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Abstract

This article engages soft-power attraction of Nigeria's film industry, demonstrating its significant rise in production values, already huge popularity globally and general growth of the industry facilitated by the global video streaming. It attempts to reconstruct how the Nigeria's film industry has evolved from Video cassettes technology to become the second largest film industry in the world. It will be argued that the industry not only provides millions of dollars to the nation's economy and numerous direct jobs but has also made great and positive impact on the cultural public diplomacy within and outside Nigeria over the years, projecting the Nigeria's national image in the international community. The analysis in this article emphasizes how driven by negative political image and economic downturn of various magnitude, the film industry evolved from the waters of business trial and experimentation to transform the continent's entertainment turf. It concludes that what was once considered a less important aspect of Nigeria's industrial sector in the early post-colonial era has turned out the mainstream of Nigeria's cultural and public diplomacy initiatives

Keywords: Nollywood, Soft-power, films, Industry

Introduction

Indeed, Nigeria's film industry, popularly known as the Nollywood, according to Akinyemi has transnationalised serving as cultural ambassador to both Nigeria and Africa¹. This transnational impact is most evident in providing an authentic medium for resisting Western cultural imperialism. In consequence, Nigeria, through its film industry-Nollywood, is challenging traditional values and beliefs and inspiring people to think differently about the world around them. The Nollywood is arguably Nigeria's most important source of soft power than any other African. While movie industries in Africa are motivated primarily by the successes recorded in the Nigeria, there is a strong assertion that supports

¹Omolola Akinyemi, "Nollywood Magic: The Rise and Impact of Nigeria's Film Industry." November 3, 2023. <https://cyber.ng/nollywood-magic-the-rise-and-impact-of-nigerias-film-industry/#gsc.tab=0>.



the agreement that Nigerian films has gained international exposure and recognition at festivals and landed distribution deals beyond African markets.²

The paper argued that through its character portrayals, production process, rich content messages, and distribution capacity, Nollywood, in the words of Giwa has assumed a transnational phenomenon in both distribution and production of its movies. Here, the analysis considered factors that facilitated local producers' accessibility to digitized film production processes from a low-budget movie production to wider audience reach, and the use of local languages in connecting with the masses on relatable levels.³ The effect of the humble beginnings and informality of Nigeria's production and distribution has allowed for the articulation of complex processes of remediation. The industry started with the creation of an original product that was regarded as small screen cinema of the 1990s but went on to remediate Nigeria's national identity. The spread of digital technology has been identified as a major driver of Nollywood's growth process and will continue to play that role as domestic and foreign consumption continue to rise. The rise is in wise accelerated consequent upon unrestricted Internet access, increased smartphone use, and improved bandwidth and resulting in production boom that is now considered a soft power ingredient.⁴

As section two reveals, this shift as a soft power giant in film industry was facilitated by number of factors. It draws out how the Video technology and the neoliberal deregulation of media environments permitted a true revolution in African filmmaking. Importantly, although these factors underline the critical importance of informal media economy and conditions that would enable the emergence of Nollywood, the goal is to explore the seismic changes from producing straight to VCD/DVD films consumed mostly by the masses, to an elite-targeted theatre distribution through the streamlining revolution. In this way, the soft power discourse may be situated within a preceding and larger continental and global impact. The final section elaborated on the most important aspect of Nollywood for Nigeria's "soft power" including the impact that the films have had across Africa and its diaspora.

Dhlamini asserts that Nollywood is modelled as a few true representations of "Global Africa".⁵ Nollywood has become the most visible form of cultural machine on the African continent. Nigerian video films travel the length and breadth of the continent connecting Africa to its diverse and far-flung Diasporas elsewhere."⁶ Consequently, the Nigerian film industry has become a viable

²Stephen Kenechi, S. 2023. "The Nollywood in all of us", August 17, 2023. Accessed November 3, 2023. <https://www.thecable.ng/the-nollywood-in-all-of-us>.

³ N. Idoko, 2023. "The Rise of Nollywood: An Insider's Perspective". Accessed November 3, 2023. <https://professions.ng/rise-of-nollywood/>.

⁴ Steve Omanufeme "Runaway Success: Nigeria's film industry is taking off", 2016. <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/022/0053/002/article-A011-en>.

⁵ Bonginkosi Dhlamini, "Nigeria's Nollywood projects itself as a true representation of a 'Global Africa.'" The habarinet work. 2022. <https://www.thehabarinetnetwork.com/nigerias-nollywood-projects-true-representation-global-africa>

⁶Matthias Krings and Okome Onome. "Nollywood and its Diaspora: An Introduction", In: Mathias Krings and Onookome Okome, (eds.), Global Nollywood: The Transnational

vehicle of public diplomacy through which Nigerian film exposes the rich cultural heritage of the country. Over the last three years, it has achieved increased international visibility that is shaping and positively changing global perception of Nigeria.⁷

Research Methodology

This article utilized a mix-method research- a qualitative-quantitative descriptive analysis that falls under social historical research method. In the qualitative, the study utilized a content analysis technique to describe how Nigeria's soft power potential has been influenced with the development and growth of the Nollywood industry. The quantitative aspect of the study is evident in the use of two charts that showcased trends and volumes of Nollywood film production. The qualitative descriptive technique and content analysis begins with systematic and objective location and gathering of evidence.⁸ To this end, the study utilized primary and secondary sources. The primary evidence was sourced from national newspapers and magazines which were written at the time of the events and developments in Nollywood industry. Some of the newspapers and magazines consulted were: *Business Day*, *The Vanguard*, *The Guardian*, *Daily Trust*, and the *Borgen Magazine*, amongst others. Secondary evidence from books, journal articles and online articles on the Nollywood and Soft Power Politics, were used to complement the primary evidence. The next stage in the methodology was criticism of the primary and secondary materials which was done to test the authenticity and reliability of the sources based on their content and authors. The authenticity and credibility of the evidence used are guaranteed in the sense that most of the newspaper reports on Nollywood corroborated one another. After analyzing the sources, the next step involved was moving from evidence to statement or interpretation of the evidence through the synthesis of thoughts and ideas developed from the evidence.

Soft Power and Nigeria's Global Influence

The term 'Soft power' was coined in the 1980s by a political scientist Joseph Nye defining it as "the ability to influence others to get them to do what you want".⁹ Tella considers soft power a state actor's use of non-coercive influence on others through its attractiveness, model and morality¹⁰. The use of soft power in influencing other nations through persuasion and attraction instead of force or coercion is gaining attention in international politics aided by diminishing impact of the hard power. The soft power in its application attempts aims at meeting the foreign policy interest of a nation by gaining attention, compliance and cooperation of other nations without the use of

Dimensions of an African Video Film Industry, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013, 3.

⁷ Stephen Kenechi, "The Nollywood in all of us"... August 17, 2023.

⁸D. W. Moodie, "Content Analysis: A Method for Historical Geography," *JSTOR*, 3(3) 1971, pp.146-49.

⁹Joseph S. Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, New York: Basic Books, 1990, 154).

¹⁰S. Tella, "Nigeria's Democracy Promotion in Africa: Hard, Soft or Smart Power Stratagem?" *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 57(6), 2022, 1092.

physical or brute force. For Nigeria, the concept of soft power is its inability to use hard power, which includes military force and economic sanctions to compel other to do what she wants in the international system. However, wielding the instruments of soft power as evident in the arenas sports, music, sports, the film industry, has enhanced Nigeria's international image in attracting international attention, compliance and cooperation.

Currently, Nigeria appears to be consolidating on its soft power advantages. In other words, Nigeria's renowned in the international system is nowhere near its exploit in military or economic arena but strategically situated along the lines of the creative and entertainment industries. Ironically, the nation's soft power exploits are not ascribed to sustained government policy aimed at building its soft power capacity but out of mainly sheer brilliance of individuals or perhaps their determination to survive in an economically distressed environment. According to Saduwa, 'Nollywood is like an orphan child who had to struggle all by himself to make something of his hard life and now that is has become successful despite all odds, it has turned to a star that's embraced and feted by all'¹¹.

The Making of Nollywood and the Rise in Soft Power Status

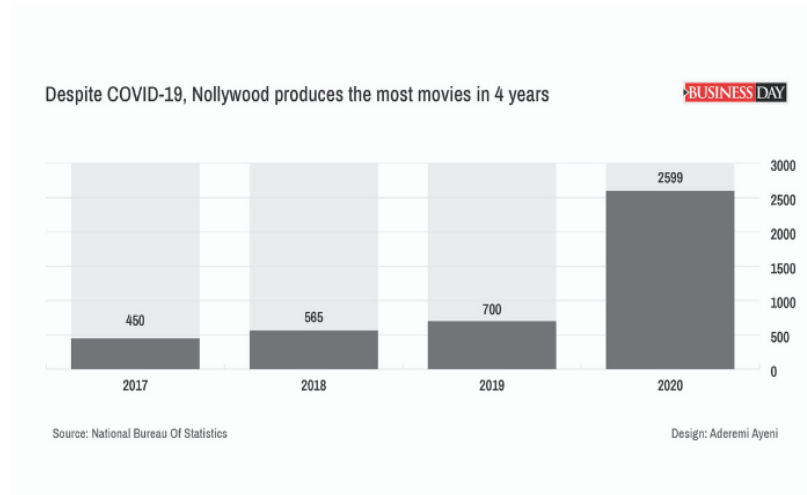
Since its humble beginnings in 1992, the Nollywood industry has assumed the status of one of the world's most successful and influential industries, garnering astronomical international audience. From *Living in Bondage*, regarded as the first Nigerian home video and also instant hit with audiences, a floodgate of other movies overwhelmed the movie market using video cameras, low budgets, and films shot on location without professional equipment or crew.¹² Ever since, the industry has trudged along these crude designs and instruments to transmit often relatable social issues that bedevil the Nigerian society. Decades before its unsung entry, the soft power potential of the industry was hardly seen; or many years down the line, was, seriously neglected and sidelined by for political careers and oil money. Slowly and steadily, however, the same industry is becoming the country's instrument for diplomatic strategy. In fact, the industry has grown increasingly in soft power politics following the footsteps of countries like China and India and becoming a source of inspiration in Africa's quest towards economic development and a force majeure in global power politics. Without initial support from the government, Nollywood propelled itself to the position it occupies today completing a massive 2,599 movies in 2020 and 1,051 films in the first half of 202.¹³

¹¹Patience Saduwa, P. 2019. "How popular is Nollywood on the African continent?", 2019, <https://www.quora.com/profile/Patience-Saduwa>.

¹²Martins Armstrong, "Nigeria: Nollywood is Booming", (Statista), 2022, <https://www.statista.com/chart/26728/nollywood-films-produced-and-censored-timeline/>.

¹³Jonathan Haynes, *Nollywood: The Creation of Nigerian Film Genres*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016, 18.

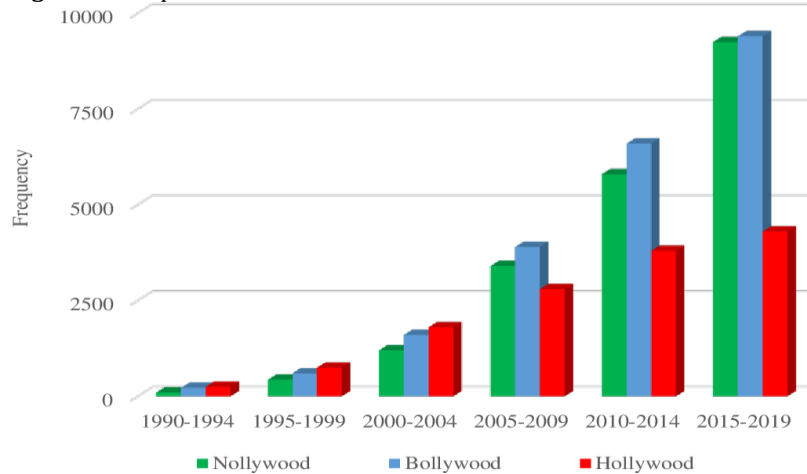
Figure 1: Nollywood Movie Production, 2017-2020



Source¹⁴

The above figures were well ahead of Hollywood and Bollywood within the period. Still in 2021, the industry was ranked the second largest film industry globally with the financial value of the film industry put at over \$6.4 billion

Figure 1: Comparison of Film Production



Source¹⁵

¹⁴ Bunmi Bailey, "Nollywood produces highest movies in 4yrs despite COVID-19", *Businessday*, May 19, 2021.

¹⁵Fortunate T. Mauyakufa, "The Role of Technological Advancement in African Cinema: A Case Study of Nollywood", 2018.

After being criticized for overlooking the industry, the Federal Government of Nigeria responded through the 'Project Nollywood fund', which provided \$200 million for trainings of filmmakers in Nigeria and abroad. These efforts were registered first under President Goodluck Jonathan in 2013 and in 2017, under President Muhammadu Buhari, in which he later released additional N420.2 million to support the industry.¹⁶ Despite the efforts, many of the industry's players believe that Nigeria's government support is a far cry when compared to the mounting challenges of the industry. Ojieson has argued that in the production culture of US' Hollywood, China, Britain, France, Germany, Canada, India and other established film hubs around the globe, corporate interests and government incentives supersede individual efforts upon which Nollywood prides its enterprise.¹⁷ For example, Uduagba notes that in South Africa, the government adopts direct financial support and international market access to support the film industry.¹⁸

In addition to government underfunding of Nollywood, the industry experts have identified the high cost of doing business in Nigeria as another setback in the industry but admits that such challenge can be fixed with partnerships with key stakeholders within and outside the country. So, there has to be more intentional policy action to attract direct foreign investment and corporate partnerships to the industry through incentives that address these limitations.¹⁹ The need for the partnership and investment, according to The Financial Institutions Training Centre (FITC), is because 'Nollywood is too strategic an economic dynamic to be left to the vagaries of government-inspired policy intervention alone'.²⁰ Uduagba further points out that the industry requires a robust funding intervention that will enable a private sector-driven management dynamic rather than being allowed exclusively under the control of the government.

In 2015, India's Acting High Commissioner in Nigeria, Kaisar Alam, had announced that the Indian commission will facilitate a partnership between Nigeria's movie industry and Indian counterpart, the Bollywood. Alam's emphasis for such partnership was basically hinged on countries' gross domestic product and the need for Nigeria to leverage on India more than 100 years of experience in movie production.²¹ India's other rationale for such private partnership was to help enhance the quality of production and how to tackle the issue of piracy which had plagued the Nigerian film industry incurring

¹⁶Daily Post, "Buhari's government gives Nollywood additional N420m grant", June 30, 2017, <https://dailypost.ng/2017/06/30/buharis-government-gives-nollywood-additional-n420m-grant/>.

¹⁷Silver A. Ojieson, "Interrogating Nollywood and its Sources of Funding: The Case of Invasion 1897." *EJOTMAS: Ekpoma Journal of Theatre and Media Arts*, 6 (1-2), 2017, 23.

¹⁸Anthony Uduagba "Nollywood bets on popularity to woo more investors", *Business Day*, May 12, 2023, <https://businessday.ng/life-arts/article/nollywood-bets-on-popularity-to-woo-more-investors/>.

¹⁹Anthony Uduagba, "Experts want Nollywood, financial institutions to collaborate." *Business day*, December, 2020 2022.

²⁰*ibid.*

²¹Covington Africa. "Nollywood and Bollywood Film Industries to Collaborate." January 14, 2015, <https://www.covafrika.com/2015/01/nollywood-and-bollywood-film-industries-to-collaborate/>.

substantial losses.²² The advantages of foreign investment and partnership according to Femi Ogunsanwo, is far greater in recent times than before. This is because the licensing of Nollywood movies by Netflix and Amazon comes with the same benefits of great financial returns for anyone that invests in business. Aliyu believes that collaborating with other entities in the entertainment industry will amplify the reach and impact of Nollywood films, as well as create exciting opportunities for filmmakers and actors²³.

Challenges of the Nollywood Industry

While the academic discussion of Nigeria's soft power benefit has so far dealt with how formidable collaborations with government and private industries might serve yawning needs of the film industry, this paper is also centred on the dimensions of themes that reinforce the existing cultural values and beliefs in the society. The industry has also endured wanton criticisms from the viewers who try to strike a comparative cord between Nollywood and its rival film industries. From the beginning, Udomisor and Sonugo point out that from the beginning, the major criticisms of the Nigeria film industry is its obsession with the occult world (juju, black magic, sorcery, ritual murder, witchcraft), obscenity, prostitution, kidnapping and "money worship."²⁴ They frown at the fact that these themes reoccur, film after film and beset with a seen-one-seen-them-all syndrome. What is striking about these criticisms is the extent to which it is now shared by stakeholders in the Nollywood industry. For instance, Tony Goodman, a Nollywood Producer and Director, in an interview with Vanguard Newspaper admits that "Nollywood has come under harsh criticism in terms of production, quality control and professionalism"²⁵ According to him, people are now tired of same story pattern, because every producer wants his film in the market, and this desperation has brought unhealthy competition²⁶.

On the contrary, the rise of criticism towards Nollywood is beneficial. In the words of Olorunnisola, "where there is no criticism, there is no growth. When complaints are dismissed, room for improvement appears dismissed."²⁷ In fact, criticism serves as a sign that shows Nigerians are interested in African cinema. In a dramatic turn of events, Nollywood has been producing movies that are getting internationally recognized. The movie industry is also exploring new genres and forms of filmmaking. As it progresses, so are the criticisms of Nollywood. Passionate individuals, writers, platforms and communities are ready to hold Nollywood filmmaking accountable against mediocre production

²²*ibid.*

²³Abdulateef Aliyu, "Collaboration Crucial To Nollywood Growth – Joke Oke." *Daily Trust*, August 5.

²⁴Israel Udomisor, I and A. Sonuga, "Content Analysis of Programs Produced by Nollywood Particularly on Africa Magic: DSTV", *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(11), 2022.

²⁵Benjamin Njoku, "Film to the rescue of indigenous languages." *The Vanguard*, October 17, 2010, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2010/10/film-to-the-rescue-of-indigenous-languages/>.

²⁶*ibid.*

²⁷Israel Olorunnisola, "Criticizing Nollywood is harsh but necessary, Pulse-ng, January 3, 2022, <https://www.pulse.ng/entertainment/movies/criticizing-nollywood-is-harsh-but-necessary/0xzg1mp>.

while rendering only trustworthy recommendations to its rapidly growing loyal audience.²⁸

Global Influence of the Nollywood Industry

To a large extent, technology, which has instigated existing filmmakers to improve on their art, plays a significant part in the evolution of Nollywood. This is because filmmakers, despite the criticisms, have continued to avail themselves for further trainings, aligning themselves with the emerging new trends in the industry. Again, the presence of global video streaming platforms in the country has undoubtedly raised the stakes such that Nollywood movies began to gain new audiences outside of Africa- among Africans and those of African descent who had only had access to European or American-produced film and video prior to the mass production of movies in Nigeria. The world's biggest streamers like Amazon and Netflix have continued investment in the Nigerian film market. For example, Ige notes that since its establishment in 1997, Netflix has grown into a global streaming giant with over 230 million subscribers worldwide, including 74.3 million in the United States and Canada; 76.7 million in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, 41.7 million in Latin America; and 38 million in the Asia-Pacific region.²⁹ Netflix formal entrant to the Nigerian market in 2016 resulted in the company's N9bn investment in the Nigeria's film industry 2022 with about 125 Nigerian films and television series were available on Netflix by 2022.³⁰

Nollywood as Nigeria's Soft Power Tool

Indeed, Nigeria, with its population size, has been undergone serious economic and political challenges since independence in 1960. Thus, it most unlikely that the movie industry alone, can change Nigeria's reality and negative image overnight. But Nigeria and its people have registered groundbreaking successes in the international arena through the film industry. This, hopefully, would hold the key to the nation's quest for development and value transformation. But clearly and undeniably, the history, growth and challenges of Nigeria's film industry have been a milestone in Nigeria exploration of soft power. But so far, this dimension of soft power advantage has projected Nigeria as a major soft power. Given the intercontinental admiration of Nigerian movies, Prentice has argued that Nigeria has the most "soft power" of any African country.³¹ In other words, the Nigeria's film industry is now the most significant platform to transmit Nigerian culture across Africa and beyond. With its visibility in US, UK, Caribbean countries and to a lesser extent in countries such as Germany, Italy and Spain, amongst others, Nollywood is no longer a continental but a global industry.

²⁸*ibid.*

²⁹Tofarati Ige. "How streaming platforms are redefining Nollywood with million-dollar investments." 18th February, 2023, <https://punchng.com/how-streaming-platforms-are-redefining-nollywood-with-million-dollar-investments/>.

³⁰*ibid.*

³¹Courtney Prentice, "Nigeria as a Rising Power in Africa", *Borgen Magazine*, July 2, 2014.

In terms of production and consumption Nigerian and the sub-Sahara, Miller argues that 'Nigeria has eclipsed Hollywood, Bollywood to register a commanding presence in the movie sector and if well deployed, could advance Nigeria's hegemonic potential in Africa.³² For Ayodele, Nigeria's film industry has assumed a veritable source of 'soft power' that could be a cultural instrument in displacing French cultural stronghold in Africa³³. Aside challenging French artistic hegemony, the Nollywood has garnered sufficient cultural respect in Africa to also challenge the cultural influence of other outsiders like the US, UK, China and Russia.

As a medium that communicates human value, Nollywood has been used, over the years, to communicate significant national and cultural values of the Nigeria people. It has been a medium to disconfirm the negativities that most states and people in the global community identify Nigeria with. To this end, Nollywood has been used to project the culture of hard work, patience, love, loyalty, honesty, tolerance, peace, non-violence, creativity, amongst others. The Nollywood has also succeeded in projecting the culture and traditions of various ethnic groups in Nigeria. Initially, majority of the Nollywood films were produced in English. However, the industry has transcended into producing movies in Yoruba, Hausa, Efik, Igbo, Edo, Ijaw, amongst others. A major impact of the indigenous movies is that they are watched by Nigerians in the diaspora to teach their children about the language and culture of their land.³⁴ Professor Tunde Babwale, Director-General of the Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation(CBAAC), has argued that apart from serving as a medium of correcting societal ills, films can be used in communicating and disseminating information about a people.³⁵ To this end, the Nollywood can be used to project and globalize indigenous attires, food, languages and ceremonies.

Aside showcasing Nigeria's cultural values and endowment, the Nollywood has also been used in preserving Nigeria's cultural heritage. Threatened constantly by the influence of westernization and globalization, Nigeria faces the challenge of its languages and culture sliding into extinction. It has been argued that out of the 500 languages spoken across the ethnic groups in the Nigeria, only 84 of them are still in use.³⁶ With the continuing impact of globalization, more languages could be lost if measures are not put in place to reverse. Fortunately, the Nollywood is currently being used as a tool to reverse this trend. Its

³²Jade Miller, "Global Nollywood: The Nigerian movie industry and alternative global networks in production and distribution" *Global Media and Communication*, 8(2), 2012.

³³Rachael Ayodele, "Decades after, Nollywood swims in unfulfilled greatness." May 21, 2023. <https://dailypost.ng/2023/05/21/decades-after-nollywood-swims-in-unfulfilled-greatness/>

³⁴Ajumoke Lawal "Nollywood movie production rises by 478% in 4 years." *Businessday*, May 27, 2021, <https://businessday.ng/research-post/article/nollywood-movie-production-rises-by-478-in-4-years/>.

³⁵Benjamin Njoku, "Film to the rescue of indigenous languages." *The Vanguard*, October 17, 2010, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2010/10/film-to-the-rescue-of-indigenous-languages/>

³⁶Benjamin Njoku, "Film to the rescue of indigenous languages." *The Vanguard*, October 17, 2010, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2010/10/film-to-the-rescue-of-indigenous-languages/>

emergence has been described as an expression of grassroots, popular culture and a quest for Africa's Cultural Revolution.³⁷

In terms of economic value, Nigeria's Nollywood, has attracted formal finance partnerships and corporate sponsorship deals from major Nigerian corporations like the Dangote Group, Globacom, as well as other multinationals like Toyota, GSK Luzocade Sport, amongst others. The industry is helping in job creation within an economy that relied exclusively on oil and agriculture. It has over a million people are currently employed making it the country's largest employer after agriculture. For example, according to Moudio (2013), Jason Njoku, the founder of the company, Iroko TV, currently has over a hundred employees working in Lagos, London and New York, and often boasts that "these people are working for us in a country with 50% unemployment."³⁸ He was recently listed by *Forbes*, an American business magazine, as one of the top 10 young African millionaires to watch.

The Nigeria film industry, as forecasted by Price Water Cooper (PWC) Global Entertainment and Media Outlook for 2022-2026, has the potential to champion the country's exports, with projected annual consumer growth rate of 8.8%.³⁹ In 2021, the film industry is said to have contributed 2.3% (\$660 million (239 billion naira)) to GDP.⁴⁰ According to Igbinalolor, it also projected that the industry's export revenue earnings will increase to over \$1 billion within this period⁴¹. The question of Nollywood successes and inroad to soft power status can be gleaned from the observations of Krings and Okome that: "Nollywood stirs the imagination, provoking its viewers to compare their own daily lives with what is presented on-screen... it has served as a model of film production and inspired the growth of local film industry in the sub-Saharan Africa"⁴². Starting from its quality of production to the contents and themes of the production, there two distinguishing footprints Nollywood leaves behind for its global audience that the founders of the Nollywood industry discovered early enough that they did not have to wait anymore for the big screen to project their forms of tradition even if these cultures are frightening and contemptuous, but it only had to project its culture, in the midst of widely misunderstood aspects of Nigerian traditions and varying national challenges of monumental dimension.

Conclusion

³⁷O. Williams, "Nollywood is an Expression of grassroots, popular culture, a true revolution." *The Guardian*, June 17, 2018.

³⁸ Rebecca Moudio, "Nigeria's film industry: a potential gold mine"? *Africa Renewal*, 2013, <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/may-2013/nigeria%E2%80%99s-film-industry-potential-gold-mine>.

³⁹Price Water Cooper (PWC), "Africa Entertainment & Media Outlook 2022-2026", <https://www.pwc.com/ng/en/publications/entertainment-and-media-outlook.html>

⁴⁰*ibid*.

⁴¹Nosa Igbinalolor, "Nollywood and its glittering returns for Nigeria's economy", *Businessday*, January 10.

⁴²Mathias Krings and O. Okome, "Nollywood and its Diaspora: An Introduction", In: *The Transnational Dimensions of an African Video Film Industry: Global Nollywood* (eds.), Mathias Krings and Onokome Okome, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013, 3.

Drawing on Nigeria's soft power discourse, this article has argued that the Nigerian film industry moved from the challenges of lack of government support and use of unsophisticated equipment to international soft power beneficiary. Heavily impacted by individual determination to succeed, global video streaming platforms, and portrayal of its rich content messages, the Nigerian film industry translated to soft power state. To assist the process, funding from the government, international global partnership and foreign investors took advantage of its rising global status to ensure the industry's continued economic and cultural hegemony in Africa and beyond. The article has tried to draw out how criticisms bothering on content and lack of professional formed frameworks and stepping stone through personal endeavours and commitment of its practitioner to get better from time to time. Importantly, although Nigeria's soft power discourse embraces its potential in sport and music, it has, in the light of this study, mostly been felt in its film industry as indicated by the Nollywood. In view of its relevance and achievements in recent times, the industry offers Nigeria an unprecedented opportunity to influence not only Africa cultural diplomacy, but also general issues within the international system.

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