, is to determine the influence of film genre on Nollywood consumption among UNIBEN students. It is a practical way to acquire accurate, impartial information from a diverse population.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of this study will be the entire UNIBEN students’ body. According to NOUN (2008) as cited in Asemah et al (2022), the population (of any study) may be ... students or any other quantifiable measure.

In this case, the population entails all enrolled students of the University of Benin. Furthermore, it is from this (estimated) student population of 77,000 (University of Benin) that the sample size will be drawn.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size was 398 UNIBEN students. With a population of approximately 77,000 students at the University of Benin (University of Benin, 2025), this figure was gotten to encompass as many students as plausible, during the course of carrying out the study.

The Taro Yamane (1967) formula was adopted to determine the sample size:

$$n = \{N\} / \{1 + N * e^2\}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size = 77,000

E = Margin of error (0.05 for 95% confidence level)

$$n = \{77000\} / \{1 + 77000 * (0.05)^2\}$$

$$= \{77000\} / \{1 + 192.5\}$$

$$= \{77000\} / \{193.5\}$$

$$= 398$$

Thus, the sample size was 398 students, drawn from the various faculties across UNIBEN campuses. Furthermore, it aligns with exploratory research standards in media

studies (Nwabueze, 2021) and, it balances statistical feasibility with time and budget limitations.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique adopted for this study is simple random sampling. Simple random sampling is a method where each member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected, ensuring an unbiased representation of the group under study (Asemah et al., 2022).

This method is in line with the study's exploratory nature and limitations, as it does not require stratification, which might demand unavailable resources. According to Asemah et al. (2022), simple random sampling is effective in realistic settings where the goal is to investigate attitudes and behaviours ... without manipulating variables as in experimental designs.

3.5 Research Instrument

The research instrument for this study is a structured questionnaire. A questionnaire is a set of written questions designed to gather information from respondents about their attitudes, behaviours, or preferences, making it an effective tool for survey research (Asemah et al., 2022). This instrument was chosen to collect data on Nollywood film consumption patterns among UNIBEN students.

The questionnaire was divided into six(6) parts with a total of 16 questions. It was made up of demographic information, Nollywood consumption habits, film genre preferences, social & cultural factors, the case study and lastly, general opinions. It also featured close-ended questions.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

In ensuring the instrument's validity, the questionnaire was designed to directly align with the research objectives and questions outlined in Chapter 1. Moreover, the instrument was subjected to scrutiny by my project supervisor.

For reliability, the questionnaire consistency was tested. 20 students, were administered with the instrument in a week. The test retest method was used and the reliability coefficient stood at 0.81. As it was above the 0.7 threshold, it indicated high consistency and reliability of the instrument.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The method of data collection for this study is the administration of a structured questionnaire to the determined sample of students. The questionnaire was administered online via Whatsapp: personal chats and student groups. Moreover, the researcher met with students face-to-face and encouraged them to fill the questionnaire.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. As they were close-ended, the responses were analyzed quantitatively, with the results presented in tables, for clarity.

This approach to analyzing data, was best to balance the measurable trends with contextual understanding of questions. Furthermore, it made the work more thorough.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This section of the chapter serves to briefly describe the major findings of the data collected from UNIBEN students whom are influenced by film genre in their consumption of Nollywood.

The data collection instrument was made in a manner all the major variables of the study are entirely incorporated. In addition, the variables were measured using nominal and ordinal scale measurements. A representative sample size of 398 was derived from the total of 77,000 UNIBEN students. The data collected for this study are carefully analyzed in simple percentages and tables.

4.2 Data Presentation

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Male	185	46.5
Female	213	53.5
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

This table shows a fairly balanced gender distribution in the sample, with female respondents constituting a slight majority at 53.5% and male respondents at 46.5%. This near-equal distribution is adequate as it prevents the findings from being heavily determined by one gender’s perspective.

Table 2: Age group of respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
16 - 20	134	33.7
21 - 25	206	51.8
26 - 30	53	13.3
Above 30	5	1.2
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The data clearly indicates that the respondents are largely made up of young adults. The 21-25 age group forms the largest segment with 51.8%, followed by the 16-20 age group at 33.7%. Together, these groups make up over 85% of the sample, which aligns with the study’s focus on the “younger demographic” and “young adults” of Nigeria.

Table 3: Respondents' level of study

Level of Study	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
100	106	26.5
200	33	8.4
300	29	7.2
400	158	39.8
500 or above	72	18.1
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The sample includes students from all levels of study. 400-level students represent the largest group at 39.8%, with 100-level students following at 26.5%. This diversity ensures that the perspectives gathered are not limited to a specific year of study but reflects the broader undergraduate experience at UNIBEN.

Table 4: Faculty of respondents

Faculty	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Arts	130	32.7
Education	59	14.8
Engineering	56	14.0
Law	9	2.4
Medicine	24	6.0
Management sciences	54	13.6
Physical sciences	19	4.8
Others	47	11.7
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Respondents were drawn from the different faculties at UNIBEN. The Faculty of Arts had the highest representation with 32.7%, followed by Education (14.8%), Engineering (14.0%), and Management sciences (13.6%). This distribution strengthens the study's relevance across the university's student population.

NOLLYWOOD CONSUMPTION HABITS OF RESPONDENTS

Table 5: "How often do you watch Nollywood films?"

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Daily	78	19.6
Weekly	102	25.7
Monthly	83	20.8
Rarely	125	31.4
Never	10	2.5
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

This table reveals that while a good portion of students (31.4%) watch Nollywood films "Rarely," a significant combined portion watches them on a regular basis, either "Weekly" (25.7%) or "Daily" (19.6%). This indicates that while not a dominant daily habit for most, Nollywood remains a consistent part of media consumption for a significant number of UNIBEN students.

Table 6: “Where do you typically watch Nollywood films?”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Cinema	49	12.3
Television	88	22.0
Mobile phone/Laptop	261	65.7
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The findings here are clear: the primary platform for Nollywood consumption is personal digital devices. An overwhelming majority of 65.7% of students watch films on a “Mobile phone/Laptop”. This directly answers the research question on accessibility, showing that consumption is driven by digital convenience.

Table 7: “How does the cost of accessing Nollywood films affect your viewing choices?”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
I only watch free films	224	56.3
I pay for some films	55	13.7
Cost doesn’t affect me	119	30.0
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

A majority of students, 56.3%, claimed they “only watch free films”. 30% of them however, state that “cost doesn’t affect me.” This suggests that paid platforms are not the

primary choice for most students, who likely rely on free sources like YouTube or downloads. This reinforces the study’s proposition that accessibility is a key driver of viewing patterns.

FILM GENRE PREFERENCES OF RESPONDENTS

Table 8: “Which Nollywood film genre do you enjoy most?”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Comedy	160	40.2
Action/Thriller	97	24.5
Romance	54	13.5
Historical	59	14.8
Others	28	7.0
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

This table presents one of the core findings of the study. Comedy is the most preferred Nollywood genre by a good margin, selected by 40.2% of the respondents. The next most popular genre, Action/Thriller, was chosen by 24.5%. This directly confirms the observation made in the statement of the problem, that comedy films seem to dominate viewership.

Table 09: “How much does the genre of a Nollywood film influence your decision to watch it?”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Not at all	39	9.8
Slightly	73	18.3
Moderately	136	34.1
Very much	116	29.3
Completely	34	8.5
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

A combined majority of respondents stated that genre influences their choice “Moderately” (34.1%), “Very much” (29.3%), or “Completely” (8.5%). Only a small minority (9.8%) claimed it has no influence at all. This validates indicates that genre is a primary factor shaping consumption.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS

Table 10: “Which of the following factors influence your choice of Nollywood films?”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Recommendation	115	28.8
Cultural relevance	61	15.2
Availability	77	19.4
Cost	33	8.4
Popularity on social media	112	28.2
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

This table highlights the power of social influence. “Recommendations from friends/family” (28.8%) and “Popularity on social media” (28.2%) are the two most significant factors influencing students’ choices. This shows that people have more impact on others’ choices directly or indirectly, when compared to other factors, in driving initial interest.

Table 11: “How important is it for Nollywood films to reflect Nigerian culture and experiences, in your decision to watch them?”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Not important	44	11.0
Slightly important	48	12.2
Moderately important	160	40.2
Very important	117	29.3
Extremely important	29	7.3
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

While not the top factor, cultural relevance remains highly significant. A large majority of students consider it “Moderately important” (40.2%) or “Very important” (29.3%) for Nollywood films to reflect Nigerian culture. This indicates that the local context and storytelling of Nollywood are a key part of its appeal, even if social trends influence which specific film gets watched.

CASE STUDY – EVERYBODY LOVES JENIFA (ELJ)

Table 12: “Have you watched *ELJ* (2024)?”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Yes	165	41.5
No	233	58.5
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The data shows that a majority of the respondents (58.5%) had not watched the film. However, a substantial portion (41.5%) had. This viewership figure is significant enough to make *ELJ* a valid case study, as it has reached a large segment of the target population.

Table 13: “Rate your enjoyment of *ELJ* on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Did not enjoy, 5 = Highly enjoyed)”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
1	7	4.2
2	14	8.3
3	14	8.3
4	55	33.3
5	75	45.9
Total	165	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Among the students who watched the film, the reception was quite positive. A combined 79.2% of viewers rated their enjoyment as either a 4 (33.3%) or a 5 (45.9% for “Highly enjoyed”). This confirms that the film was successful and well-liked by its audience, making it an excellent example of a popular Nollywood comedy.

Table 14: “What did you like most about *ELJ*?” (multi-choice)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage out of 337 Responses
Humour/funny scenes	110	32.6
Characters	86	25.5
Plot/storyline	39	11.6
Language	71	21.1
Cultural relevance	31	9.2
Total	165	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The most liked elements of *ELJ* were its “Humour/funny scenes,” cited by 32.6% of viewers, and its “Characters (e.g., Jenifa’s personality),” cited by 25.5%. This shows that for a comedy to succeed with this audience, it must deliver on both its comedic provisions and its character portrayal & development.

GENERAL OPINIONS OF RESPONDENTS

Table 15: “Do you watch films more during festive seasons or the holidays?”

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Yes	291	73.1
No	107	26.9
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

A significant majority of respondents (73.1%) confirmed that they watch more films during holidays. This supports the literature review’s observation of seasonal releases and highlights that practical factors play a crucial role in consumption habits.

Table 16: “What do you primarily watch Nollywood films for?” (multi-choice)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage out of 475 responses
Entertainment/fun	251	52.9
Relaxation	93	19.6
Social bonding	22	4.6
Cultural connection	41	8.6
Education/learning	68	14.3
Total	398	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The primary motivations for watching Nollywood align perfectly with the study’s theoretical frameworks. “Entertainment/Fun” (52.9%) and “Relaxation” (19.6%) were the

top two reasons cited. This strongly supports the Play Theory and the Uses and Gratifications Theory, indicating that students are active consumers seeking pleasure, stress relief, and amusement from media.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

This section provides the discussion of findings as regards the four (4) research questions in Chapter 1, posed to guide this study. Therefore, this section provides answers to the four research questions, integrating the survey data with insights from the literature review.

Research Question 1: How does film genre impact Nollywood consumption patterns among UNIBEN students?

The data reveals that students are not indifferent to film genre, when consuming Nollywood. In Table 9, a combined majority of respondents indicated that genre influences their choice to watch a film “Moderately” (34.1%), “Very much” (29.3%), or “Completely” (8.5%). This validates the study’s earlier suggestion that film genre is critical to shaping Nollywood consumption.

Furthermore, the study identifies a clear hierarchy of genre preference. In Table 8, Comedy is the most enjoyed genre by a significant margin, with 40.2% of students selecting it as their top choice. Action/Thriller follows at a distant second with 24.5%. This directly supports the observation in the statement of the problem that there is a “considerable viewership of comedy films” compared to other genres in Nollywood.

The preference for comedy among UNIBEN students, aligns with the empirical review by Badru, Hashim & Adisa (2022), where comedy was also the most preferred genre among young, educated Nigerians. Therefore, genre does not just influence consumption; it actively directs it towards specific categories, with comedy being the dominant choice for this demographic.

Research Question 2: How do social and cultural factors influence UNIBEN students' genre preferences in Nollywood films?

The data shows that social influence significantly affects film consumption. The major factors influencing students' choice of Nollywood films were "Recommendations from friends/family" (28.8%) and "Popularity on social media" (28.2%) from Table 10. This suggests that personal endorsement and favourable online discourse often ignite the interest to watch a particular film, supporting the idea that film consumption is a social activity.

While social trends introduce students to some films, cultural relevance remains a foundational element of Nollywood's appeal. In Table 11, a good portion of respondents consider it "Moderately important" (40.2%) or "Very important" (29.3%) for films to reflect Nigerian culture and experiences. This finding resonates with the literature review, where studies by Okome (2007) and Onuzulike (2016) highlighted Nollywood's success as being deeply connected to its ability to tell culturally familiar stories.

The case study of Everybody Loves Jenifa further illustrates this, with “Language (e.g., Pidgin, Yoruba)” being relevant element for 21.1% of its viewers, in Table 14. This shows that while a recommendation might spark interest, the cultural elements within the film are what make it relatable and enjoyable for the student audience.

Research Question 3: How do accessibility and availability of Nollywood films across different genres shape UNIBEN students’ consumption choices?

Accessibility and availability are critical determinants of Nollywood consumption among UNIBEN students, largely defined by digital convenience and cost. The survey results are assertive: in Table 6, 65.7% of students primarily watch Nollywood films on a “Mobile phone/Laptop.” This inclination to personal digital devices, as noted in the literature review, means that films that can be steamed or downloaded are more likely to be consumed.

Cost is another aspect of accessibility. In Table 7, a majority of students (56.3%) reported that they “only watch free films”. This economic consideration directly shapes consumption patterns, steering students toward platforms like YouTube or pirated downloads. In Table 10, “Availability” itself was chosen as a key factor influencing film choice by 19.4% of respondents, which further reinforces this point.

Consequently, a film’s genre might be appealing, but if it is not affordable/available on the platforms students frequent, its consumption will be limited.

This indicates that consumption choices are a product of both preference and the practical constraints of accessibility.

Research Question 4: What is the appeal of specific genres on UNIBEN students' Nollywood consumption?

The primary appeal of specific genres, particularly the comedy genre, is directly linked to the gratification they provide. In Table 16, it shows that students watch Nollywood films predominantly for “Entertainment/Fun” (52.8%) and “Relaxation” (19.6%). This aligns perfectly with the study’s theoretical frameworks, which posit that audiences actively seek media to fulfill needs like amusement and emotional release.

The case study of Everybody Loves Jenifa provides a concrete example of this appeal. In Table 14, viewers chose “Humour/funny scenes” (32.6%) and “Characters” (25.5%) as the elements they liked most about the film. This demonstrates that the appeal of comedy lies in its ability to deliver laughter and present relatable, engaging personalities and plots.

This supports King’s (2002) assertion that comedy offers a break from daily stress, a need that is particularly acute for students navigating academic pressures. While other genres like Action/Thriller and Historical have their audiences, they do not fulfill this core need for playful escape as effectively as comedy does for the majority of the student population.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendation based on the findings of the study, as well as limitations encountered during this study.

5.1 Summary

This study delved into the influence of film genre on Nollywood consumption among UNIBEN students, using *Everybody Loves Jenifa* (2024) as a case study. This study adds to existing research that explores film genre, Nollywood consumption & the younger demographic. The reason behind this study arose from the observation that despite the different genres that Nollywood presents, there appears to be a preference for comedy among the younger demographic, particularly students. As such, the study discovered the reasons behind this trend, exploring the social, cultural, and accessibility-related factors.

A sample size of 398 students across multiple faculties and levels in UNIBEN was selected using the simple random sampling technique. The questionnaire distributed was comprehensive and the findings were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in clear tables. From the data gathered, it became evident that the genre of a film plays a considerable role in determining whether a UNIBEN student would engage with it or not. Comedy, in particular, stood out as the most preferred genre, largely due to its humour, relatability, and emotional ease. Students claimed that they chose comedy for entertainment, relaxation, and sometimes even connection with peers.

Additionally, the research revealed that most students consume Nollywood films on mobile phones and laptops, which highlighted the role of digital accessibility. Free or low-cost viewing options were preferred, especially YouTube and other online streaming platforms. Social recommendations, such as those from friends or content trending on TikTok and X (formerly Twitter), also influenced what students watched. While cost and availability play roles in Nollywood consumption, the cultural relevance of a film, especially its use of Nigerian languages, familiar settings, and portrayal of everyday Nigerian life, resonate deeply with students. This suggests that Nollywood's unique ability to reflect the lives of its audience carries a significant value.

The case study of *Everybody Loves Jenifa* exemplified these insights. Students who watched the film commended it for its humour and memorable characters, particularly Jenifa herself. The film's use of language and cultural peculiarities, as well as the comedic relief, made it both entertaining and familiar. In a nutshell, the study provided a thorough understanding of how genre, along with other intersecting factors, shapes Nollywood consumption patterns among the Nigerian undergraduates and by extension, the youth today.

5.2 Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it is clear that film genre is an active element in students' film choices. UNIBEN students, like many of their contemporaries across Nigeria, are intentional about what they consume and why. Comedy, in this context,

provides an escape from academic engagements, life-related stress, plain entertainment and even cultural affirmation.

This preference, however, does not imply that students outright reject other genres like thrillers, romance or historical dramas. Rather, it affirms the idea that genres which deliver on both entertainment and relatability are more likely to enjoy student patronage. Students are drawn to stories that mirror their realities, or at the very least, offer a refreshing break from them.

Another critical insight is that students are highly responsive to social influence. Whether it's a WhatsApp recommendation, a viral TikTok review, or group discussions in hostels, students tend to follow trends and shared experiences. This shared viewing culture is not merely about "what's good," but also about "what's popular" and "what is being talked about in their social circles."

Cost and accessibility also carry significant weight. With many students not having the financial means to access premium streaming platforms or pay for cinema tickets regularly, free and convenient access becomes a huge factor. This shapes what they watch, when they watch it, and how frequently. Films that are not easily accessible, no matter how rich in storyline or genre, may not gain traction among this demographic.

In the end, the study establishes that film genre, social influence, accessibility, and cultural connection are deeply intertwined. Together, they guide how Nollywood is consumed by young Nigerian students. For Nollywood to retain and even grow this

important segment of its audience, these factors must be consciously considered in both content (film) creation and distribution.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are proposed to stakeholders in the Nollywood industry

1. Nollywood filmmakers should be intentional about diversifying the films produced, in terms of genres. They should endeavour to push the boundaries further while catering to the Nigerian younger audience.
2. Nollywood filmmakers should distribute their films on platforms that are affordable and easily accessible, so that it would be readily consumed by undergraduates.
3. Additionally, filmmakers can partner with Nigerian universities (say via film clubs or school-sponsored screenings) so as to help bring more genres to the student audience in cost-friendly ways.
4. Government and non-governmental organisations can invest in grant schemes for filmmakers creating culturally rooted content, especially in niche genres.
5. Future researchers could explore gender differences in genre preferences, or do comparative studies between students in public versus private institutions. Moreover, it would be useful to track how film consumption changes say, during exam periods or holidays.

6. Future research can also be done using qualitative approaches like interviews or focus groups to enrich findings on Nollywood film consumption.

In summary, the onus is on both creators and consumers to challenge the boundaries of genre and accessibility in Nollywood. If tapped properly, the Nigerian student demographic holds immense potential for a thriving, diverse and globally relevant Nollywood industry.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Mass Communication,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Benin,
Benin City.

Dear Respondent,

I am an undergraduate student of the above institution conducting a study on **the Influence of Film Genre on Nollywood Consumption among UNIBEN Students: A Case Study of Everybody Loves Jenifa**. This questionnaire is designed to gather information about your consumption patterns, preferences, and interactions with Nollywood films. Your responses will be treated confidentially and used solely for academic purposes. Kindly respond to the questions as accurately as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Marvellous Oluwatofunmi ABIWO

Researcher

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Age Group: ☐ 16–20 ☐ 21–25 ☐ 26–30 ☐ Above 30
3. Level of Study: ☐ 100 Level ☐ 200 Level ☐ 300 Level ☐ 400 Level ☐ 500 Level
or above
4. Faculty: ☐ Arts ☐ Education ☐ Engineering ☐ Law ☐ Medicine ☐ Management
Sciences ☐ Physical Sciences ☐ Others (specify): _____

Section B: Nollywood Consumption Habits

5. How often do you watch Nollywood films? ☐ Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Rarely
☐ Never
6. Where do you typically watch Nollywood films? ☐ Cinema ☐ Television ☐ Mobile
phone (streaming/download) ☐ Laptop
7. How does the cost of accessing Nollywood films affect your viewing choices? ☐ I
only watch free films (e.g., YouTube, downloads) ☐ I pay for some films (e.g., cinema)
when affordable ☐ Cost doesn't affect me—I watch what I want

Section C: Film Genre Preferences

8. Which Nollywood film genre do you enjoy most? (Select one) ☐ Comedy ☐
Action/Thriller ☐ Romance ☐ Historical ☐ Others

9. How much does the genre of a Nollywood film influence your decision to watch it? []

Not at all [] Slightly [] Moderately [] Very much [] Completely

Section D: Social and Cultural Factors

10. Which of the following factors influence your choice of Nollywood films? []

Recommendations from friends/family [] Cultural relevance (e.g., Nigerian stories, language) [] Availability (e.g., easy to stream/download) [] Cost (e.g., free or affordable) [] Popularity on social media (e.g., TikTok, X)

11. How important is it for Nollywood films to reflect Nigerian culture and experiences in your decision to watch them? [] Not important [] Slightly important [] Moderately important [] Very important [] Extremely important

Section E: Case Study – Everybody Loves Jenifa

12. Have you watched *Everybody Loves Jenifa* (2024)? [] Yes [] No

13. Rate your enjoyment of *Everybody Loves Jenifa* on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Did not enjoy, 5 = Highly enjoyed): [] 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5

14. What did you like most about *Everybody Loves Jenifa*? (multi-choice) [] Humour/Funny scenes [] Characters (e.g., Jenifa's personality) [] Plot/Storyline [] Language (e.g., Pidgin, Yoruba) [] Cultural relevance

Section F: General Opinions

15. Do you watch films more, during festive seasons or the holidays? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. What do you primarily watch Nollywood films for? (multi-choice) ☐

Entertainment/Fun ☐ Relaxation ☐ Social bonding ☐ Cultural connection ☐

Education/Learning