

NIGERIAN MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY: AN ANALYSIS OF CINEMATIC TECHNIQUES IN PRODUCTION PHASE

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Abstract: *Cinematic techniques are methods used by movie makers to create emotional and psychological response in the audience. Such methods like scripting, lighting, camera shots, audio and video editing are done to make the audience get a movie that is of good quality, entertaining, educating and satisfactory. Presently there is strong opinion that in Nigeria, the quality of movies is comparatively suboptimal against western standards which is often determined by how much consideration is given to thematic contents and cinematic techniques. Therefore, to attain western cinematic standard and attracting global audience, Nigeria motion picture industry needs a total revitalization. The starting point is a critical assessment of the nature of cinematic techniques practiced by professional, their technical approach to these techniques and thorough evaluation of cinematic processes utilized in Nigerian motion picture industry. Thus, in this paper I presented relevant supporting evidence from a major study on Nigeria Motion Picture Industry aimed at identifying the precise cinematic procedures, techniques, approaches used production phase in Nigeria. In the parent study, oral interviews were conducted, archival materials consulted; relevant literatures reviewed and snapshots were taken from 14 selected movies and analyzed. The major contextual or related findings revealed that Nigerian movie professionals are fast growing in practice and skill acquisition. Though, cinematographic techniques such as cranning and trucking are infrequently used among them as a result of inadequacy of finance to purchase necessary equipments. The significance of this paper lies in its potential to enlighten Nigerian movie professionals on ways to improve and ensure effective production.*

Keywords: *Cinematic, Techniques, Movies, Video, Films, Production*

I. Introduction

To a large extent, records of the development and growth of the motion picture industry in Nigeria and its operative practices have been well documented in art historical studies published by numerous scholars such as Arulogun (1979), Ekwuazi (1987, 1992 and 2001), and many others. Significantly, Mgbejume (2001), Oladele (2001), Galadima (2001), Adesanya (2006) and others did empirical studies on the technology and techniques of cine film production in Nigeria, taking into cognizance production, marketing /distribution and exhibition processes. Apart from these, Amu (2001), Mafikuyomi (2003), Kelani (2006), Hannafor (2007) and Uwah (2009) have discussed cinematic narration of African film making, examination of variety of measures of cinematic quality of movies in Nigeria, other studies have focused on sound, camera and lighting techniques in a general scope. Despite these studies insufficient data and discussions still characterize research in cinematic techniques in Nigerian motion picture industry.

Imperatively, the product of photographic and technological developments for the recording of a moving image and its projection onto a flat surface is referred to as “motion picture” (Encyclopaedia International, 1981: 305-308). In other word, motion pictures or moving pictures are cartoon animations, films, videos or movies. It is the only new visual art form

created in the last 300 years that is complex, elusive art, difficult to define, but the enjoyment derived is instantaneous and universal (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1981: 493-497). Most people use film, video and movie interchangeably. Film is more often used when considering artistic, theoretical, or technical aspects as in studies in a pedagogic environment. Arulogun (1979:25-37) in his view sees film as a propaganda tool and stereotyped. Orewere (1992:307) observes films, like television, radio and the newspaper, as a medium of mass communication. He says it a relationship between the film maker or producer (sender of a message) and the film viewer (receiver of a message). Ekpo (1992:38) describes film as a medium of enlightenment and cultural dissemination, which stand in a very unique position to reverse the negative image of the country in the community of nations, as well as communicate and propagate the positive and salient aspects of the Nigerian culture to the world. Amu (2001:167-171) also describes film as a veritable tool for social and political engineering. He assumes that film can be used effectively to mass mobilize people and create awareness on topical issues of government. Galadama (2001:159,168) defines *cine* (film) as a product of celluloid and video as a product of magnetic strips which is an element of television.

Contradicting to film, video is a moving image that is either seen on television or in movie theatres; it is a computer-generated version of film. It is something we watch and hear, usually for entertainment, and it continues to amaze us (Willams, 2006:3-5). Video belongs to the photographic medium that has had tremendous advancement in the relatively short period of its existence (Oladitan, 1992:56). Video is also distinguished as a mass media known as recordings, which is subdivided into audio and sound, and video and picture, while ‘movies’ are often used in connection with entertainment or commercial aspects. Therefore, movie is more encompassing and appropriately used to connote video and film in this study. Nonetheless, the motion picture industry in Nigeria had been associated with different terms by Scholars as Nigerian movie industry, Nigerian video film industry and Nigerian film industry. But, Nigerian motion picture industry had been adopted in this study.

Notably, home videos, drama, reality TV and documentaries are perhaps the most common types of movies produced in Nigeria at least for private and commercial purposes. Most movies are derived from stories, indigenous cultural norms, myths and legends, dreams, social ethics and religious rites; this list is not exhaustive. The quality of a movie and its acceptability is often determined by how much it approximates these aforementioned conceptual factors (i.e quality of stories derived from indigenous cultural norms, myths and legends, dreams, social ethics and religious rites). In recent development, Nigerian motion

picture industry has garnered global attention as United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO 2006: 42) declared *Nollywood* the second world film producer. Her survey revealed that *Bollywood* produced 1,091 feature-length films in 2006 compared to 872 productions (in video format) from Nigerian industry. The United States produced 485 major films.

Part of the underlying theme of any movie is the *scenes* that are most helpful in disclosing the overall theme of such a movie, since an extraordinary movie skillfully uses these techniques appropriately within the context of their theme. Within the scenes, the cinematic techniques such as camera angles, shots, lighting, sound *etcetera*, play an important role in highlighting the emotions behind the scenes, which eventually impact on the audience. Everything that is done (all activities) to make the audience get a film that is of good quality, easy to follow with few disruptions or interruptions of audio and video, entertaining, educative, satisfactory *etcetera* can be ascribed as cinematic techniques (Ayinmode, 2012:2). Hence, cinematic technique can be defined as methods used by movie makers to communicate meaning, entertain and to create emotional and psychological response in the audience.

However, movies are readily available and watched by the audience in Nigeria. But the problems of quality of cinematic narrative as in respect to western standard of cinematic rules have been a platform for social debate. It is in the realm of this that much attention has to go down on the ways cinematic techniques are used in Nigerian environment.

In contributing to this debate, this paper provides evidence from research on the precise cinematic techniques used only in production phase (video/audio recording) in Nigerian motion picture industry and the technical problems associated with the employed cinematic approach. The study from which evidence in this paper is derived understudied Fourteen (14) movies selected from Nigerian video/films to determine and analyse cinematic techniques utilized and practised by Nigerian movie professionals. Furthermore, some recognized film institutes were visited in order to obtain archival materials and information on the history and practice of cinematic techniques in Nigeria. This paper provides ways to ensure an effective production of good movies at the level production process for the practitioners in Nigerian motion picture industry.

An Appraisal of Cinematic Techniques in Production Phase of Movie Making

Ciné (sometimes Cine) is usually used to refer to one or more of the home movie formats including 8 mm, 9.5 mm, 16 mm film, and Super 8. It is not generally used to refer to video formats or professional formats (such as 35mm or 70mm film). Cine film literally means 'moving' film; deriving from the Greek 'kine' for motion; it also has roots in the Anglo-French word Cinematograph, meaning moving picture (Wikipedia Archive, 2009). On the other hand, Technique is a procedure used to accomplish a specific activity or task. Thus, cinematic techniques could be referred to as skills to accomplish the specific task of moving pictures in line with sound to become more adequately visual and audible.

It is impossible to discuss cinematic techniques without film or video production, they are intertwined and inseparable. Production is the act of preparing or making a film or play for audience satisfaction whereas cinematic techniques is the specific procedures and processes by which this is accomplished. Just like production is divided into three phases namely, pre-production, production and post-production; cinematic technique activities are similarly divided. Cinematic techniques cut across all phases of production but cinematographic techniques (such as size of shots, camera angles and movements, lighting and sound) in production phase shall be analysed extensively.

The second phase of movie making is the production phase which consists of technical operations such as directing, acting and shooting. It involves the process of taking the camera and “shooting” or filming the interviews, dialogue footage, photographs or still images, and voice-overs for the video or film. It is at this phase, acting is collectively done by professional actors and actresses by means of encoding or translating their ideas into practical work with strict direction of a film director. Although, this involve series of rehearsal ahead of the shooting done by videographers/cinematographers with their cameras.

Apparently, throughout the evolution of Nigerian motion picture industry, be it film or video, different kinds of camera have been used. Camera is perhaps the most important gadget in the production phase. For the production of celluloid film, ‘cine camera’ is used by a cinematographer (Amu, 2001:177). Cine camera is a piece of precision machinery that coordinates a rapid succession of still photographs to create illusion of images motion at a speed of 24 frames per second. Recently, more sophisticated digital cine cameras have been invented as a result of technological advancement. Both analog and digital cine cameras use 16mm and 35mm film format for celluloid film production.

In video productions, video and digital cameras are used by Videographers. Digital camera is a piece of device that focuses the image on a light-sensitive computer chip called the CCD (charge-coupled device). These cameras are of two types, 1CCD camcorders and 3CCD cameras which capture image data by assigning one colour to each chip, resulting in more accurate colour information (Williams, 2001:8). *VHS and Betacam SX* cameras belong to 1CCD camera while the most popular digital format such as, *High Definition, Digital Betacam, DVCPRO, Digital S, DV cam (camcorder) and DV* belong to 3CCD definitions.

Subsequently, cinematographic techniques such as size of shots, camera angles and movements, lighting and sound will be reviewed in more details using illustration from selected images extracted from some of the Nigerian movies clips. Firstly, a shot is an individual segment within a scene. The primary unit of expression in a film is the image of the single shot. Shots are films made up of separate strips of frames. The intimacy of the film image is related to the camera's ability to see things in greater details than the eye can see. This is revealed by the size of shots that are classified into Establishing shot, Extreme Long shot, Medium Long shot, Extreme Close-Up shot, Close-Up shot, Medium Close-Up shot, Two shot and Over-the-shoulder shot (Martin, 2001:37,77; Bello, 2001:216-221 and Okon, 2001:224, 225).

Establishing shot is a type of a long shot that is taken when the camera is either elevated above the action or at a straight angle to show the surrounding area where action is about to take place. It is used to establish a prologue. Examples of such shot is drawn from *The Return of Jenifa* (Funke Akindele, 2012), *Dying with the King* (Damola Mike Bamiloye, 2011) and *Arugba* (Tunde Kelani, 2008). These shots vary in their function and meaning.



Plate 1 *The Return of Jenifa*
2012



Plate 2 *Dying with the King*
2011



Plate 3 *Arugba (the carrier)*
2008

The image in plate 1 illustrates Akindele usage of establishing shot to introduce a mega city, Lagos to the audience where the main characters are about to meet. Bamiloye used high

camera angle to show this shot form to tell a story of a town, *Okako* where the king must not die alone except with *Abobaku (Dying with the King)* (plate 2). In the third image, this shot is also used to establish the next action in the movie (plate 3). *Extreme long shot* shows a person with the fullness of the surrounding area, be it building, landscape or multitude of people which are shot effectively to establish the environment. The following illustrated shots are shown from *Ayo ni mo fe 2* (Tunde Kelani, 1996), *The Return of Jenifa* (Funke Akindele, 2012) and *Arugba* (Tunde Kelani, 2008). The actor in plate 4 is captured from a long range over viewed landscape used to depicting his arrival from *Yeye Osun*.

Plate 5 vividly shows how Akindele depicts *Jenifa* while she was absconding from chief's residence as a result of her ignorance. Kelani on the other hand carefully captured *Makinwa* as he was about to descending from a motorcycle at the front of *Adetutu's* residence in plate 6. In *Long shot*, character(s) occupy(s) one-half to three quarters of the screen height. That is from the feet to the head. This is frequently used in most of Nigerian movies because of its ability to show details of actions displayed within a scene. It is often used when the subject is moving. Shots from *Dying with the King* (Damilola Bamiloye, 2011), *Captives of the Mighty* (Mike Bamiloye, 2000) and *Ile Alayo* (Femi Adebayo, 2012) are illustrated plates 7, 8, 9 respectively.

Medium long shot shows the subject's body plus a little above and below. It is usually referred to as *Knee shot*, showing a three quarter shot from the head to the knee. A shot from *Captives of the Mighty* (Mike Bamiloye, 2000), *Who are the gods* (Ifeyanyi Eze, 2011), and *Ile Alayo* (Femi Adebayo, 2012) in plates 10, 11, 12 are illustrated below for more Knowledge of medium long shot. These shots are used to establish the relationship of the character to a location or another character.



Plate 4 *Ayo ni mofe 2 (Desired Joy)*
1996



Plate 5 *The Return of Jenifa*
2012



Plate 6 *Arugba (the carrier)*
2008



Plate 7 *Dying with the King*
2011



Plate 8 *Captives of the Mighty*
2000



Plate 9 *Ile Alayo (Happy Home)*
2012



Plate 10 *Captives of the Mighty*
2000



Plate 11 *Who are the gods*
2011



Plate 12 *Who are the gods*
2011

In addition of another major shot that is used in Nigerian motion picture industry is called ‘*Medium shot*’. This shot is a framing in which the scale of the object show is fairly large. Object will be seen from chest to the top of the head. The background details become minimal, since the location is probably being established earlier in scene. Plates 13, 14, 15 show illustrated shots of clip from these films, *Ona lojin*, *Eru ni Baba* (Yinka Quadri, 2012), *Who are the gods* (Ifeyanyi Eze 2011) and *Romeo in Love* (Uchenna Mbunabo, 2011).



Plate 13

Who are the gods
2011



Plate 14

Who are the gods
2011



Plate 15

Romeo in Love
2011

Close-up shot is a type of shot that shows the upper forehead to the upper chest. It shows very little background, and concentration might either be on a specific detail in *mise-en-scène*. It is also used as an emphasis and for establishment of strong feelings. These three shots from *Ayo ni mo fe 1* (Tunde Kelani, 1994), *Campus Queen* (Tunde, Kelani, 2003) and *Dying with the King* (Damilola, Bamiloye, 2011) all in plates 16, 17, 18. Kelani carefully expresses the emotional state in which *Jumoke* was by magnifying her face. He equally conveys the emotion of the character in plate 17. While Bamiloye emphasis on the importance of what the prince is doing at that time and the kind of illumination that is available (plate 18).

Extreme close-up shot, as its name suggests, focuses on a single facial feature such as lips and eyes. This shot is at the edge of the lens's capability to focus. The study observed that among all the selected movies watched, none of the producers and their cameramen practically use this shot. Perhaps, their storyline did not permit that. Meanwhile *Two-shot* showed a shot of two characters in a set or scene; *Over-the-shoulder* shows a three quarter shot from the head to the knee of two characters in opposite direction. It is used to establish the relationship of characters, looking at it through the shoulder line. The image in plate 19, a shot from a clip in *Romeo in Love* (Uchenna Mbunabo, 2011) is a typical example of over-the-shoulder shot. Nevertheless, the use of different shot sizes influences the meaning which an audience will interpret. The size of the image in frame depends on two things: the distance the camera is away from the image and the focal length of the camera lens. The shot sizes indicate the closeness of the lens to the subject or image being recorded. The choice of shot size is also directly related to the size of the final display screen the audience will see.



Plate 16 *Ayo ni mofe 1 (Desired Joy)*
1994



Plate 17 *Campus Queen*
2003



Plate 18 *Dying with the King*
2011

Another important cinematographic technique is Camera Angles. This technique is used extensively to communicate meaning and emotion about characters. Martin and Okon both agreed that the four types of camera angles that can be used by any cinematographer or videographer are Low-angle, Straight-angle, High-angle shot and Canted or Oblique- angle (Martin, 2001: 40-75; Okon, 2001: 225). With *Low-angle shot*, the camera is tilted upward towards the character's eye height. It often suggests inferiority, weak spot of the subject to the viewer or fear and terror in the audience.

From the video clip of *Who are the gods* (Ifeanyi Eze, 2011), *Arugba* (Tunde Kelani, 2008) and *Captives of the Mighty* (Mike Bamiloye, 2000), in plates 20, 21, 22. Eze gives a sense of confusion and awe in the audience as the camera focus on the spectators through the legs of the local gladiators. Bamiloye and Kelani succeed in creating a sense of magnitude and importance in the audience to appreciate aesthetics. *Straight-angle shot* is done when the camera is positioned as though it is a human actually observing a scene. It is also known as *Eye Level Camera Angle*. The eye-level angle to a character or an object gives a sense of equality between the subject and the audience. It is a normal shot in any movies since shots are objective because they do not influence audience's perception of the subject. *Ile Alayo* (Femi Adebayo, 2012) is a typical example (Plate 23).

On the other hand, the use of *High-angle shot* suggests strength and dominance over the audience. It makes the object or subject photographed seem smaller and scary, because camera is tilted downward. This is best demonstrated in movies such as *The Return of Jenifa* (Funke Akindele, 2012) and *Arugba* (Tunde Kelani, 2008) illustrated in Plates 24, 25. Meanwhile, *Canted or Oblique angle shot* is used extensively in the horror and science fiction films. The camera is tilted to show the scene at an angle. This type of a shot is frequently found in typical Nigerian epic films. Among the selected movies, the study

observed that *Wide Angle Shot* is often used in the movie *The Return of Jenifa* (Funke Akindele, 2012). It is the use of a lens of short focal length that affects a scene's perspective by distorting straight lines near the edge of the frame and by this exaggerates the distance between the foreground and background plane. It is important to note that Camera angles interrelate with camera movement since the movement of the camera changes the relationship of the character to his surroundings.

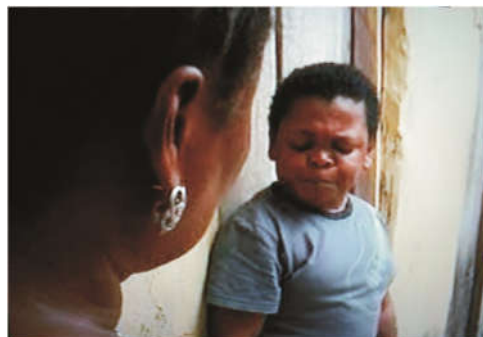


Plate 19 *Romeo in Love*
2011



Plate 20 *Who are the gods*
2011



Plate 21 *Arugba (Carrier)*
2008



Plate 22 *Captives of the Mighty*
2000

The use of camera movement is another important technique in movie making. This is used extensively by movie makers to make significance; it is how a scene is put together to produce an image. Camera movement makes a dull scene interesting. It is a cinematic technique that involves various perspective shots such as panning, tilting, dollying, cranning, trucking and tracking of camera and several others. Panning is performed with camera resting on the head of a tripod. It is the movement of the camera from the left and right. There are two basic kinds of panning which are *Following Panning* (the camera operator pans to follow a character) and *Surveying Pan* (used to locate a character or an object among other objects).

Tilting on the other hand is achieving a particular effect by moving camera upward and downward to denote height or depth. It is mostly used when shot is at the base of tall building, illustrating the height.



Plate 23 *Ile Alayo (Happy Home)*
2012



Plate 24 *The Return of Jenifa*
2012



Plate 25 *Arugba (Carrier)*
2008

Dolly refers to moving the camera forward or backward in a scene. At instance, dolly may seem similar to *Zooming* (adjustment of lens) but it changes the relationship of the character to his surroundings. Meanwhile, *Cranning* is the movement of camera over an object or scene. *Trucking* is the movement of the camera left and right in relation to a scene. It reflects changes in character's background. It is the movement of the camera mounted on wheeled platform tracks that moves in and out or following moving object in a straight line manner. Trucking is just coming up gradually in Nigeria, the practitioners improvised wheeled platform track with locally produced tracks. All the identified camera movement techniques are repeatedly used in Nigerian motion picture industry (Ayinmode, 2012:56) except that only the available equipments are utilized with improvisation made in general instances. Note that, Camera movement can best be demonstrated in multimedia since still image is absolutely not illustrative.

It is of utmost importance to examine some of the elements that are necessary in the creation of a shot. These are colour balance; the depths of the space in focus and frame rate per second. Basically, *colour balance* is an important element of cinematography. It creates realism in an audience. Human perception of colour varies, but the Hue, Saturation and Brightness (HSB) model describes three fundamental characteristic of colour. *Hue* describes the pigment of a colour and is measured in degrees from 0 to 359. It is the reflection or transmission of colour through an object. *Saturation* describes the vividness or dullness of a colour and is measured in percent from 0 to 100. It shows strength or purity of the colour. It

is sometimes called *Chroma*. *Brightness* describes the amount of white that the colour contains and is measured in percent from 0 to 100. It relatively means lightness and darkness of a colour. All these sub- elements help video/film production perfect cinematically.

The depth of the space in focus can simply be referred to as those elements at different depths of the image both in focus and space. *Focus* is the quality in terms of sharpness of an object as it is seen on the screen. This could be either deep or shallow focus. *The deep focus* involves that significant elements be it human being or object occupying widely separated plane on the screen. In this shot from *Campus Queen* (Tunde Kelani, 2000), the characters with the scene are given equal importance through deep focus yet the character behind is still seen (plate 26). The shallow focus on the other hand, keeps only one plane (main character) in sharp focus as it directs the audience attention to the character within the scene. This is very common in close-up as in these two shots from *Arugba* (Tunde Kelani, 2008) and *Jemila* (Wale Akorede, 2012) in plates 27, 28. This type of focus suggests psychological introspection since the action and thought of those actors and actresses prevail over everything elsewhere.

Shallow depth of field refers to the extent to which the space is represented in a focus. It is often used as a technique to focus audience attention on the most significant aspect of a scene without having to use cutting technique in post production phase of movie making. This is demonstrated in a movie, *The Return of Jenifa* (Funke Akindele, 2012), as *Jenifa* was depicted to have been captivated by the group called the *Big girls* in one of the scenes. This is shown in plate 29. *Racking focus* is commonly used by most Nigerian movie makers. It is the practice of changing the focus of a lens such that a subject or an object in one scene goes out of focus and other subjects or objects from scene comes into focus. This is usually done quickly to increase suspense in a movie.

Ultimately, a typical movie is shot at a frame rate of 24 frames per seconds. If there is an increase in frame per seconds exposed by the camera, the action becomes slower than normal when it is played back. This is called *Slow motion*. Example of this shot is seen at the second to the last scene of the film *Ile Alayo* (Femi Adebayo, 2012) when the Police came to drive out all the tenants in that compound called *Ile Alayo* (plate 30). Conversely, a decrease in number of frame per second, the more rapid the resulting action appears to be. This could be referred to as *Stop motion*. A shot from a video clip from Funke Akindele's *The Return of Jenifa* (2012) demonstrates stop motion by given the impression that *Jenifa* did selection and

changed to different cloth at the same scene. (plate 31). The use of camera movement gives impression of ubiquity which is achieved in part by the camera's apparent freedom to move from place to place or to approach or withdraw instantaneously. Both in movie making and film appreciation, movement must constantly be borne in mind since composition in the motion picture is kinetic rather than static.



Plate 26 *Campus Queen*
2003



Plate 27 *Jemila*
2012



Plate 28 *Who are the gods*
2011



Plate 29 *The Return of Jenifa*
2012



Plate 30 *Ile Alayo (Happy Home)*
2012



Plate 31 *The Return of Jenifa*
2012

Sound and its manipulation is an important aspect of cinematic techniques. It is a transmitted vibration (*i.e* noise) of any frequency within the approximate range of 20-20,000 hertz, capable of being detected by human organs of hearing. Sound for video and film is created to support the narration of a story, which may be direct or indirect to enhance such story. It provides a form of continuity or connective tissue for movies. In short, it plays a grammatical role in the process of movie making. Sound is used extensively in movie making to enhance presentation. It is distinguished into Diegetic (actual sound) and Non-diegetic sound (Wikipedia, 2009).

Diegetic sound is any form of sounds that emanate from the action within the movie. These are sounds made by objects in the movie, music that comes from instruments in the story space

or voices of characters, and music that comes from reproduction devices such as radios, tape players etcetera. On the other hand, *Non-diegetic sound* is the sound that comes from a source outside the story space. This is sometimes called *Commentary sound*. It can be sound effect which is added for melodramatic effect, narrator's commentary and some other basic sound effects. The kind of this sound plays a big role in creating horror atmosphere and mood within a movie. For instance, *The Return of Jenifa* (Funke Akindele, 2008) gong sound is specifically and frequently used to connote insecurity, lies and insults.

Sounds recording for video or film production are single and double system. The single system is strictly for video production. It is the recording of sound and picture simultaneously together on same medium (magnetic tapes). While the double system involves the recording of sound and picture simultaneously but on different medium. The sound is recorded on 6.35mm magnetic recording tape on the Nagra and that of the picture on the film negative in the camera 16mm or 35mm gauge. Both the sound and picture will then be synchronized

Discussion

In spite of all odds; Nigeria is rated to be one of the highest producers of film in the world, second to Bollywood Film Corporation (Indian Film Industry). To some extent, it is good news but it has equally become a visible problem. Production of too many movies is rampant among the professionals in the motion picture industry in Nigeria. This is as result of one man doing virtually the whole work of production, from the beginning to the end. The study observed that many professionals are doing the work of the script writer, producer, the director, actor, editor, even handling of camera. For example, an average Nigerian movie is made in two or more parts often filled with repeatedly prolonged dialogue, over stated acting, unnecessary adverts which became boring and less interesting. They have turned all movies to soap-operas or TV series, where several commercial adverts are done at specific intervals. This is outside the bounds of professional ethics and movies produced may be considered suboptimal if judged negatively on the basis of audience acceptability.

In addition, the frequency and number of video/ film produced yearly may reflect suboptimal thoroughness of concepts and production. Ayinmode (2012: 83) confirmed that more than two-third of producers produced more than 4 videos/films yearly and take less than 5 months to produce a movie; it will definitely have effect on the quality of production. This signified

that more than 2 movies are produced simultaneously resulting to decline in production value. It is important to state without a doubt that a lot of improvement has been made over time among the upcoming professionals within Nigerian motion picture industry. Based on personal observations, the number of movies produced yearly by each producer is radically reduced and resources are channelled into fewer videos/films

However, technical knowledge and approaches to scripting, directing, casting, shooting and editing are beginning to show in most recent movies produced in Nigeria. For instance, Nigerian movies share in the quality of good video/film which Richard (2006:78) explains when he submits that ‘a good film gives the viewer something important to consider in the opening sequences; background information about characters, or an image helpful for interpreting the story’. It is imperative to note that most of Nigerian script writers now utilize the methodical process of research, synopsis, treatment and script shooting.

To corroborate these processes, the film *Arugba* (2008) by Tunde Kelani particularly dramatized Yoruba Cosmology. He was able to transmit his inspiration through a docu-drama montage in the opening sequence, where the story is told of ‘*Arugba*’, the carrier who leads the ritual procession from the King’s palace to the bank of river *Osun*, a commercial and cultural city in South-West, Nigeria. It is a historic-epic film equipped with cultural costumes, percussion soundtracks, and spiced with cognomen recitations with special chrome-key effects. Thematically, the film reveals a corrupt society that seeks cleansing, rebirth and nationhood, but with all the attendant intrigues, *Arugba* (Bukola Awoyemi) must perform her annual traditional role of caring the sacrifice in a procession to the river for the last time. The degree to which attention is paid to scripting may be a reflection of the quality of film produced (Ayinmode, 2012:34).

Most cases in Nigerians movie making environment, the director is also the producer who serves as the creative glue that holds all teams together. (Balewa, 2001:116-118) says when the director has begun to develop his vision, then he can begin to find talent before and behind the camera that will help make this vision real. The director is crucial to the implementation of the production stage. The greater is his/her knowledge, skill and experience; the better will be the quality of his/her work. Experience is particularly important in the work of a director.

Virtually all the directors in Nigeria were constrained by acquiring of props at varied sources. 43.5% of the directors acquired props through the means of hiring (Ayinmode, 2012:36). To

buttress this fact, the props used in the production of the film *Arugba* by Tunde Kelani was acquired and supplied by different companies like Audio-visual First Ltd (*Panasonic P2 cameras*), Jungle Films (*Lighting equipments*), Cinekraft Independent Films and Associate (*Grip equipments*) and HD Logistics (*Apple Mac Workshops*). This is cost intensive but enhance the quality of movie produced. This may imply that the Nigerian directors have a reasonable level of skill and competence.

However, majority of actors/actresses in Nigeria are freelancer (Ayinmode, 2012: 36). Formal training and development may be difficult to acquire in this setting. It is therefore not surprising that majority of them act simple romantic, dramatic home video with less than one-quarter of them acting celluloid film; and indeed very few have ever acted in comic or epic films (Ayinmode, 2012:37).

In accessing the technical importance of the infrastructural support for cinematographers/videographers, gaffers, sound recordists/boom operators and editors in Nigeria, cinematographic techniques like size of shots, camera angles and movements, lighting, sound and editing are strictly utilized. Various perspective shots such as panning, tilting, dollying, cranning, trucking and tracking of camera are commonly used by Nigerian professionals except cranning and trucking that are coming up gradually in Nigeria, they improvised wheeled platform track with locally produced tracks and through means of hiring. Most of these professionals may not be able to acquire the latest equipments that can produce highly rated quality movies by western standard but in their capacities, these equipments are improvised. The inability of acquiring modern cinematographic equipments is mostly due to finance. Finance is not readily available for the industry. Government interventions are not properly felt or implemented, cinematic process is not too palatable in such an environment.

Ayinmode (2012:1-117) in his concluded that there is an indication that majority of cinematographers and videographers in Nigeria have the required skills and their infrastructural support is improving but still deficient. For example, three-quarter of these professionals used 3CCD cameras, preferred manual zoom and white balancing than automatic mode; virtually all used natural angle shots, vertical angle and wide angle shot to influence audience's perception and to change the perception of a shot based on storytelling or editing. Of course, most of these cameras are high definition with high resolutions. But the choice of good camera that allows manual adjustment of white balance, time-code, shutter speed and audio level with the option of auto control is more appropriate (Kelani, 2006:113).

It is noteworthy that most Nigerian cinematographers or videographers often employed the technique called “*Handheld Camera Movement*”. That is the most basic and inexperienced way to hold and move a camera with the hand (Peter, 2009). Professionally, it is most appropriate to mount the camera on a tripod, which helps in stabilizing the camera.

Most of Nigerian sound recordists or sound engineers, cinematographers and editors in this day and age find recording of sound on 6.35mm magnetic recording tape done on the Nagra and that of the picture on the film negative in the camera 16mm or 35mm gauge nerve-racking. The synchronization of both the sound and picture is considered tedious and time taken. In nutshell, they refrain from practical film production that involves the use of raw (unexposed) film stock loaded into the sound dubbing machine with the aid of sound mixer and checkerboard *etcetera*. And sound (soundtracks, narrations and dialogue) in it are rendered into optical sound, which are sent to the laboratory for processing that involves chemical preparation and analysis, film development, film negative cutting, colour grading and balancing, and film printing. The processed negatives are produced photographically and appear as an image on the edges of the release prints.

These professionals are gradually putting an end to celluloid production as they specialized more in video production using different types of shooting, recording, editing techniques and software programs to enhance good quality of movies produced. This suggests that era of celluloid production is probably forgotten due to this factor. Perhaps, it is obvious that the production of celluloid films in Nigeria is virtually in a state of coma for which several other factors are responsible. Some of these factors are shortage of skills, lack of investment and funds, cultural politics, absence of feasibility studies and viable commercial plans (James, 1996: 29-40).

Without any prejudice, Nigerian professional in all production phases have improved drastically based on comparative literature in the usage of appropriate cinematic techniques with the available equipments. This suggests that there is a relatively high level of unutilized skill which could translate to better output if infrastructural support-base is improved through public and private financial assistance.

Conclusion

Exploring all the theoretical perspectives to the application of cinematic techniques in the motion picture industry in Nigeria, this paper submits that for an exceptional movie (i.e video or film) to be transformed from a mere words of the idea to a meaningful footage embodied

in an organized combination of photographed images and recorded sounds, different processes that involve research, synopsis, treatment, script, casting, shooting and editing must be duly observed. These cinematic processes are technically challenging, requiring knowledge, skill and training. Nevertheless, variation in the technical skill and competence among the various professionals such as scriptwriters, producers, directors, gaffers, videographers or cinematographers, boom operators, actors/actresses, editors and others had been scrutinized to a large extent within the motion picture industry in Nigeria.

The application of cinematic techniques in the motion picture industry in Nigeria has formed a dignified art and profession that aesthetically appealing. However, it requires systematic technical skills and cinematographic knowledge to achieve a well distinctive movie done on film or video format. As a consequence of most professional observed being freelancer, adequate formal training and skill acquisition in cinematic processes are difficult to acquire. Although, principles and approaches may be employed, more knowledge and proficiency needs to be achieved. It should however be recognized that in the video or film production process, every professional is important for a quality output; but certainly more efforts are needed in the area of equipments and skill acquisition.

One of the major problems facing professionals within motion picture industry in Nigeria is low budgeting and inadequate funding from government, financial organizations *etcetera*. If government institutions are established and funded appropriately (mainly for the betterment of these professionals) seeing the financial institutions, corporate bodies, philanthropists' involvement are deeply felt in this sector then most of these problems facing the industry will be reduced to minimal. With the emergence of Nollywood, there are encouraging signs of better budget for Nigerian videos /films and greater involvement of government and finance institutions.

Perhaps, attending workshops on cinema and film festivals can be of great value. The Motion Picture Practitioners Council of Nigeria (MOPIPCON) which was established to set standards for the industry and check unprofessional practices should be strengthened to improve its role. Although it is controlled by National Film Corporation, injection of a private sector expertise and funding in its running may greatly help to further improve its regulatory role. Also, in order to acquire more skills and competence in the use of various cinematic techniques and specialise various phase of video or film production, professionals should endeavour to join various movie associations or guilds such as Motion Picture producers

Association of Nigeria (MOPPAN), United Motion Picture Practitioners of Nigeria (UMPPN), Nigerian Society of Editors (NSE), Nigerian Guild of Music and Sound Practitioners (NGMSP), Association of Movie Producers (AMP), Association of Nollywood Core Producers (ANCOP), Association of Film Distributors and Editors (AFDE) and many others.

Conclusively, such interaction will allow individual professional learn new skills. It will also enable the pulling together of skill, expertise, funds, equipment *etcetera*, by this, better quality movies can be produced.

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