

Nollywood Films and Girl-child Identity Reconstruction from Intonation Perspective

Michael O. Gbadegesin, PhD

Department of English and Literary Studies,

Lead City University, Ibadan

gbadegesinmike@gmail.com

+234 708 447 8356

Abstract

Digital world is a virtual space where technologically inclined people and social media users operate irrespective of age, gender or race. It has helped to place the world on the finger of people across the globe. The availability of Nollywood films to Nigerians is part of the entrenchment of digital in the world. The study examined the effects of digitally distributed Nollywood films on the emergence of a new girl-child. This is with a view to investigating the roles of Nollywood films in the girl-child identity construct. The study is premised on the previous study on discourse intonation of females in selected Nollywood films by the author. It used excerpts from the selected films, the journal articles, textbooks, the Internet from intonation perspectives. The study found that Nollywood films contribute greatly to the socialisation of the modern girl-child and that there is a difference in the way the traditional African girl-child perceived herself from the way she sees herself now. Also, the feminism agitation through intonation in the digitalised Nollywood films is 'mild' while the western countries is 'wild'. The study concluded that the girl-child expresses her new identity and protest against relegation and injustice with intonation. The study recommended that the society should wake up to the reality of the new girl-child's identity created by the digital and accommodate her new identity to avoid incessant domestic violence.

Word Count: 227

Keywords: Digital world, Hollywood Films, Girl-child, Identity reconstruction, Intonation

Introduction

The digital world, as we have it today, has great influence on the youths in general and girl-child in particular. The world view and the value system of an average girl-child today has changed compared to what it used to be in the time past. This might be as a result of their means of socialisation which have changed considerably too. In the past, the family and the society were regular and common means of socialising a child. However, the situation has changed now, there are so many sources of socialisation, prominent among them are the social media platforms. Social media platforms are the commonest, cheapest and most available sources of entertainment and information in a digitalised world. The digital world seems to have come with its mirror through which each individual sees herself within the bigger picture of the society.

Zachos, Paraskevopoulou-Kollia and Anagnostopoulos, (2018) observe that within the last decade, social networks and their applications have penetrated our daily lives. They have succeeded in transforming the lifestyle of young people (the male and the female alike) while becoming one of the most important means of communication and entertainment. Social media like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram, and so on are used daily by

millions of people worldwide, especially young people. Young people use social networks in their personal lives, for entertainment, information in the overwhelming majority (Dahlstrom; De Boor; Grunwald; and Vockley, 2011; Zachos et al 2018). This study therefore examines the effects of female discourse intonation patterns in digitally distributed Nollywood films on the emergence of a new girl-child. It also looked at the personality/identity of the girl-child in African traditional society; and investigated the roles of Nollywood in the feminist Struggle.

Discourse Intonation (DI)

Discourse intonation is concerned with how intonation can enable the speakers to express what they wish and make their meanings and intentions clear to the listener(s) as well as to communicate the implied meanings (Brazil, 1994). Discourse intonation reflects the social and situational contexts of an utterance. It is based on the division of speech into tone units, highlighting of particular words and syllables through prominence and choice of pitch movement. Discourse intonation also makes distinction between proposed or new information and referred information both the speaker and the listener already know about. Prominence, vowel lengthening and loudness are deployed to achieve this. Discourse intonation is a method of expressing various meanings, emotions or situations. It is flexible; many patterns are possible, and to a very large extent, it depends on the sentence types, social identity, status, shared knowledge, cultural background and conversational context. Since discourse intonation has very close cues between society and language, it may cause confusion between interlocutors if they do not share the same set of cultural background or when they come from different speech communities (Jiang, 2011). Discourse is the analysis of language beyond sentence level and therefore it is suprasentential (Gbadegesin, 2018). Discourse intonation reflects various features of the speaker or the utterance such as emotion, attitude, disposition and intention. It is a process of speech analysis to bring out salient communicative, conversational and sociolinguistic implications of a text beyond grammatical and phonemic levels to the fore.

According to Chapman (2007), discourse intonation attempts to explain how intonation patterns in English affect the communicative value of speech, through the use of falling and rising tunes along with changes in pitch. It is used to analyse how intended but implied meaning is communicated. Gbadegesin (2018) observes that in communication, part of the speaker's intended meaning and volumes are not clearly expressed in words but embedded in how the speakers say what they say in a way that provokes listeners to infer the real unspoken meaning. Chun (1998) argues that in discourse intonation, speakers select various intonation choices which reflect their understandings of the degree of shared assumptions between them and their hearer/partners (Brazil, 1994).

Raúl (2015) opines that:

Discourse intonation advocated the study of intonation from the point of view of the user, its function in context and its communicative value.

Discourse intonation approached English intonation as a well-defined set of prosodic features that the speaker can choose (p. 35).

Raúl's description of discourse intonation above is a comprehensive description. It consist some salient features that are very germane to the study of discourse intonation. These include user centeredness, participant specificity, functioning within a context and communicative value. Discourse intonation is participants-specific; this allows for the speaker's assertion of dominance

and control within specific discourse modes. Brazil (1994), explains further that discourse intonation as a specialised discourse allows for a dominant speaker to be identified. According to Ibrahim and Faleke (2013) language is described as a development of purposeful behaviour, hence each statement is a product of action (speech acts) that are performed in order to have an effect on the listener. This is the pragmatic aspect of discourse intonation. Discourse intonation is used to configure mechanism for interpersonal interaction.

Gbadegesin (2018) identifies perceptual features of discourse intonation as loudness, vowel lengthening, voice quality, prominence, tune unit, pause, hesitation (of various types), paralinguistics, emotionality, assertiveness; and acoustic features of discourse intonation as: the fundamental frequency pattern (related to the perceived pitch pattern), the relative duration/time, amplitude/loudness, voice quality, pausing. Roach (1983:155) concludes that 'studying intonation in relation to discourse makes it possible to explain much more comprehensively the uses that speakers make of intonation'.

In a specific term, discourse intonation functions can be classified into sociolinguistic, conversational and communicative functions (Gbadegesin, 2018).

There are many sociolinguistic factors responsible for phonological variation in general and intonational variation in particular. Region, age, status and gender have been identified by scholars as being accountable for phonological and intonational variations (Daly and Warren, 2001; Gut and Milde, 2002; Grabe, 2004; Fletcher *et al*, 2004; Arvaniti and Garding, 2007; and Gbadegesin, 2016).

The Girl-Child in African Traditional Society

The female folk across Africa seem to be vulnerable in some respect and seem to be living in a male-favoured society full of masculine power and privileges. It is supported by cultural belief and religious stance. African society is founded on a chauvinistic ideology (Umukoro and Okwuowulu, 2010). This has not provided an enabling environment for self-discovery, self-development and self-expression among the women folk. The picture of a girl-child in such a traditional African society is captured by Orazbekova, Nazgul, Kulaiym and Anarkhan (2015) in their description of a traditional Kazakh woman as:

...a beautiful East, dark, sweet and graceful. It is a known hostess. She can cook economical of all that is at hand. She has many children, She honours her husband and older traditions; and so, apparently, is not inclined to build a career and independent life; something backward, closed, kept apart; the soul is going through a lot and stores injustice to herself, but more cunning, smart, workable (p14).

The above description presupposes that an ideal traditional African girl-child is reduced, at her best, to a home maker when she grows up, irrespective of the potential she carries. She shows her dexterity in cooking; she holds her husband in high esteem even when he does not reciprocate her good gesture. She seems to be compelled by tradition to deny herself a life of her own. She suffers all forms of masculine injustice in silence (Sembene, 1986).

Gbadegesin (2018) notes that one of the features of the traditional African society is class system. Among the class system, gender dichotomy is very prominent. The male and the female often operate from different classes. This, as epitomized in the epistolary novel of Mariama Ba (1980), is a class system according to gender, marriage and status (Harrell-Bond and Barbara, 2003). In many Nigerian traditional societies, girl-child is not reckoned with. Any family without

a male child is humiliated and persecuted. Upon the death of the father, in some parts of the country, the mother and her daughter(s) have no right to his property, especially landed property.

Boh (2012:133) observes that 'Women mostly played subservient roles to their husbands, suffering discrimination in many socio-cultural practices'. Some traditional Nigerian females are subjected to harmful widowhood practices. Others suffered from discriminatory inheritance practices. Girl-child is denied the means of expressing herself strongly, on the one hand, and encouraging expressions that suggest triviality in subject matter and uncertainty about it (Lakoff, 1975:7).

African societies perceived the females as inherently inferior creatures and thus sidelined them from positions of power and influence. Kindem & Steele (2006) posit that women do not represent commodities and possessions to desire and obtain; rather, the salt of the earth; they provide both the cohesive force that has traditionally held African society together and the gunpowder that will precipitate future social revolution. They conclude on the note that the films of Sembene Ousmane teach many that the females must continue to play their important roles in Africa's development and in the development of colonized, exploited, oppressed peoples throughout the world.

Reynolds (1985) notes that there is universal correlation between women's language and their inferior social status. African society like, Japanese society as observed by Reynolds is 'vertical' and not 'horizontal'. The degree of organogram is high. There is high level of ranking consciousness, especially in the male-female dichotomy.

According to Reynolds (1985)

Linguistic activity is no exception to this principle of verticality. When speaking, one always defines his/her rank relative to the hearer's and chooses the most appropriate level of speech. In other words, the speaker must indicate in his/her language as well as in his/her manner the rank relationship that he or she perceived. The appropriateness in this process is particularly important when the speaker is socially inferior to the hearer (p14).

In a traditional society, the females are supposed to talk more politely than the males. The females glory in the status of the males to whose apron they are tied either as a father or a husband. Women are considered inferior to men, but women do not consider themselves to be all equal to each other. They are prone to believe that the rank of the men they are tied to, (fathers and husbands) is their own, and if the rank of those men is high, they try to distinguish themselves from other women by using excessively formal language (Reynolds, 1985).

Gbadegesin (2018) identifies six different categories of the women in African society with their attendant discourse intonation patterns in a study he conducted using ten Nollywood films as follows:

i. The Exploited Women: They are perpetually hopeless, submerged, oppressed and dehumanized by male and female popularly called their 'madam'. They speak from the point of view of the servants who have no life of their own. The intonation patterns of their speeches depict fear, lack of self-expression, hopelessness and submergence.

ii. The Submerged Woman: This category of the female are submerged by their husband especially. They have something to defend themselves (education, skills) but for certain reasons, they chose not to. These include the educated female who are taking for granted. Their intonation patterns reveal frustration, lack of self-expression, protest, vowel lengthening, prominence and assertiveness and emotionality.

iii. The Emerging Woman: These are the submerged that are already tired of the injustice they suffer and have started to resist and protest. The intonation patterns of their speeches show frustration, lack of self-expression and submergence. It is more of emotionality without assertiveness.

iv. The Collaborators: They are women fighting women to satisfy men. They always join hands with the male counterparts to maltreat their female colleagues either as mother/sister-in-law or as mistresses. They speak from the background of enmity/rivalry against the submerged woman.

v. The Deceived Women: They believe their husband is under control and cannot do anything funny. So they speak in two ways, first, to friends and outsiders from the point of view of someone who has 'conquered' her husband and 'on top of the situation', second from the point of view of love to their husband.

vi. The Liberated Women: They speak from the context of those who have broken the jinx and can express their potential without fear or intimidation but with support of their husband. They know their authority and social role over men that are subordinate to them and exact their authority accordingly.

A woman in a high position, therefore, is thrown on the horns of a dilemma, between the needs of authority demanded by her status and her feminine identity. The exposure, modernity and global influence on the females today make it impossible to maintain the status-quo. There are various forms of protest against injustice and submergence of the female folk.

In the recent times, there seems to be an identity crisis for women. Women are portrayed in the traditional society typically as weak and inconsequential in the scheme of things. The digital world on the other hand, lends credence to the inherent qualities of girl-child and thereby reconstructing a new girl-child identity. The role of African women in modern society is fast changing from being passive to being active. This is as a result of the process of socialisation of the contemporary boys and girls into adulthood through digitalised communication and entertainment as evident in some Nollywood films. This is done through youth orientation, education, cultural development, industrial relations, (Orazbekova, *et al.*, 2015), family ideology, self-discovery, self-development and use of personal skills and abilities among others as seen in the digital space.

Hence, there is a new orientation about the identity of a girl-child today. The role of the females in the modern society surpasses that of being the good women of the house (full housewife) to becoming elegant indispensable public figures (Sembene, 1986). The cultural and linguistic implications of this change, in gender role are evident. The females are no longer mere sex symbols/objects. They now work outside the confines of the home in all spheres of life like their male counterparts. The digital world has put the whole wide world on the palm of every individual irrespective of gender race. This change in social role and status invariably affects their

language use. As the contemporary females are engrossing into the usage of English language, it gives them insight into another culture and other people's way of life.

As a result of digital entrenchment, Adomako, Beoku-Betts and Osirim, (2008) note that African women have made major strides in political office-holding and in advancing gender-equality, human rights and democratization in African states. Earlier feminist studies of African states have recognized the significant increase in the number of women in political positions as a result of quota systems, state feminism/femocracy and other forms of national gender machinery (Mama, 1995; Tamale, 1999; Dambe, 2000; Ahikire, 2004; Ibrahim, 2004; Hassim, 2006).

The contemporary females may not be dominated or denied life of their own without opposition (Hassim, 2006). The resistance and opposition first of all start from the use of different intonation patterns (Gbadegesin, 2018). They protest against any unhealthy gender discrimination, dominance and injustice with verisimilitude of what they see in the Nollywood films with their intonation patterns and actions. They do this through both planned and unplanned strategies. The planned strategies come through organised rallies, campaign awareness and many other ways. The unplanned method comes as situation demands. One of such is through inter-ender conversation which relies heavily on perceptual and acoustic features of discourse intonation.

There seems to be a disjuncture between the portrayal of women in the traditional society, what the society expects of woman and the current emergence of a new breed of women from all over the continent (Ladele, 2009) influenced by the effects of their presence in the digital space. A contemporary educated woman is not subscribing to the type of life traditional women lived. She uses everything at her disposal to fight against discrimination, injustice, relegation and undue male dominance.

The occupational mobility of the modern women shows the register of their new public involvement and engagements. The implication of this cultural change of a kind, in gender role is evident. The females are no longer mere sex symbols; they now work outside the confines of the home in all spheres of life like their male counterparts. Reviewing Sembene's films, Kindem & Steele (2006) identify the female character as *symbols of fertility, young victims of exploitation and oppression and militants standing up against colonial and/or the male oppression*. Orazbekova et al., (2015) observe that there have been several discussions since the 1970s that a traditional male order and life style does not match the social conditions of today's modernity. It then seems as if this reality however, has not dawned on many males. They want to enjoy economic contribution of their wives in various forms and at the same time order them around like in the traditional society. The modern females revolt against this and use everything at their disposal to change the order. Kindem & Steele (2006) identify modern female as *militants standing up against the male oppression*.

The level of education, technology and socio-economic development of Africa is pro-rata to the level of recognition and involvement of the females in the scheme of things. Sembene Ousmane (1986) observes that Africa cannot develop without the participation of its females. There can be no development in Africa if women are left out of the account. It will look like an engine with six cylinders firing on three. In a modern Africa, women can take part in production, education, but they are still refused the right of speech. The fact is that the society cannot go forward without Women (Lenin 1997). African women are given little or no recognition. Women are identified as *young victims of exploitation and oppression*. African liberation is tied to

women's liberation and women have key roles to play in Africa's future development (Kindem & Steele, 2006).

Female Discourse Intonation Patterns in Nollywood Films

According to Gbadegesin (2018), female discourse intonation patterns as deployed in the selected Nollywood films overtly indicated their peculiar conditions and statuses. It further concluded that intonational choices were veritable tools for the expression of peculiar experiences in the Nigerian society as demonstrated in Nollywood films. The discourse intonation patterns of Nigerian female speakers of English in Nollywood films did not follow stereotypical patterns, rather a range of factors were responsible for their choice of intonational patterns. Among the factors revealed are speaker's social statuses, conversational contexts and shared knowledge. Gbadegesin (2018) finds out from the results of both perceptual and acoustic analyses of his study that Nigerian female speakers of English in Nollywood films deployed discourse intonation and its prosodic features to protest male dominance and cultural submergence.

Nollywood Films and Gender Identity

The issue of gender discrimination continues to be witnessed in our society on daily basis despite the magnitude of existing legal framework coupled with the activities of the civil society groups. For too long women had been perceived in different African societies, but particularly in the developing world as second class citizens (Emecheta, 1979). Abegunde (2014) notes there was reluctance in official quarters to encourage women to play meaningful and effective roles in societal processes such as politics and governance in many parts of Africa including Nigeria.

Many scholars subscribe to the fact that women suffer all forms of oppression in male dominated societies, though their submission may be different in the area of the extent and the nature of the oppression (Emecheta, 1979; Sembene, 1986; Kindem & Steele, 2006). There have been various attempts to curtail the menace of domestic violence and women suffering oppression in male dominated societies. A lot of campaigns (through literature) to emancipate the women from traditionally unjust practices, beliefs or values are on-going (Mannathoko, 1992; Mtarangwi, 2000; Hellum, Stewart, Sardar Ali and Tsanga, 2007). To this effect, feminism revolves around the recognition of existing women's oppression and addresses the prevailing unjust and discriminatory gender relations. Women seem to be marginalized in many aspects of life. There is a need to explore ways that can help to bring meaningful justice and equity in the manner society perceives women.

In order to achieve this, to a great extent, the role of the film producers become imperative. Wild (1992) submits that film is like

A teacher whose duty is to give voice to the voiceless, the powerless, the victims of both power and circumstancesThe ultimate goal being to create a world of human dignity and love. (p314)

Both the males and the females are generally viewed as occupying sharply different roles in the society. A woman's place is in the home as wife and mother; the man's place is in the public sphere. Men had legal powers over their wives and children. Umukoro and Okwuowulu (2010) observe that gender inequality is further aggravated in some of the world of literary

creativity of drama or films in which artistic representation of character and setting tended to follow the patriarchal paradigms in social reality.

Umukoro and Okwuowulu (2010) submit that

...the movies have become so central in the art of social and cultural documentation; it has such a wide coverage cutting across social boundaries, feminists have been highly encouraged to explore the film platform for its propaganda objectives. It is therefore not surprising that Nollywood, Nigeria's filmic paradigm, has become the battle-ground for feminist crusaders eager to use the avenue to reinvent the feminine image, particularly, the Nigerian woman. More significant to this study, therefore is the use of the filmic media and in this case, Nollywood, as weapon for harnessing the cultivated grievances and dissatisfaction of feminist movements in various disciplines and its use to better the situation of womanhood. (p226)

As a result of the above, many females suffered untold hardship under the heavy load of patriarchal nature of their societies. They led sorrowful and depressed lives occasioned by broken marriages, having to share their husband with another person, sometimes age mate of their children, and abandonment.

This leads to different types of protest, movement and activities in favour of women at one time or the other. For instance, what is attributed to Mariama Bâ *So Long a Letter* is called moderate feminism which refuses total rebellion but believes in liberation through education, possible synthesis and emergence of working class woman (Harrell-Bond and Barbara. 2003). The females' agitation for a better treatment is described by Afolabi (2002) as a positive development which is necessitated by the Nigeria's advances towards greater heights in civilization and human rights. African feminism is quite different from what obtains in the western society; feminism approach in Africa seems to be mild while it is wild in the western world. African women seem to realize that male and female are not the same. Hence, what they are agitating for is equity not equality. What is obtainable and practicable in Africa is not displacement of men rather a gentle protest that will give women a place to express themselves and not stocked in the kitchen. This is against the radical feminism of equality in the Western world.

Gender identity is society dependent; it is the role the culture of a particular society accords each gender that forms the basis of its identity. Boh (2012:133) observes that women mostly played a subservient position to their husbands, suffering discrimination in many socio-cultural practices such as harmful widowhood practices, discriminatory inheritance practices and limited participation in decision making, forced early marriage and bride price practices. African society is founded on a chauvinistic ideology which has not provided an enabling environment for the development of self confidence among the women folk who have come to believe that their roles as women ended in their ability to cook and care for their households.

This maleficent has brought the girl child in African society to the point of revolution, rebellion and revolt. However, the contemporary women have rebelled and created personal lives within the framework of possibilities and limitations set by structure, society, religions and culture. In the contemporary times, women are striving hard to have a say in the society. These are expressive in Adebowale's (2006) *The Lonely Days*. The notion of the education of women ends in the kitchen does not apply to the women of this age. As economic hardship bites hard on many families, there is need for more women to combine motherhood with their respective

careers. Many women are able to do these successfully without one affecting the other. Indeed the women of this age have successfully survived and they are found at the top in the society. The crusaders of women emancipation employ every available means (literatures, films, social gathering, NGOs) to put their idea through; this gave birth to the theory or approach of 'feminism' -an attempt by the female gender to liberate itself from male chauvinism or patriarchy (Umukoro and Okwuowulu, 2010). One of the effective platforms to fight the course of women in Nigerian society and to rebrand the hitherto relegated image of Nigerian women is Nollywood film.

Historically, film was first introduced in Nigeria by the Christian missionaries and colonial government to persuade people to accept Christianity and western education. One of the most celebrated places of pleasure in the 1970s in Nigeria was the cinema house. Nollywood, a name coined for movie industry in Nigeria began almost thirty years ago. According to Jedlowski (2011:24) Nollywood is a "space within which the Nigerian film makers operate". Obviously, the name is one of the Eurocentric ideas. It was adopted into Nigerian context patterned after Bollywood and Hollywood (though these were name of places where film activities take place). In the wake of 21st century, Nollywood is not only popular in Nigeria; it is also a name to reckon with outside the shores of the nation. It is adjudged one of the largest film industries in the world. The industry is one of the image makers for Nigeria in the world market, especially in the parlance of entertainment. Onah (2015) rightly observes that Nollywood films can aptly be described as culture in motion through space and time. It could not have been described otherwise owing to its present status and influence.

There is no doubt that Nollywood has grown to become one of the world largest film industries. Esan (2008) posits that poor economy, security consciousness, political instability and a change of lifestyle from attending cinema, lack of bubble nights gave rise to home video. He stresses further that 'The same instability which contributed to the decline in cinema attendance contributed to the growth of Nigeria movie industry. The need to fill up the air with home based drama also gave rise to the growth of home videos. Ekeanyanwu (2009). Okoroji (2006) asserts that the real birth of Nollywood is traceable to the overwhelming success of Kenneth Nnebue "Living in Bondage".

Another factor that gave rise to the movie industry is the financial support enjoyed from stakeholders. Succinctly put, the effects of oil boom, increase in the number of television stations, and the rising of some movie celebrities are responsible for the speedy growth of Nollywood films. Others are the already made market by the foreign films and the growth of the Internet facilities. There are some websites which support circulation of Nollywood films (Esan, 2008; Ekeanyanwu, 2009; Haynes, 2011).

Nollywood that began as a means of entertainment and education has grown into a very large industry with economic and cultural effects. Through the numerous cultural effects, the mind of the girl-child is blown having seen the dignity, honour and respect accorded the female folk in the other part of the world. Mild protest, opposition and determination for self-expression. It is now a veritable means by which Nigerian story is told to the world (Haynes and Okome 1997). Adeseke (2015) observes that since inception, the Nigerian home video has become a viable instrument in propagating and preserving our diverse and vibrant cultural heritage. It also aids interculturalism and national cohesion. More than what could be read in books; Nollywood has transmitted Nigerian culture to the world. Nigerian culture is gaining

more and more international recognition. Ibagere (1995) notes that film, as means of entertainment and education facilitates exchange of information.

This engenders the cultivation of new attitude, norms and values that help the girl-child to see herself in the light of who she is and not what the society calls her. Communication depends on lucid exposition of the benefits inherent in such exchange. As a result of the popularity the film industry enjoys since its advent and development, it has become one of the veritable means of social and cultural documentation, propagation, preservation and presentation to indigenous and foreign societies (Umukoro and Okwuowulu, 2010).

Umukoro and Okwuowulu (2010) opine that:

Because Nollywood has proved to have such a wide coverage cutting across social boundaries, feminists have been highly encouraged to explore the film platform for its propaganda objectives. It is therefore not surprising that Nollywood, Nigeria's filmic paradigm, has become the battle-ground for feminist crusaders eager to use the avenue to reinvent the feminine image, particularly, the Nigerian woman" (p 226).

Through Nollywood film, the picture of how women are treated in a traditional African society is revealed. The film producers in some home videos depict the plight of women by portraying them as voiceless, sex objects, vulnerable and weak, always at the mercy of men; in some films women are seen struggling for survival with male portrayed in the old culture of dominance, polygamy and egoism.

Nollywood films provide a rich platform for entertainment for both male and female in the digital world. The films are all over the place -YouTube, Facebook, online play store and many cable television stations are dedicated to featuring Nollywood films 24/7. These can be watched on Android, iPhone, iPad, laptop and many other devices. The storyline of Nollywood films are that co-existence of male and female in diverse socio-cultural and sociolinguistic contexts across the spheres life. The Nollywood films comprised reflections of many real life situations that could not be found on one spot. Film industry as vehicle that carries our cultural heritages to the outside world mirrors the dynamism of culture. It shows the progressive changes in our culture from primitive to the modern state. Although, there are some of the films that misrepresent our culture many are good image makers. This misrepresentation is due to competition and deliberate effort to copy the content and form of other larger film industries in the world (Adeseke, 2015).

The influx of westernization through Nollywood also gives rise to the awareness and agitation for gender equity. Nollywood does not only showcase Nigerian cultural heritages, it brings them in contact with other cultures of the world. When two cultures meet, they produce another culture. Its products are called cultural half-castes (Onah, 2015). He describes it as the 'westernization' of Nollywood films. In the context of western lifestyles some Nollywood films depict, they increasingly incline Nigeria towards easy branding of its people as "cultural half-castes". However, it may be negative in some respects, it is positive in the respect of women emancipation.

Ali (2012) observes that since 2011, more female filmmakers and producers are emerging. This development, as the trend continues, gives birth to films that are deliberately created towards the feminist inquest of redefining the image of womanhood (Umukoro and Okwuowulu 2010). Some examples of female film producers and their works include Funke

Akindele *Jenifa*, Uche Jombo's *Damage, After Proposal*; Effiom-Egbe's *Two Brides and a Baby*, Ini Edo's *I Will Take My Chances*, Chinwe Egwuagu's *Mr. & Mrs*; Monalisa Chinda's *Kiss and Tell*", and *Ije* by Chineze Anyaene. However, Nollywood films are used as weapon for harnessing the cultivated grievances and dissatisfaction of feminist movements in various disciplines and its use to better the situation of womanhood.

Onah (2016) argues that, it is evident that a number of cultural elements portrayed in contemporary Nollywood films are alien to the cultural values of the Nigerian people. Perhaps, Nigerian film makers are spurred by the rather inarticulate tenets of globalization in order to widen the viewership and expand the market horizon of made-by-Nigerian films. By this, they consciously or inadvertently represent Nigeria in several erroneous manners. The image of Nigeria, or rather Nigerians, is painted in spurious portraits.

Adeseke (2015) argues that some Nigerian home videos' portrayal of our cultural ethos and of the women is inappropriate, misleading and therefore unacceptable. In an attempt to ape the Hollywood, some Nigerian home videos could be accused of "projecting intentionally or ignorantly an image (of women) and even men that contains old myths, misconceptions, and even distortions of true images" (Cantor, 1998). However, this does not rule out the fact that many Nollywood films are adequate representation of the Nigerian cultural heritage.

Nigerian movie industry and culture are interwoven; it directly associated with the culture industry. As a window or medium by which Nigerian culture is marketed to the rest part of the world, it has entrenched Nigerian culture across the globe. The Nigerian accents, style of dress, and behavioural idiosyncrasies, all of which are distinctly Nigeria, are now being transmitted as images around the globe (Onuzulike, 2007). Orewere (1992:206) submit that 'film is a powerful medium of entertainment and the transmission of cultural values.'

Nollywood explores diverse of subject matters, it might not be accurate social realities but it reflects or mirrors the social realities. Nollywood evolved around a dominant language structure; different variant of English language emerge as English films are promoted at each region (Esan, 2008). Nollywood since its entry in 1992 has grown to become a significant window through which the African story or perhaps the Nigerian story is told. Ekeanyanm (2009), sees Nollywood as part of culture industry. Some studies have evaluated the type of culture that Nollywood is entrenching into the Nigerian society.

Nollywood movies influence and shape the attitude and value of the adolescent, the movie stars are also role models of today's youths (Filani, 2001; Odesola, 2001). The impact of the movies on the adolescent is enormous (Udofia and Ekaette, 2013). Movies are forms of instrumental materials through which young ones acquire new attitude (Owvamaman, 2005). Udofia and Ekaette (2013) posit that many traditional values are changing rapidly and being replaced by media project values. The influence of Nollywood is already entrenched across the globe. For instance, it is now a regular feature on channels via satellite or cable (Ekeanyanwu, 2009). As far back as 2008, channels are dedicated to showing Nollywood films 24/7 on sky digital platform (Ekeanyanwu, 2009). Efforts of Nollywood filmmakers are engendered towards an attempt to replicate exactly, in finite terms, visual texts culled from social realities (Umukoro and Okwuowulu, 2010).

Umukoro and Okwuowulu (2010) in their study on Feminine Image observe that

Nollywood since its entry in 1992 has grown to become a significant window through which the African story or perhaps the Nigerian story is told and that Nollywood filmmakers attempt to replicate exactly visual texts culled from social

reality; reinforcing thus the vision of gender imbalance and to the chagrin of feminist crusaders who opposed such. (p228)

Nollywood films begin to gain popularity and create awareness. The films are extensively distributed at local and international markets through film festivals and other non-commercial outlets (Haynes and Okome 1997, Gbadegesin 2016). Giwa (2014) observes that this has led to what we now see as Nigerian film and video production that has been deeply rooted into the culture of professional competence.

To this end, Ali (2012:147) states that, “with the emergence of a new crop of feminist-oriented film directors and producers, a new direction is being charted in the history of Nollywood”. The likes of Funke Akindele, Uche Jombo and Monalisa Chinda have produced films consciously crafted towards the feminist inquest of redefining the image of womanhood. Umukoro and Okwuowulu (2010) posit that:

It is therefore not surprising that Nollywood, Nigeria’s filmic paradigm, has become the battle-ground for feminist crusaders eager to use the avenue to reinvent the feminine image, particularly, the Nigerian woman; the use of the filmic media and in this case, Nollywood, as weapon for harnessing the cultivated grievances and dissatisfaction of feminist movements in various disciplines and its use to better the situation of womanhood.(p226)

They conclude from their findings that the feminist ideals pursued in the western world is on the extreme and therefore different from the one aimed at in Africa as presented in the Nollywood films; they then philosophically subscribe to the womanist ideal of African feminism in which the complementary quality of both sexes is iterated and pursued. This is gender equity as gender equality is not attainable and is unrealistic. The feminist approach in the western world is wild because it clamours for equality and man’s displacement. However in Africa, the approach is mild because it realises that male and female are not completely the same. The agitation in Africa is for equity and not equality.

Gobl and Chasaide (2003) in their study on the role of voice quality in communicating emotion, mood and attitude identify seven different voice qualities (the voice qualities included harsh voice, tense voice, modal voice, breathy voice, whispery voice, creaky voice and lax-creaky voice) and explore their effect in the communication of emotions, moods and attitudes. Nwanya (2010) holds the view that gender should be complementary since neither man nor woman can exist in isolation.

Summary and Conclusion

The study found that Nollywood films (through digital space) contributes greatly to the socialisation of the present day girl-child thereby playing a significant role in her identity discovery and construction. Also, the study revealed that there is a difference in the way the traditional African girl-child perceived herself from the way she sees herself now. Another finding of the study is that the feminism agitation through digitalised Nollywood films is different from the western countries. The former is ‘mild’ while the latter is ‘wild’. The study concluded that functional education is a tool to break the jinx of injustice against and relegation of the girl-child. The study recommended that the society should wake up to the reality of the new girl-child's identity created by the digital and accommodate her new identity to avoid incessant

domestic violence. The level of education, technology and socio-economic development of Africa is pro-rata to the level of recognition and involvement of the females in the scheme of things. The Nollywood films have shown among other things that: As it is inadequate for a 6 cylinder engine to fire on 3, it is not proper for a man with two legs to walk on one. So no society can prosper annexing on the masculine resources.

The effects of digitalised world on the psyche of a girl-child cannot be overemphasised. From the previous works such as, Buchi Emecheta, 1979, Mariama Ba (1980), Adedun (2010) Gbadegesin (2016 & 2018), Education is the potent tool for fighting maleficent. One main instrument that changes the identity of an African girl-child from exploited and submerged female is education. The more a girl-child is educated the more she wins the battles of exploitation and submergence. Through socialisation that comes with entertainment especially, the Nollywood films that are available at little or no cost, the girl-child realises who she is, develops confidence in herself and resist the male injustice. She finds expression and ask for a space to do her thing in her own way. Lack of this is evident in the various domestic violence in our society, most importantly, the female against the male kind of violence. The study therefore recommends that the society should wake up to the reality of the new girl-child and accommodate her new identity to avoid incessant domestic violence.

References

- Abegunde B. (2014) Gender Inequality: Nigeria and International Perspectives. British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences. Volume 17 No.02, UK, British Journal Publishing
- Adebowale B. (2006) *The Lonely Days* Ibadan, Spectrum Books.
- Adedun (2010) *The Sociolinguistics of a Nollywood Movie* Journal of Global Analysis Vol. 1, No. 2, LondonCentre for Strategic Research and Analysis.
- Adeseke, A. (2014) "Man 'Rape' Woman: Putting Feminist Discourse in Proper Perspective." In *Quest Journals: Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 2(8)
- Adeseke, A. (2015) *Nollywood and Women Profiling: A Case Study of Two Nigerian Home Videos Films*
- Adomako A., Beoku-Betts J. and Osirim M. (2008) "Researching African Women and Gender Studies: New Social Science Perspectives." *African and Asian Studies*, vol 7 pp 327-341.
- Afolabi J. (2002) *Of Womb-men, We-men and Woe-men: Feminist Aesthetic, Theatre Practice and the Democratic Process in Nigeria*. Ibadan, Kraft Books.
- Ahikire, Josephine (2004). "Towards Women's Effective Participation in Electoral Processes: A Review of the Ugandan Experience." *Feminist Africa*, Issue 3, <http://www.feministafrica.org/index.php/towards-womens-effective>.
- Ali, A. (2012). Nigerian women and political re-orientation in the 21st: The Nollywood imperative. *Makurdi journal of arts and culture*, 10 (1): 142-151.
- Arvaniti A. and Garding G., (2007, Dialectal variation in the rising accents of American English. In J. Cole & J. H. Hualde (Eds), *Papers in Laboratory Phonology* 9, pp. 547-576. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter
- Boh, A. (2012). Nollywood and national development: Redefining Women's Role. *Makurdi Journal of Arts and Culture*, 10 (1):128- 141.
- Brazil, D. (1994) *Pronunciation for Advanced Learners of English* Teacher's Book and Student's Book). Cambridge: CambridgeUniversity Press.

- Brazil, D. (1997). *The Communicative value of intonation in English*. Cambridge; CambridgeUniversity Press.
- Buchi Emecheta, 1979. *The Joys of Motherhood*: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Ltd: Ibadan.
- Cantor, M. G. (1998). "Feminism and the Media." *Society Magazine*, 25(5), July/Aug.
- Chapman M. (2007) Genetic Divergence and Hybrid Speciation. Volume 61, Issue 7, Pages 1773–1780
- Chun, D., (1998). Signal Analysis Software for Teaching Discourse Intonation. *Language Learning & Technology* 2, 61–77.
- Chun D. M (2002) *Discourse Intonation in L2: From Theory and Research to Practice*:234 Sociolinguistic Functions of Intonation, John Benjamins Publishing.
- Dahlstrom, E.; De Boor, T.; Grunwald, P.; Vockley, M. (2011), ECAR: National Study of Undergraduate Students and Information Technology. Available online: <https://library.educause.edu/resources/2011/10/ecar-nationalstudy-of-undergraduate-students-and-information-technology-2011-report> (accessed on 30 October 2018). 17.
- Daly, Nicola, and P. Warren. (2001) Pitching it differently in New Zealand English: Speaker Sex and Intonation. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5: 85-96.
- Dambe, Regina Thea Maaswai (2000). *The National Machinery for the Advancement of Women: The Botswana Experience*. Accra North, Ghana: Third World Network – Africa,
- Ekeayanwu N. (2009). Nollywood, New communication Technology Indigenous Culture in a Global World; *The International Journal of Social and Management* pp 61-84.
- Esan, O. (2008). Appreciating Nollywood: Audiences and Nigerian Films. *Particip@tions*. 5 (1).
- Filani, K. (2001). Introduction to Sex Education in Schools. Abeokuta: Goad Educational Publisher the Sex Attitudes of Students in Senior Secondary Schools. Unpublished B. Ed. Project. University of Lagos.
- Fletcher, J., Grabe, E., and Warren, P. (2004). Intonational Variation in Four Dialects of English: the High Rising Tune. In Sun-Ah Jun (ed.) *Prosodic Typology. The Phonology of Intonation and Phrasing*. Oxford, OUP.
- Gbadegesin M. (2016) Nollywood English Films and Spoken English Proficiency among Senior Secondary School Students. In M. Olateju Ife *Studies in English Language*. Vol. 12, pp 99-109.
- Gbadegesin M. (2018), *Discourse Intonation Patterns of Females in Selected Nollywood Films*. (An Unpublished PhD. Dissertation, submitted to the Department of English, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife).
- Giwa E. (2014) "Nollywood: A Case Study of the Rising Nigerian Film Industry- Content & Production" (2014). *Research Papers*. <http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/g>
- Gobl and Chasaide (2003) *The role of voice quality in communicating emotion, mood and attitude*. Speech Communication, Ireland, Elsevier Science.
- Grabe, E. 2004. Intonational variation in urban dialects of English spoken in the British Isles. In Peter Gilles and Jörg Peters (eds.) *Regional Variation in Intonation*. Linguistische Arbeiten, Tübingen: Niemeyer, pp. 9-31
- Gut, U. & Milde, J.T. (2002): The prosody of Nigerian English. In: B. Bel & I. Marlien (eds.) *Proceedings of the Speech Prosody 2002 conference*, 11-13 April 2002. Aix-en-Provence: Laboratoire Parole et Langage, pp. 367-370.

- Harrell-Bond and Barbara, (2003) <http://sudaneseonline.com/cgi-bin/sdb/2bb.cgi?seq=msg&board=103&msg=1199687814&rn=3>
- Hassim, Shireen (2006), *Women's Organizations and Democracy in South Africa – Contesting Authority*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu Natal Press.
- Haynes J. and Okome O. (1997) *Evolving Media: Nigerian Videon Films*, Jos, National Film Institute.
- Haynes, J (2011) - African Cinema and Nollywood: Contradictions." *Situations* 4.1 pp.67-90.
- Hellum, A., Stewart, J., Sardar Ali, S., & Tsanga, H. (2007). *Human Rights, Plural Legalities and Gender Realities*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Ibagere, E. (1995) "The Media in the Nigeria Democratization Process: The Assessment of a Paradigm and the Paradigm of Assessment." In Austin Ovigie Asagba. *Nigerian Theatre Journal*, Benin City: Osasu Publishers, pp.134-146.
- Ibrahim, Jibrin (2004) "The First Lady Syndrome and the Marginalisation of Women from Power: Opportunities or Compromises for Gender Equality." *Feminist Africa*, Issue 3, <http://www.feministafrica.org/index.php/first-lady-syndrome>.
- Ibrahim S. and Faleke V. O (2013), Pattern of Intonation Tunes in the Marking of Attitudes in Nigerian English *Journal of the Nigeria English Studies Association (JNESA) 16:2*
- Jedlowski, A. (2011) When the Nigerian Video Film Industry became Nollywood: Naming, Branding and Videos' Transnational Mobility." In *Estudos Afro-Asiatcos – Ano 33 – nos. 1/2/3*, pp. 225-251.
- Jiang (2011) *Gender Difference in English Intonation* ICPhS XVII, Sichuan University, China
- Kindem H. and Steele M. (2006) Women in Sembene's films *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media*, no. 36, pp. 52-60.
- Ladele O. (2009) Reconstructing Identities through Resistance in Postcolonial Women's Writing: A Reading of Ezeigbo's *The Last of the Strong Ones*. *Nebula* 6.3,
- Lakoff, R. (1975). *Language and Women's Place*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, Inc.
- Mama, Amina (1995) "Feminism or Femocracy? State Feminism and Democratization in Nigeria." *Africa Development* 20, Issue 2, pp. 37-58.
- Mannathoko, C. (1992), Feminist Theories and the Study of Gender Issues in *Southern Africa*. In Menna R (ed) *Gender in Southern Africa: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues*. Harare: SAPES Trust.
- Mariama Ba (1980) *So Long a Letter*. *Waveland Press*. ISBN 978-1-4786-1123-3.
- Mtarangwi, M. (2000). "Feminism, Anthropology and Androcentrism". *Southern African Feminist Review*, 4(1), pp. 25-35.
- Nwanya, N. (2010). Gender balance and women empowerment in two Nigerian literary drama. *Nigeria theatre journal*, 10 (1) pp. 117-128.
- Odesola, M.N. (2001). Impacts of Video Films on the Sex Attitudes of Students in Senior Secondary Schools. Unpublished B. Ed. Project. University of Lagos.
- Okoroji, T. (2006). Developing an Intellectual Property Strategy for Nollywood. A paper presented at the National Workshop on Developing an Intellectual Property Strategy in Ahuja,
- Onah J. (2015), *The Socio-semiotics of Filmic Representations in Nollywood and its Implications for Nigeria's Cultural Diplomacy*, The Society of Nigeria Theatre Artists. (A Conference paper).

- Onuzulike U. (2007), Nollywood: The Influence of the Nigerian Movie Industry on African Culture: The Journal of Human Communication: A Journal of the Pacific and Asian Communication Association. 2007. Vol.10, No.3, pp. 231 – 242.
- Orazbekova Zeine, Nazgul Shyngyssovab, Kulaiym Mamyrovab and Anarkhan Zhumabayeva (2015), The intonation in gender analysis of linguistics *The European Proceedings of Social & Behavioural Sciences* eISSN: 2357-1330
- Orewere, B. (1992). Towards a film policy for Nigeria. In U. Ekwuazi., & Y. Nasidi. Y (Ed.), *Film for development: Theory and practice at the crossroads* (pp. 308-319). Jos, Nigeria: Nigerian Film Corporation.
- Owvamamam, D. O. (2005). Critical Issues in the Values of Adolescents Today: Implication for Counselling. *Counselling and Human Development*. (2). Pp. 10 – 17
- Raúl J.V. (2015) An L2 Discourse Intonation Study on Four Prosodic Parameters, *Complutense Journal of English Studies*. Vol. 23, pp. 33-58
- Reynolds (1985) English-speaking women in ESL and EFL situations tend to use rising intonation in the context where men would use falling intonation.
- Roach, P. (1983). *Functions of Intonation in English Phonetics and Phonology: A handbook for teachers* (pp. 143-130). Reino Unido: Cambridge University Press.
- Sembene O. (1986) letter to Françoise Pfaff in Pfaff's *The Cinema of Ousmane Sembene* (Weatport CN: Greenwood press).
- Tamale, Sylvia (1999) "Towards Legitimate Governance in Africa: The Case of Affirmative Action and Parliamentary Politics in Uganda," in *Legitimate Governance in Africa*, eds. Quashigah and Okafor. Amsterdam: Kluwer Law International.
- Udofia N. A & Ekaette O. T. (2013) Evaluation of Nollywood Behavior of Youth in Nigerian Secondary Schools, *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* ISSN 2222-1719 (Paper) ISSN 2222 Vol.3, No.5
- Umukoro and Okwuowulu (2010) Feminine Image in Two Nollywood Films: The Examples of *Ije* and *Mr. and Mrs. The Performer* (Vol. 12, 2010) 9, 225-234
- Wild, F. (1992). *Teachers, Preachers and Non-Believers: A Social History of Zimbabwean Literature*. Harare: Baobab Books.
- Zachos G., Paraskevopoulou-Kollia A. and Anagnostopoulos I., (2018), Social Media Use in Higher Education: A Review. *Education Sciences, MPDI*, Vol 8. pp 1-13