

CONNECTING MISBEHAVIOUR OF AFRICAN YOUTHS TO MOVIES: EXPERIENCES FROM NIGERIA IN VIEW OF THE NFVCB ACT

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Abstract

Sight is one of the major senses in the body. It is commonly said that people become what they behold. This underscores the importance of films, videos and cinemas which have become part of daily realities that are seen. Everyone watches films and videos as they are generally entertaining, educative, and relaxing, but could also incite. Youths spend most of their time on them, and thus are the most influenced. This is evident in their way of life as they choose role models from among their favourite actors and actresses, copying their life styles and mannerisms. Africa is a youthful continent with Nigeria ranking first in terms of youthful population. This offers opportunities for development while posing challenges. The opportunities can only be exploited when the youths are caught young. One of the ways of doing this is by ensuring that they watch the right films. This necessitates the adoption of censoring laws which in Nigeria is the National Film and Video Censors Board Act. It classifies all films and videos whether locally produced or imported, setting criteria for licensing. Employing doctrinal methodology, using primary and secondary data sources, this study examines the National Film and Video Censors Board Act and its influence on the youths in the light of norms encapsulated in the constitutionally recognized national motto and ethics. While applauding the Act, the researchers find that National Film and Video Censors Board possesses less stringent standard that promotes lack of implementation. The study recommends further strengthening and full implementation.

Keywords: *Experiences, Misbehaviours, Movies, NFVCB Act, Nollywood and Youths.*

Introduction

The emergence of modern technology and communication has immensely changed the ideology and standard of people generally. One of the most intriguing ingenuity of modern technology is the infusion and invention of movies, films, home videos, among others into the society through recorded

media, cinema and television, as well as more recent phenomena (new media or information and communication technologies) such as the Internet. Today's communication and cultural products are becoming powerful tools of non-formal education and cultural transmission (UNESCO. 2009). The television is adjudged the most influential, because of its combination of motion pictures and sound (Akpan and Anyianuka, 2012). The mass media, especially television, have evolved overtime bringing along with it emerging features that sustain the interest of their audience, create mood for them or lure them into taking certain actions (Ajakaiye, Oloyede, Bernice, Sanusi, Owoeye, Ojeka-John, Apalowo and Popoola. 2021). Schrank (1985:21) says television is the greatest invention of the twentieth century. However, others see it as a vast wasteland that steals time and turns viewers into couch potatoes. Most Nigerians today, educated or not, have unknowingly conferred on television and films the status of baby sitter in their homes.

Film is a potent tool for portraying the culture and values of a people, as culture is disseminated through film (UNESCO, 2009). The value of home movies as a medium of mass communication is esteemed all over the world. In Nigeria, there are over one million audiences of home movies films who are affected in one way or the other by the subjects treated in Nigerian home movies. These movies portray messages that have influence on the viewers, mostly, their mode of dressing. Movies hold a very special place in the culture of a people. 'Movies, like books, are a culturally special medium...an important medium of cultural transmission' (Baran, 2009:75). Studies show that movies contribute to socialization and the transmission of culture (Baran, 2009; Daramola, 2007). It is considered to be an important form, a source of popular entertainment, a powerful method for educating or indoctrinating people especially children and youths.

Nigeria's population constitutes about 25% of young people aged between 10 and 20 years of age (National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). The influence of television and movie viewing among youths has been subject of research for some time. A lot of misbehaviour or wrong pattern of lifestyles from the youths can be traced to this. For instance, it was established that an hour of television viewing per day increases the tendency of a youth to start drinking alcohol by 9% (Robinson, Chen & Killen, 1998; Gunasekera, Chapman and Campbell, 2005). Similarly, Sargent et al (2005) reported that 40% of youths who tried smoking did so based on what they see in movies, and that youths with highest exposure to movie smoking are 2.6 times likely to try the act than those with low exposure.

The influential propensity of Nollywood movies (the Nigerian industry movies) has become a bane for investigation for various scholars. The function of Nollywood movies being informative, educative and inducing cultural norms and values are no more effective, due to the globalization ideology that has overruled the cultural beliefs and value which the movies are expected to pass to the audience. The cultural and moral norms that the movies express have now been taken over with nudity, promiscuity, vulgarism, sex and violence displays which leave the youths most especially on the negative consequence.

In recent times, the home movie industry is taking a different dimension by revealing the societal ills and their consequences on the society (Duru 2020). The wrong information theme of the Nollywood movies has created apprehension about sex and violence information that the youths are being exposed to, which are evidenced in unsafe sex, alcohol use and violence. Different studies have continually given the understanding that it has the capacity to influence the behavioural pattern of the audience, when they expose themselves to it consciously or unconsciously. However, despite the negative norms promoted by Nollywood movies, these movies have improved the social reformation status of society and have improved the awareness of historical facts.

There have been recent outcries over rising levels of early age unsafe sexual behaviour, violence, aggression, substance abuse, and eating disorder among youths, increasingly attributed to Nollywood movies and other communication media aimed at children and youths. This has led this research to investigate the influence of Nollywood movies on the behavioural patterns of youths in Nigeria. It is a well-established fact that viewing violent, ritual killing and undeserved affluence-oriented movies on television increases aggression as well as affect the behaviour of the viewers. This is because film has a dramatic effect on the perception of viewers whether they are conscious or unconscious of this fact.

Through the doctrinal research methodology, this study, therefore, attempts to find how Nigerian youths interpret the images they see in Nollywood movies. It is also to establish if some of the themes in Nollywood movies are true reflection of what goes on in our society. Also, it seeks to find out if there are laws regulating what people particularly the youths view from these movies. Also having in mind the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) (1999 CFRN), Section 39 provision which enshrines freedom of expression to all without excluding the youths.

Statement of the Problem

Recent outcry over the moral decadence in the Nigerian society has become alarming. Nigerian youths are into all sorts of atrocities such as ritual killings, sexual perversion, violence, aggression etc. and the question is who takes the blame? A lot of these atrocities have been attributed to the Nollywood industry which is the major entertainment industry in Nigeria. One of the most popular hobbies among youths today is watching movies. Nigerian movie makers are good at what they do. They know exactly how to capture people, especially young people. In order to answer this question, it is pertinent to understand how much impact movies have on youths. Books give youths the power of imagination. When words are read, the mind begins to visualize them. Two individuals may read the same book but their minds may create different visual representations of that book. Movies on the other hand bring these words to life and provide visuals of every situation and nothing is left to the imagination.

Literature Review

There appears to be no standard global definition of a youth. Definition of youth perhaps changes with circumstances, especially with the changes in demographic, financial, economic and socio-cultural settings. The age bracket varies from region to region, organization to organization and from country to country. The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. The Secretary-General first referred to the current definition of youth in 1981 in his report to the General Assembly on International Youth Year (A/36/215, para. 8 of the annex) and endorsed it in ensuing reports (A/40/256, para. 19 of the annex). When the General Assembly, by its resolution 50/81 in 1995, adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond, it reiterated that the United Nations defined youth as the age cohort of 15-24.

Table 1: Summary of age brackets of Youths.

Entity/Instrument/ Organization	Age	Reference
UN Secretariat/UNESCO/ILO	Youth: 15-24	UN Instruments, Statistics
UN Habitat (Youth Fund)	Youth 15-32	Agenda 21
UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA	Adolescent: 10-19, Young People: 10-24, Youth: 15-24	UNFPA
UNICEF /The Convention on Rights of the Child	Child until 18	UNICEF
The African Youth Charter	Youth: 15-35	African Union, 2006
The Commonwealth	Youth: 15-29	Youth Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

In Nigeria, prior to the emergence of the National Youth Policy 2019, The Nigerian National youth policy (2009) defines youth as between 18-35 years. However, the 2019 National Youth Policy has changed the above classification. By the new Policy, a youth in Nigeria is a person between 18-29 years. (The Nigerianlawyer, 2020). The developmental stage of the youths covers the scope of the adolescence and the young adults hence they experience most adolescent characteristics. The period is associated with vigour. Since they are very energetic and active, they tend to engage in explorative actions which sometimes yield both positive and negative actions affecting their behaviour (Igbo, Egbe-Okpenge and Awopetu 2013).

Unachukwu and Ebenebe (1997) noted that the common denominator in all adolescent experiences irrespective of cultural variations is the biological changes from childhood into mature adults' status capable of reproduction. It is also a time of enormous physiological changes; adolescence is also marked by changes in behaviour and expectations. It is regarded as a prelude to and preparation for adulthood, a transitional period of life between immaturity and maturity as well as having to deal with the question "who am I". The adolescent must also deal with the question "who will I be" (Gross and Mc Ilveen, 1998). Since most adolescents belong to the secondary school age, they seem to be easily influenced by what they see and or hear (environment). They are a very mobile group gaining access to several television stations and programmes.

Because the teenage and adolescent years is a time when teens begin to try out new identities, behaviours and characters, whoever the teen interacts with at this period is very influential in the life of that teenager. Since teens own smartphones and tablets and are always on the internet, a lot of them spend time downloading and watching movies, shows, drama and other contents with their phones which could only suggest that celebrities become their role models rather than their parents who may or may not be too busy to keep an eye on them. Depending on what celebrity the teenager is obsessed with, if he loves action movies and thrilling shows where violence is the theme and is constantly promoted, these television contents begin to have an impact on the life of the teenager. In fact, research has shown that frequent exposure to violent media contents can stimulate violent behaviours on the viewers of these violent contents (Oyama and Ogbu, 2017).

Behaviour and Misbehavior

Adolescence is a vital developmental stage, characterized by marked biological and physiological changes. Behaviourally, adolescence is associated with volatile emotions and boundary-testing behaviour as individuals explore and assert personal identity, learn to navigate peer relationships, and transition to independence. The strongest stereotypes of adolescence are portrayed in countless television shows and movies: the emergence of sexual interest and behaviour, and decision-making dilemmas (American Psychological Association, 2017). In these circumstances, adolescents' behaviour is determined by their own moral and behavioural code. O' Rorke (2006:72) states that '...Behaviour is influenced not only by personal or live models but by those presented in the mass media'. According to American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP) 2005, 'Children are influenced by media, they learn by

observing, imitating and making behaviour their own'. It is quite depressing to note that since the inception of action films, there have been increased incidents of violent behaviours in youths.

Behavioural problems among youths manifest in various forms. These include: stealing, truancy, lying, fighting, cheating, lateness, rudeness, sex offenses and harassment, alcohol drinking and smoking. These problems have been alleged to have been caused by several factors including, absence of religious and moral instructions and mass media which mass media which recently encompass information and communication technology (ICT). (UNESCO 2000).

Movies also depict luxurious lifestyle and rarely show middle class life, and this brings about a negative impact on youths who would want to acquire riches without any hard work. In some movies, armed robbery, kidnap, and murder are portrayed as heroic. Some movies even go as far as narrating how these crimes should be committed. This influences youths negatively as they try to mimic these movies.

In Nigeria, several scholars have identified the following as forms of behavioural problems among children and youths aggression, sex crimes, disrespect for elders, bullying, disobedience truancy, examination malpractice, drug addiction and noise making (Anagbogu, 2001; Nnachi, 2003). Recently, it has been observed that several youths now engage in cyber related crimes. Such as e-mail scam, cyber bullying and intimidations, drug trafficking, lying, online child and internet pornography, sabotaging internet network providers and examination fraud (Longe, Ngwa, Wada and Mbarika 2009).

The recent trend of misbehaviour among Nigerian youths makes one marvel if current exposure and involvement of this group of individuals to films, has any influence on them. As Nigerian youths spend ample time with television, cinemas, and the Internet to watch Nollywood movies, the information they internalize from the movies could influence their behaviour (Igbo, Egbe-Okpenge and Awopetu 2013).

Nollywood Industry

Although the history of Nigerian cinema is much older, the term Nollywood commonly refers to the period starting with the direct-to-video boom of the early 1990s. Nollywood is an African film tradition and industry, which started in the late 1980s in Nigeria, but has now spread globally, with vast potentials for wealth creation, employment, and the provision of social safety nets for teeming Nigerian (African) youths. Nollywood, as an industry, is

derived from Hollywood in the manner as Bollywood (Omoera, Edemode and Aihevba 2017).

Nollywood as a symbol of the Nigerian movie industry is reputed as the third most prolific industry after Hollywood and Bollywood (Uchegbu, 1992 & Onishi, 2002), and has achieved this feat by virtue of the volume of production over the years through wholesome practices rooted in the television as a medium of mass communication where drama is the most important element of programming for many of its audience (Esan, 2008). Recently, Nollywood productions has transformed into an enormous and significant industry which has become a popular source of entertainment for Nigerian youth. The Nigerian creative industry (film, television, music, fashion, visual arts, gaming, etc.) is reportedly the nation's second-largest employer of labour, after the agricultural sector. The film industry in itself currently employs over a million people who work directly or indirectly across the exhibition, distribution and production subsectors. The industry produces about 50 movies every week (UNESCO 2021).

Brief History of Film in Nigeria

Filmmaking in Nigeria is as old as the inception of Nigeria as a British colony (UNESCO, 2021). The British colony brought in the ideology of film into Nigeria in the 1900's (Nnabuko and Anatsui, 2012; 1). However, at the dawn of August 12, 1903, the first wobbling picture was displayed on Nigerian soil at the Glover Memorial Hall in Lagos under the Management of Herbert Macaulay who between those times closed down the cinemas and went to West Africa to continue to run the business (Nnabuko and Anatsui, 2012; 1). After he left the Nigerian soil, Stanley Jones opened up the film showing business in the same location in November 1903. This is the incident that birthed the Nigeria Home Movie industry which is now referred to as Nollywood.

The first feature film, *Palaver*, was produced in 1926 by Geoffrey Barkas and starred Nigerian actors. Since then, the industry has undergone different phases of development. After the country's independence in 1960 and the indigenization decree of the then Head of State, Yakubu Gowon, ownership of cinemas was transferred to Nigerians from foreigners and indigenous productions began to thrive, with more local films making it to the box office. *Kongi's Harvest* (1970), by Ossie Davis and acclaimed writer Wole Soyinka, was the first production by a Nigerian indigenous company. Renowned filmmakers of the period include prominent Yoruba directors Ola Balogun (UNESCO, 2021).

The early 90s introduced the reign of straight-to-video productions, with Kenneth Nnebue's *Living in Bondage* becoming a Nollywood classic. It kicked off the home video boom which led to the release of popular films such as *Rattle Snake* (1995), *Domitilla* (1996), etc. The early 2000s introduced a transition from VHS to VCDs and DVDs, and an increase in production and consumption. Star actors such as Ramsey Noah, Genevieve Nnaji, Omotola Jalade Ekeinde, Uche Jombo Rodriguez, Kate Henshaw, Jim Iyke, Stella Damasus, Stephanie Okereke, Ini Edo and Pat Attah, to mention a few, starred in several romantic comedies and melodramatic films that became household names. In 2004, modern cinemas returned with the establishment of Silverbird Cinemas in Victoria Island, Lagos. A new generation of filmmakers became faced with the need to raise the production quality of their work in order to take it to the big screen. At the same time, a small group of filmmakers from the 90s era also became more ambitious with their storytelling (UNESCO, 2021).

Kunle Afolayan's *The Figurine* (2009) is widely considered to be the first "New Nollywood" film, marking a turning point in the creative development of the industry. Since 2009, Nollywood films have continuously thrived in Nigerian cinemas. With an improvement in funding from government loans and corporate financial institutions, filmmakers have enjoyed better production budgets and have managed to make films good enough to compete with Hollywood at the local box office. In 2014, popular stand-up comedian, Ayo Makun, produced his first feature film, *30 Days in Atlanta*, starring Hollywood A-list actress Vivica Fox, which went on to become the first Nollywood film to get a Guinness World Record recognition, grossing about US\$1 million (UNESCO, 2021). The Nollywood industry is reputed as the third most prolific industry after Hollywood and Bollywood (Uchegbu, 1992 & Onishi, 2002).

The Nigerian Experience

Of recent in Nigeria, there is an outbreak of moral decadence in society, such as, violent killings, kidnapping, ritualism for money, sexual perversion and the list goes on. A lot of these crimes have been attributed to the influence from Nollywood movies. According to *Naija News*, Ayobamidele Ayodele, a kidnap suspect who was recently arrested by the security operatives in Ogun State for abducting a six-year-old, Ebube Eze, confessed that he had learnt the act of kidnapping by watching the films of Nollywood actor, Zubby Michael. *Naija News* reported the ritual suspect, Ayodele saying:

Zubby Michael is my favorite Nollywood actor and he is good at kidnapping roles. I decided to try out some of the methods used

by Zubby to kidnap children and adults in the movies. I started by visiting several schools around Ojo to see the possibility of picking children without anyone noticing (Naija News 2022)

Also, an ace Nigerian movie star, Yul Edochie, (the son of Nollywood's living legend, Pete Edochie) popularly known for his roles as an occult member cried out in 2021 to young people motivated by his 'ritualism-themed' movies that he was just a very good actor and not an actual ritualist. The actor, due to the overwhelming messages received on a daily basis from young people seeking to make quick money through fetish and harmful means, coupled with the scourge in incidents of ritual killings that has assumed an alarming rate in society, was forced to make a declamatory announcement to the general public. Yul Edochie noted that he is only an actor that acts according to storylines given to him, and that playing money rituals roles in the movies did not mean he does it in real life (Naija News 2022).

To prove his point, the actor shared a screenshot of a message from one of his fans in an Instagram post. In the direct message sent to him, the fan wrote, 'Afa bro, where e dey happen. Give me location I'm ready for sacrifice abeg. I message KOK, he never answer me. I will keep everything secrets. I promise. Just take me to baba make I run my own sharp' (Punchng 2021).

Another prominent actor who followed that part is veteran actor, Kanayo O Kanayo. Contrary to the allegation of being a ritualist due to the roles he plays in movies, he clarified on social media in 2021 that he only interprets roles in movies and is not an actual ritualist. Undoubtedly, Nollywood films with its replete themes and scenes of ritual murder, magical and spiritual powers have attributed to the prevailing belief system that ill-gotten wealth can be made through the diabolical means of ritual killings and dubious kidnapping, hence this rising menace among youths in the Nigerian society (Naija News 2022). There have been other numerous cases reported by Naija News.

On 21st February 2022, the Nigerian government, via its minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed, after declaring a national emergency on ritual killing, placed a prohibition on Nollywood creation of money ritual content films. The government had also indicted the film industry for the increase of ritual killing among youths. This claim by the government struck a blow to the Nollywood industry. In their defence, Lancelot Imasuen, a film director, questioned the government, asking, 'When did the industry become the problem of bad governance, bad roads and the reason for the economic downturn? The Nigerian film industry has always been portraying what is

evidently wrong with the country and proffering solutions' (Guardian.ng/life, 2022).

Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed, stated during a media visit to *Daily Trust* office in Abuja that to mitigate this, he had directed the National Film and Video Censors Board, the body set up to regulate the film and video industry in Nigeria, to take this issue into consideration while performing its role of censoring and classifying films and videos (Punchng 2022).

Regulatory Framework for Movie/ Films in Nigeria

The Nollywood sector operates under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture. Under the ministry, film production, distribution and exhibition are overseen by the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB). Noteworthy is the fact that two states in Nigeria, Lagos and Kano, have their own states Censors Boards. For instance, Lagos city which is the hub and centre of Nollywood, its censor board works in collaboration with the NFVCB to implement its regulations in terms of licensing exhibition centers as well as to fight against piracy. While, Kano's board is more focused on censoring films in accordance with the state's religious code (UNESCO, 2021).

The National Film and Video Censors Board Act: A Review

Considering the enormous influence of films and videos as shown in a plethora of researches, including Omobola (2014) which confirms that too much exposure to films affects academic performance of secondary school students, it behoves a reasonable government to introduce control mechanisms. The federal government of Nigeria regulates the film and video works ecosystem through the operation of the National Film and Video Censors Board Act (NFVCBA) (as amended) enacted in 1993, to replace the Federal Board for Film Censorship.

The NFVCBA is a document of 9 parts, 67 sections and 2 schedules. Relating to the subject of discussion, the pertinent provisions include the creation of the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) in section 1 whose functions according to section 2 are to (a) license a person or premises for exhibiting film and video works and (b) censor films and video works, among other duties. Section 17 authorizes the exhibition of film and video works that are licensed by the board and in licensed premises. Section 19 makes violation an offence.

The Act authorizes the licensing of film and video works that: have educational or entertainment value; promote the Nigerian culture, unity and interest; do not undermine national security, reinforce corruption of private or public morality; encourage violence; ridicule people of African heritage; encourage illegal acts; encourage racial, religious or ethnic discrimination; offensive contents, injurious to morality; incite public disorder and are undesirable in the public interest, among others (NFVCBA, s. 36 (1) & (2)). These criteria are in line with the motto of the federal republic of Nigeria which are 'Unity and Faith, Peace and progress' (1999 CFRN as amended, s.15) and national ethics of "Discipline, Integrity, Dignity of Labour, Social Justice, Religious Tolerance, Self-reliance and Patriotism" (1999 CFRN as amended, s.23).

Nigeria being a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-religious society, actualizing these will encourage the propagation of these positive attributes as well as the discouragement of discrimination in every way using every available medium. But one can hardly find films and video works that promote hard work, intelligence, respect, peace, meekness, development, education and moral education. It follows that the NFVB ought not to license or permit the exhibition of films and video works that negate the constitution. In doing this, it is expected to do a balancing of some sort. For instance, actors petitioned the censors board on a film that demonized Tiv culture (The Guardian, 2018). While NFVCB should not license culture denigrating films and videos, it must be noted that this applies where the alleged culture enhances human dignity and are consistent with the fundamental objectives as proved in chapter II of the constitution (1999 CFRN as amended, s.21). Otherwise, the culture, if barbaric, should be named and condemned.

Further, this petition questions the co-operation between the zones and the headquarter. This is because each zone has a zonal film censors committee (NFVCBA, s.35) and zonal video censors committee (NFVCBA, s.55). It is ideal that film and video works with cultural themes should be referred to the zone where the culture emanates for input before it is licensed.

In approving these works, they are classified into the following categories- "G" for general exhibition, "C" for children, "NC" not recommended for children, "J 8" for mature audiences, "RE" for restricted exhibition (NFVCBA s. 41). However, despite the classifications individuals that are less than 18 years of age whom Nigerian Child's Right define as children (CRA) (CRA, S.277) get to watch films not meant for them in cinemas because those selling tickets do so without verifying their age. Again, a lot of youths own mobile phones and laptops where they can access films not meant for them, without parental

knowledge. Research shows there exists a relationship between the mass media, social ills and other behavioural and attitudinal change in society (Ekaette, 2019). It follows that for the classification to be meaningful, the populace must understand them. The censors board and other stakeholders should be seen to be doing this. Fortunately, this is happening in some states tagged media literacy campaign to the grassroots where schools are visited and students educated on film classification (Premium Times, 2021).

Further, the board can revoke the approval of any film (NFVCBA s. 38) or withdraw the film for further censorship (NFVCBA s. 39) or withdraw a license which it ought not to have given (NFVCBA s. 31). These provisions seem to recognize that Nigerian system is not perfect, meaning that officers could mistakenly license a film or knowingly do so for selfish interests. It thus gives NFVCB an opportunity to right the wrong without the fear of litigation. The recent banning of a film by the NFVCB is speculated to be due to its poor portrayal of the law enforcement agency (The Guardian, Why We Banned 'Sugar Rush' – National Film and Video Censors Board 2020). If the speculation is true, then the NFVCB must be called out for violating the constitution (1999 CFRN as amended, s.22) which tasks agencies of mass media to freely uphold the fundamental objectives of chapter II of the constitution as well as the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people. The NFVCB should not become a willing tool in the hands of anti-democratic forces.

The Act creates room for zonal offices of the board and mandates the board's secretary to keep a registered list of licensed film and video works which is accessible to the public on the payment of a prescribed fee (NFVCBA s. 29). These zonal offices give room for easy access and public participation in the implementation of the Act. This is important because anyone who has a grouse against any film or video work could walk into the nearest zonal office to lodge a complaint or even verify whether a particular film has been licensed for public viewing. To harness the benefit of this provision, there is need for awareness of these zonal offices so that the public can take advantage of their presence in ensuring that the objectives of the Act on quality film and video works are met. While the Act is a veritable tool, it has some lapses beginning with the use of the word "censor" in its name. This has been a matter of concern to stakeholders who see it as draconian, violating human rights and not in consonance with the global trend. The constitution in guaranteeing Nigerians freedom of conscience, thought and religion, allows the propagation in private or public either alone or with others (1999 CFRN as amended, s.38). Being that the constitution remains the grundnorm, any law that contradicts its provision,

shall to the extent of its consistency be void (1999 CFRN as amended, s.38). This could be one of the reasons for the current bill at the House of Representatives, seeking the repeal of the current NFVCBA and enactment of National Films and Video Censorship Classification and Exhibition Regulatory Commission Act (This Day, 2021).

Another issue of concern is the inadequacy of penalties. The prescribed penalties are considered too mild and not strong enough to serve as deterrence for offenders. For instance, exhibiting restricted film in a registered place before an underage person attracts penalty of N1000:00 (NFVCBA, s. 43(2)) while penalty for exhibiting unapproved film, on conviction is a fine of N10 000: or 2 years imprisonment. Exhibiting approved film without showing the approved certificate of censorship attracts a fine on N5 000:00 (NFVCBA, s.45) and distributing unclassified video works attracts a fine of N2, 500:00 (NFVCBA, s.60). In the face of these paltry fines, easily payable, offenders will opt for payment instead of desisting from committing the offences.

Furthermore, it excludes licensing for film and video works exhibited in a place where the public is not invited, done by persons employed by government, or done in premises owned by government and films aimed at promoting any business (NFVCBA, s.17(3)). The purport of these exceptions is that unlicensed films shown in unlicensed premises is lawful when it is exhibited in a place where the public is not invited or a place owned by the government or it is exhibited by government employees. The Act did not define non-public place but according to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) section, it refers to non-commercial exhibition. The intention of the draftsmen in including these exceptions is unknown but recent experiences have shown that crimes have been carried out in government establishments by those in the government employment even during normal work hours. An example is a BRT driver in Lagos who raped and killed a female passenger (Premium Times 2022). Also, the inclusion of any business without qualifying it as 'legal' could give room for mischief.

The essence of any law is its implementation because where a law is not implemented; it remains inactive on concerned issues. Implementing NFVCBA requires surmounting challenges militating against the attainment of set objectives. The first is funding for training and retraining of staff as well as procuring necessary equipment. Some producers and exhibitors who want to cut corners will constantly try out plans to outsmart the staff of NFVCB. Where these staff are neither trained on the latest avoidance tricks nor provided with the necessary work instruments, they will not be able to accomplish much and

society will suffer for it. This is evident in a research revealing shortage of staff as well as dearth of equipment in zonal offices (Stevenson, 2008). Training will enable the NFVCB staff to employ other strategies rather than the usual market raid for confiscation of uncensored film and video works (Okemuyiwa, 2018). This has become necessary because it seems to be their only strategy and those involved have found evasive tactics.

Furthermore, the police have enormous task in ensuring compliance with laws generally. The NFVCBA has specific assignments for the police. A police officer can enter premises where a film or video work is being exhibited to ensure compliance with the Act (NFVCBA, s.24), remove a child from licensed premises where a restricted film or video work is being exhibited (NFVCBA, s.42), arrest without warrant and use necessary reasonable force during search (NFVCBA, s.62). To perform these functions, police officers must be trained and retrained to understand these assignments. These trainings require funds. It may make better sense to have a special unit in the police force that concentrates on this area in order to maximize resources. With these trainings, it is hoped that police will take their NFVCBA assigned responsibility seriously. For example, Stevenson noted that of the 10 cases reported by NFVCB to police, only 2 were prosecuted (2008). This is clearly not encouraging, going forward, NFVCB should take advantage of the proposed amendment of NFVCBA to seek prosecutorial powers. This will make implementation of the Act easier and faster.

Security has always been important but the rising insecurity in Nigeria makes the tasks of NFVCB hazardous. The bad economic situation normalizes corner cutting in film and video production activities, distribution and exhibition for quick gains. A research noted that some producers sell a different version of film and video works to the market instead of the exact version for which they got NFVCB approval (Okemuyiwa, 2018). Those cutting corners do not plan to be caught and therefore will employ every conceivable strategy to achieve their goal. NFVCB staff require better protection if they are to freely carry on their statutory assignments without fear or favour. The required protection could come from Nigerian police force or private security outfit but whichever option is taken necessitates NFVCB making financial commitment.

Another challenge with the implementation of NFVCBA is the issue of piracy. Many film and video works in Nigeria today are pirated, meaning that they do not go through the censorship of the board. This may explain the reason majority of them contain ritual scenes, graphic violence, foul language, denigration of Nigeria, prejudicial portrayal of certain ethnic groups, and the

abuse of cherished institutions, all which are contrary to the provisions of the NFVCBA (Omoera, 2008). The NFVCB is reported to have confirmed that most pornographic films are imported into the country, mainly from Ghana (Akorga, Atsa and Joseph, 2020). It behoves NFVCB to collaborate with Ghana in eliminating this menace. Partnering with the Nigerian Custom Service will go a long way since the importers or smugglers of these film and video works that violate our laws bring them in through the borders.

Despite the challenges, the NFVCB is doing its best in performing its statutory duties. It censored 2000 Nigerian films in 2021 (Punch, 2022), banning some film and video works while refusing to grant viewing license to others for contravening the NFVCBA in terms of contents (*Okemuyiwa, 2018*). Despite the seemingly good work, the NFVCB possesses less stringent standards than other jurisdictions which is the reason it has banned only a few films and video works (*Okemuyiwa, 2018*). Buttressing this point, some opined that in the United States of America, the rating board starts its work from scripted screen play unlike Nigeria where the NFVCB knows nothing about the film and video work till a finished product is brought to their office for censorship wherein it is near impossible to make any tangible adjustments (Akorga, Atsa and Joseph, 2020). There is room for improvement but the NFVCB embrace its functions and encourage all duty bearers so as to realize objectives in the NFVCBA.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The above deductions indicates that Nollywood movies have proven to affect the behaviour of their viewers, thus playing an injurious role in the increased and uncontrolled desire for a life of affluence through ritual killings, kidnapping. The fight against ritual killings and other menaces in our society should not be left to only the regulatory bodies, actors and actresses should make it a duty to turn down storylines and scripts promoting the menace. It is the duty of the movie industry to create a culture through its contents that will invariably promote and uphold the sanctity of life, and must in every way desist from contents that aim to collapse morality, ethics, and law of our society.

The following recommendations are made:

1. Seeing that the NFVCBA has set out a standard core minimum for film and video works production and exhibition in Nigeria, it behoves the NFVCB to implement the Act by doing the following:
 - Advocate for the creation of a special unit in the police force that will deal with issues of film and video works.

- Seek increased funding by demanding from the federal government, the 1% of taxes paid on all censored film and video works.
 - Deploy the funds in the training and retraining of staff and members of the police force.
 - Give incentives for film and video works producers to enable them produce contents that are children friendly, as currently there are few of those so as to discourage their importation (Akorga, Atsa and Joseph, 2020).
2. Create massive awareness of the essence of film and video works rating in schools, markets, religious centres as well as traditional and social media. It will be helpful to catch them young by establishing film classification clubs in secondary schools.
 3. To partner with the NCS and other relevant stakeholders for the effective implementation of the NFVCBA.
 4. In addition to this, the regulatory bodies and practitioners in the movie industry should create a dedicated department or agency with the purpose of 'content sensitizing' on the repercussions of indulging in such a heinous lifestyle. Informative movies that will be aimed at discouraging young people from engaging in such crimes and lifestyles should be promoted and encouraged more than ever as we are already in crisis.
 5. Due to the spate of ritual killings, which have become so problematic, movie marketers and producers who default and continue to promote ritual killing themed movies should be made to face stiff jail sentences to deter potential producers/ filmmakers motivated by greed to continue to produce such content despite its damaging effects on society.
 6. The fight against ritual killings and other menaces in our society should not be left to only the regulatory bodies, actors and actresses should make it a duty to turn down storylines and scripts promoting the menace.
 7. Music, TV, video games, magazines and other media all have a strong influence on how people view the world, an influence that often begins in infancy. Media consumers, children need to develop skills and habits of media literacy. These skills include being able to access media on a basic level, to analyse it based on certain key concepts, to evaluate the analysis and, finally, to produce media oneself. This process of learning media literacy skills is media education. Media literacy encourages

young people to question, evaluate, understand and appreciate their multimedia culture. It teaches them to become active, engaged media consumers and users.

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