



Towards decolonizing film distribution and exhibition practices in 21st-century Nigeria

Yinka Akintunde Fagbile^{1*}

^{1*}Department of Theatre & Performing Arts, Lagos State University of Education, Lagos, Nigeria.
fagbileya@lasued.edu.ng

Abstract

This paper examines the need to decolonize film distribution and exhibition practices in Nigeria in the 21st century. The paper reviews the history of film exhibition and distribution in Nigeria and argues that contemporary film production and distribution processes preserve a colonial mindset that fails to recognize and implement cultural and new technological diversity. The paper discusses the implications of this colonial mindset on the film industry of Nigeria and reviews different initiatives, both established and proposed, that aim to rectify the current film practices. The primary objective of this research is to develop an understanding of how to decolonize film distribution and exhibition practices in 21st-century Nigeria. Through a political economy approach, this paper examines critical issues surrounding the calls for decolonizing film distribution and exhibition practices in the Nigerian film industry and the need for Nollywood to leverage the use of technology and the internet to unbundle neocolonial practices. This is by supporting competitive alternative networks and embracing homegrown film investments through a public-private partnership (PPP) approach. This model will create the enablement, in line with a workable film policy, to develop multi-level distribution platforms for boundary spanners and the creative industry while developing the national film culture simultaneously. The paper argues that this hybrid initiative will aid in shaking off the structural limitations imposed through colonialism, “failings and restrictions” left behind by colonial and postcolonial experiences. In conclusion, the paper proposes strategies that can be utilized to decolonize film distribution and exhibition practices in Nigeria in the 21st century.

Keywords: Decolonizing, Distribution, Exhibition, Film practices, PPP, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Distribution and exhibition of film is critical to the success of the cinema. It is the end process and completion cycle of getting the product to the consumers who are the end users. Film was first introduced in Nigeria, Lagos precisely, between August 12 and 22, 1903 when Herbert Macaulay invited Balboa and Company for an exhibition at the Glover Hall (Olubomehin, 2012; Thomas-Odia & Awa, 2018). The film company at the time was engaged in an exhibition tour around the West African Coast. In colonial Nigeria, the established Colonia Film Unit (CFU) was only interested in the exhibition of film as a vehicle for social enlightenment and imperialistic purposes. Exhibition of film was carried out using vans showing documentary films across communities. The colonial government was not really interested in the production and exhibition of indigenous feature films for commercial purposes; thus, limited production equipment, technology, and distribution support were provided.

Capitalizing on this lacuna, foreign nationals especially the Lebanese and Syrians established cinemas across Lagos such as Rex Cinema, Regale Cinema, and Royal Cinema (Olubomehin, 2012), and brought in foreign films for the viewing pleasure of audiences. That was how foreigners ‘hijacked’ the distribution channels and became gatekeepers in the film exhibition business in Nigeria. This view was affirmed by Enahora (1989) when he pointed out that the distribution of films in Nigeria was inadvertently handed over to foreigners who in most cases decided what film to be exhibited at cinemas and when. Predictably, this process excluded Nigerians to the detriment of indigenous involvement. Enahoro argued that the business of cinema practices was political and that the end game was to discourage indigenous filmmaking by alienating local participation. The study posited that “cinema is the result of an economic practice, technology, and aesthetics which is developed by a dominant ideology” (Enahora, 1989: 103).

This ideological positioning to dominate and overwhelm the local cinema culture was re-echoed by Ekwuazi (1991) who observed that policy goals cannot be separated from power politics. Ekwuazi cited Hollywood’s aesthetics in the

global film distribution economy which is ably backed by the American government policy and added that “a viable aesthetic of the cinema is rooted in economic control over cinema technology and cinema institutions” (Ekwuazi, 1991: 105). The postcolonial independent Nigeria afforded citizens the opportunity to produce and exhibit films through the promulgation of the Indigenization and Enterprises Decree of 1972 in the regime of General Yakubu Gowon. This policy goal gave Nigerian film practitioners the opportunity to be key players in the film industry. Prior to this time, American, Indian, and Chinese films held sway and were distributed by these foreign interests.

The film industry in Nigeria known as Nollywood has evolved over the years, rising through the 35mm film production practices and cinema-going culture into the digital production of films into VCDs/DVS and now streaming services. It is currently recognized as the third largest film industry in the world in terms of quantity of film production output. There is now a progressive rise in the establishment of new cinemas and theatre-going culture because of interest and reinvention of the entertainment industry by self-motivated film entrepreneurs, as well as compelled government intervention due to agitations by practitioners over neglect of standard industry practice. In turn, the government in the past has taken some steps to ameliorate the situation. Some of the previous major interventions include the Revolving Loan Scheme of \$200 million (32 billion naira); a N3 billion “Project Nollywood” programme and later, the “Nollywood Act”, a film industry project which the government of former president Goodluck Jonathan committed N3 Billion to the industry as a form of grant and loans. The N420.2 million film industry support of the federal government of Nigeria during the administration of former President Muhammadu Buhari to the entertainment business and Nollywood is also inclusive just to mention but a few.

These interventions most times have been around pieces of training and production support, with minute attention to the end process and challenges faced by filmmakers in the distribution and exhibition of their films. There have been criticisms by industry practitioners that what the film industry needs is regulation and not doling out money which most often leads to corruption and embezzlement. There is a need therefore to create more avenues for showcasing the already available and general audiences’ films made by Nigerians to Nigerians and the outside world. The films produced by the creative boundary spanners are in dire need of distribution and exhibition which are not readily available as there are only a few cinemas and screens available in the country. These limited theatres and cinemas cannot cater to the population obtainable in the country thereby limiting filmmakers’ opportunity to wider exhibition access, revenues, and capability to recoup their investments. The desire to decolonize and unbundle the distribution process is what has led to the creation and patronage of alternative exhibition channels such as digital television, online-based pay TV channels, and new media platforms such as streaming for the display of film content. Although there are arguments that this is not the regular industry standard, nevertheless, it has thus far reached and gained wider acceptability as a current global practice.

2. The concept of decoloniality

Decoloniality is a concept that emphasizes economic and cultural freedom for a people while attempting to erase all forms of colonial, and neocolonial tendencies that impede sustainable growth. It is a new rethinking that grew out of the need to break away from Eurocentric structures and practices by adopting natural and home-grown methods to attain desired objectives. Decolonizing is perceived as an evolving process. It is a term traced to the Latin American school of thought and advanced by scholars such as Anibal Quijano, Walter Dignolo, Arturo Escobar, and others (Miller, 2023). The school of thought encompasses scholars of Latin American and European origin who work in universities in the United States with interests in critical theory, gender, colonialism, and dependency theory. They work together on establishing the relationship between the Frankfurt school of critical theory and the emerging ideas in coloniality and modernity studies. In Africa and other erstwhile colonized territories such as Ghana, Nigeria Zimbabwe, and India just to mention but a few, decoloniality has taken root as a resistant movement that challenges all forms of neocolonial control of levers of power and institutions with the aim to gain control by removing all forms of colonial practices perceived as inimical to a sustainable development.

Trembath (2023) sees decoloniality as a term coined by the sociologist Anibal Quijano but with an inspirational stance from Frantz Fanon. The study posited that decoloniality “is about doing – or rather, undoing and creating just situations where unjust ones have long prevailed” (Trembath, 2023, para 1). To Trembath, decoloniality is built on the notion that colonialism was an evil that was imposed on the colonized and that certain forms of cruelty did not cease to exist in every society even with the assumption that the colonial powers had left, though they continued to permeate all strata of institutions. This is achieved through the creation of “social hierarchies and ideologies” (para 2) that centralize the interests of the colonizing forces while stepping down other competing tendencies.

William and Mary (2023) perceive decoloniality as “the logic, metaphysics, ontology, and matrix of power created by the massive processes and aftermath of colonization and settler-colonialism and racial capitalism” (para. 1). This is achieved using various methods and approaches to disrupt colonial ideas of racial capitalism and social practices that impede self-actualization and other ‘production of knowledge’. Decoloniality is therefore marked by deliberate action and mindset meant to uproot colonial orientations by advancing commitments and building consensus to promote culture and the society at large.

Harper (2019) addresses decoloniality from the theoretical point of view. He perceives it as a deliberate policy to bring an end to all forms of hegemony. It states that decoloniality is a “theoretical framework that takes into consideration the systemic nature in which oppressive policy affects the lives of formerly colonized people” (Harper, 2019: 337). The study calls attention to the “hegemonic narratives that are rooted in colonial practices and incorporate the voice and narratives of those oppressed peoples in conversations that ultimately affect the creation of policy” (Harper, 2019: 337). This

ideological narrative and overview noted that the existence of colonial and postcolonial policies in a postcolonial state by the government and the private sector may be delimiting the structures that allow people to develop and participate in the economy profitably (Harper, 2019). Decoloniality, therefore, calls for an encompassing inclusion of people who are affected by these policies to lend their views to evolving policies that will ameliorate these problems.

3. Theoretical framework introduction

The theoretical framework adopted for the paper is the Political Economy Theory. The theory is an interdisciplinary branch of the social sciences. It is a common term used previously to refer to the field of economics as advanced by scholars such as Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Kenton, 2023). Lee and Jordan (2022) perceive the term as a concept that draws strength from other fields of study like sociology, political science, and economics and it refers to the interrelationships that exist between the state, society and, individuals in a market economy. They posit that political economy theory studies a nation's governance systems and deals with the analysis of how individuals and society are affected by the implementation of government policy actions and their effects on individuals and the markets. The Political Economy theory as applied in the paper is used to analyze the impact of policies on content creation and distribution. It also explains the roles of the new media platforms as alternative channels providing democratization of film product distribution and their socio-economic effects on the film industry and on society.

4. Decolonizing film distribution and exhibition practice: What are the issues?

One of the critical areas of concern in the film industry is the problem of returns on investments. Currently, producers and distributors accrue between 30% to 33% percent of ticket sales at the box office in Nigerian cinemas. This has several times been considered as not good enough for film entrepreneurs. The creative boundary spanners in the film industry have at many times expressed dissatisfaction with this experience and stated misgivings on operational models of the cinemas that these returns are barely enough to cover their production costs and talk more of breaking even and making profits (Thomas-Odia & Awa, 2018; Ige, 2019). On the other hand, cinema establishments have complained about the high cost of maintenance of the structure, budget on publicity, and general overhead costs which limit returns on their own investments as well, although there have not been claims of not breaking even or making profits. The challenges of funding and the need to recoup production and investment costs have so far limited filmmaking activities and pushed many producers out of the market. Since the cost of film production and the current high inflation rate in the country limit local production, the situation has thus emboldened the influx of more foreign films into the cinemas. These films are readily available and of high-quality sound and production values as well.

Oftentimes, there are issues of trust between the film distributors and cinema owners. The inability to apply technology in determining the statistics of consumers of content, cinemagoers, and the provision of accurate financial data accruing from the box office are some of the banes of the industry. Adejunmobi (2007) expressed a similar view that revenues and copies of films sold are many times unaccounted for in Nollywood because there are no fundamentals for tracking sales. Many times, producers and content owners consider themselves susceptible to the antics of the cinemas and thereby short-changed. In this regard, exhibitors will need to be transparent and their dealings while the distributors will need to learn to trust their partners as well.

Another challenge plaguing the distribution and exhibition practices in Nollywood is the problem of a double system of taxation by the government and the tax regime. Some operators have complained bitterly about the government's insensitivity to the plight of active players as the cinema exhibitors are made to pay taxes at different levels. These taxes vary from Withholding Tax to Value Added Tax (VAT), Entertainment Tax, and Radio and TV Taxes. Practitioners are of the view that the government can intervene in this tax regime through rebates by encouraging filmmakers to leverage this incentive to launch them back into the business as many are already abandoning the industry due to too many constraints. The issue of tax rebates and other film-promoting policies that serve as incentives for filmmakers have also been raised and supported by Lorenzen (2008) who posited that practices such as this will help in winning home markets and growing the industry.

In an interview with an online news medium, a film distributor, cinema owner, and a member of the Cinema Exhibitors Association of Nigeria (CEAN), Joy Odiete, while reacting to tax-related issues in the industry asserts that one of the challenges of distribution and exhibition is that of government inaction and that is having a toll on the film economy. Odiete opined:

I can say that the government is not helping us at all with these multiple taxes we are facing. In my opinion, taxation is a major problem we have to contend with. For instance, the exhibition space is crippled by double taxation that is killing our business...the government doesn't understand our industry. If they do, they will know where to come in. Coming in is not just about giving intervention funds because if you give funds and the business that receives it is not able to find an enabling environment, it will fail at the end of the day (Shock.ng, 2022: 38-39).

Again, Odiete said:

I'm more particular about taxation because I know how these things are as I now have a cinema. Then, there are radio and TV taxes that we pay each year under the audiovisual tax that I have to pay... It is compulsory. We can't do anything about it because if we don't pay our cinemas will be shut down. It's not fair to exhibitors and producers. (Shock.ng, 2022, para 39-40).

The Lack of a sizeable number of cinemas and screens is also a major challenge. Currently, there are 68 cinemas covering all 36 states in Nigeria including the Federal Capital Territory (Sasu, 2022) with 251 screens (Usoro, 2023) most of these are situated in the southwestern part of the country. Based on these statistics, it is incontrovertible that there is a limited number of cinemas and screens in the country compared to the population of Nigeria currently estimated at over 200 million people (BBC, 2019; Akinpelu, 2020; Awa & Thomas-Odia, 2020). This inadequacy impedes filmmakers who are in dire need of exhibition channels. The film is meant to be publicly showcased, but a situation where films are competing with a limited number of screens available at cinemas in Lagos and a few metropolitan cities like Ibadan, PortHacourt, and Abuja leads to undue politicking among industry players as to which film gets attention for exhibition. As a result of this, those whose influences are overwhelming are conceded slots rather than a level playing ground for everyone.

There are instances where audiences abound at cinemas but without spaces to accommodate them in the halls. This situation is made worse when exhibitors have many films competing for their attention, whereas the number of days or weeks a film stays in the cinema may be short-lived except if they have been highly publicized and has enjoyed more reviews and public attention. Except for this, Nollywood filmmakers go through hurdles to get their films distributed through alternative marketing and exhibition channels such as streaming which is now being formalized through the interventions of digital platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Showmax in the country.

There is also the politics of gatekeeping. Key players in the distribution market to a large extent are the major determinant of which film is given more or additional push to audiences at cinemas. This constitutes a form of artificial barrier. Producers and directors with more influence and good standing in the industry who are 'well connected' are prioritized ahead of supposedly assumed liberal practitioners whose only motivation is creativity and business. It is believed that films are not given the same priority attention by exhibitors due to internal politicking by insiders and key operators arising from favoritism and personal interest. Therefore, there have been agitations by these liberals that every film should be given a level playing ground to excel at different exhibition channels.

At the level of digital television service providers (Pay-Tv), a lot has been said about some of these platforms perceived as exploitative. Companies like Multichoice Nigeria, owners of DSTV and GOTV brands with dedicated Nollywood channels have been accused severally of neocolonial, repressive, and anti-competitive tendencies in the exhibition marketplace, although their contributions and investments in the sustainability of Nollywood have been in like manner, applauded and re-echoed. Notwithstanding, stakeholders have continued to yearn for more local participation in the business to compete with the already established multinationals and their assumed imperial and cultural domination through their platforms. A local digital PayTv platform known as TSTV owned by a Nigerian, Bright Echefu is already doing something similar, but its level of participation and ability to compete favourably in this already politically vested terrain has not been well established amidst funding and advanced technology required to competing favourably.

One of the strong contentions in the industry presently is the pay-per-view agitation by subscribers and stakeholders on the need for Multichoice Nigeria to go this route. This has generated a lot of tension among critical audiences and subscribers. While Nigerians are insisting on the pay-per-view mode, DSTV Nigeria says its operational technology does not support such a subscription arrangement (Dr. Chibuike Ogwumike, Zonal Director, National Broadcasting Commission, Personal interview, December 12, 2022). NBC says it is not resting on its oars as dialogue and debate continue with the digital satellite television service provider.

5. Decolonizing the film medium through the new media approach

One of the ways to decolonize and remove restrictions on the distribution and exhibition practices in the film industry in Nigeria is through the New Media. The New Media includes streaming platforms, Blogs, and social media pages like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. which offer paid and unpaid subscription services. The streaming platforms especially, such as Netflix, iROKOTV, LibraTV, IbakaTV, Amazon Prime Video, and a lot of others have provided a paradigm shift from the colonial and neocolonial practices in cinema gatekeeping by creating alternative exhibition platforms for filmmakers and content owners in Nollywood. These channels provide leverage for film practitioners in terms of access to both domicile and global audiences who patronize these channels. Today, the Nigerian film industry known as 'Nollywood' has gone transnational (Adejunmobi, 2007; Agina, 2021; Simon, 2021) cutting across borders to different nations of the world. This is particularly evidenced in the transmission of Nollywood films to global audiences through the new media platforms which provide alternative channels of distribution and exhibition. The patronage of YouTube, DSTV Now, iROKOTV, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Showmax Nigeria, and other major digital platforms currently operating in the country reflect this phenomenon.

The New Media has become a new channel for reaching out to global audiences by sharing their content through streaming technology. With the application of advanced information and communication technology, video-film streaming platforms have revolutionized the viewing practices of audiences across all strata in Nigeria and globally. The digital algorithms provided by streaming technology offer a personalized experience to audiences who consume film content online based on a previous history of what has been watched by consumers. This affords audiences varieties of access to content without any form of restriction on programming as against the traditional media. Through technology, streaming provides convenience as it allows viewers to watch from the comfort of their homes and offices with a variety of decisions of what content to view and at the time most convenient. Presently, in Nigeria, streaming is deconstructing all barriers to distribution and exhibition by providing equal access and a level playing ground for filmmakers. The alternative platforms have succeeded in giving room for access to the promotion of Nigerian films without undue creation of artificial boundaries. It offers additional revenue and profits to filmmakers and content owners in addition to recouping

their investments. This development aligns with the theoretical approach adopted for the study and agrees with an assertion by Wasko (2014) who opines that political economy concentrates on the production and consumption of wealth and their implications on individuals and society.

There is now an immense increase in the level of patronage of streaming platforms globally. According to Business Wire (2021), video streaming practices are expected to attract billions of audiences globally with over net worth of 223.98 billion dollars by the year 2028. Audiences of Nollywood films are also participating in this projection due to an increase in subscriptions to the streaming platforms, leading to more film production and collaboration activities. This expected rise in film economic activities is in tandem with the views of Pearson et al. (2013) citing Adam Smith and Dave Ricardo who hinged their political economy ideology on the labour of value theoretical argument. There are now discussions on affordability and access based on costs of tariff plans and budgets available to subscribers, thus, leading to a continued rise and improved local content creation in Nigeria.

By the projections, the Nigerian film industry can tap from this opportunity by effectively utilizing the New Media approach that streaming presents to boost film distribution and returns on investments and be a partaker in this global phenomenon that will change the narratives of the exhibition. It is currently believed that the new media platforms will continue to be relevant during this period based on the audience's growth, demands, and preferences.

6. Decolonizing the film medium through the public-private partnership approach

The Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is a collaboration between the government as represented by the public sector or Agency and the private sector known as private companies or concerns. This collaboration becomes mandatory for the purposes of providing resources, building infrastructure, and creating of enabling environment in the film sector by factoring both risks and benefits systems which serve as sustainable practice in the long term. The PPP could be multifaceted or complex in structure with diversity and all-inclusiveness.

A clear example of the Public-Private Partnership approach is the one embarked upon by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and its Bankers' Committee in which they were granted a concession to renovate the National Theatre situated in Iganmu, Lagos, although two other companies also came up. That is, Jadeas Trust and Topwide Appeals who claimed to have won the concession earlier to maintain the facility and surrounding land. The latter consortium, however, said it planned to build a 3000-capacity creative industries university, business park, and trade centre at the National Theatre.

The PPP will deal with the private sector providing finances and expertise. It will involve asset management, financial relief, economic growth, training, and retention of the workforce. The PPP processes involve collaboration in pulling resources together to encourage industry participation and guarantee investment and returns in the film industry. This will be achieved through the establishment of film academies and schools to provide professional training that would be collectively run by the government and the private sector. This new drive will create manpower needs needed in the industry to make a difference. Although the Nigeria Film Academy in Jos as well as the Nigeria Film Corporation are already participating in this area, they are not enough as this PPP approach will further complement their approach.

Through the PPP initiative, loans, grants, and other film investment incentives will be brought to bear. The government and the private participation model will create an enabling atmosphere that promotes local and international investment opportunities in Nollywood. This could come in the form of granting of loans to filmmakers who have demonstrated capacity to complete projects. The instances of undue bureaucracy and artificial bottlenecks would have to be dismantled in accessing these grants.

Collaborations between local and international film companies are usually promoted under this platform by encouraging co-production, distribution, and exhibition on different platforms and in different climes. This will go a long way in promoting Nigerian films and Nollywood generally. To fully accomplish this effort, the PPP will require the cooperation of all industry stakeholders to attain fruition. These results will come in the form of increased efficiency and effectiveness through expertise, innovations, and better service delivery leading to improvement and economic delivery. Because it is a partnership, the PPP approach will most likely enjoy and encourage accountability in the area of contracts, grants, and funding opportunities. It will ensure contract enforcement and remove the corrupt funding intervention regime earlier spearheaded solely by the government agencies where monies were released to supposed filmmakers who never produced any film. The PPP will ensure that the right people with the will and zeal are sourced and enabled.

The PPP will ensure the financing of film projects for individuals and companies where it would have been otherwise impossible to achieve. This will contribute to the economy and propel economic growth. Successful take-off of the PPP arrangement will enlarge the distribution and exhibition space in the industry and lead to the creation of more job opportunities for other artistic and technical professionals to participate when the initiative starts flourishing thereby growing the economy of the country. The PPP will be achieved through the construction of new cinemas, maintenance of old cinema infrastructures, and establishment of film schools among others. The film festivals should be supported through collaboration and sponsorships by private companies. The government should also be able to provide funding support and create the environment to attract foreign investments and wider acceptance of these festivals especially in the Global North.

The PPP should evolve a formidable and time-tested marketing and distribution expertise with a legal and regulatory framework. There should be a stakeholders' forum, advisory board, or stakeholders' round table that brings industry practitioners together to discuss and devise sustainable suggestions and inputs that will move the industry forward. The Lagos theatres owned by the Lagos State Government constructed some community-based theatres located at Igando, Oregun, Epe, and Badagry. This is to support the arts and tourism sector. Yet, the government says it is still considering

the best and most effective business models to adopt in turning the theaters around (Bassey & Emelike, 2020). This is most likely where the PPP role should come into play for effective maintenance and performance.

7. Contribution of the study

By exploring the current landscape of Nollywood, Africa's biggest film industry, the paper brings to the fore what decoloniality offers the film distribution economy, including its potential to disrupt existing power dynamics. It adds to existing academic discourse and creates more equitable and inclusive opportunities for film practitioners in the film distribution section of the economy. The paper creates a pathway for the development of a diverse and equitable film industry by providing a comprehensive view of the potential of decoloniality to transform Nollywood and suggests ways in which this approach can contribute to a more equitable, sustainable, and creative film distribution economy.

8. Implications of the study

Film is a cultural reality of a people and represents their realities and aspirations. The PPP sector must evolve and assist the industry by not just intervening in production, but also the end-process of getting the film product to the desired market locally and globally, with policy support from the government just like Hollywood is backed by the US government policy. Film producers desirous of distributing and exhibiting their content are required to approach these cinemas expected to be operating across all the senatorial districts in the country without necessarily being impeded by gatekeepers unduly. The government should also grant tax rebates to private investors and upcoming filmmakers and companies to be able to blossom. It should do away with a double taxation system that is almost crippling the system and driving film producers and directors away from the industry.

To decolonize the current film distribution and exhibition culture, the paper recommends that the Government should support the local online streaming platforms by strengthening them against suppression and foreign domination from multimedia giants like Netflix and Amazon who have the financial capital and infrastructural capacity to overwhelm the industry. Since streaming platforms are expected to generate 223.98 billion dollars globally by the year 2028 according to projections, Nollywood, Nigeria's film industry is expected to benefit immensely from this largesse based on its current expansive industry practices. These platforms are also transnational in nature because they exhibit Nollywood films globally via the internet. By so doing, the distribution efforts in Nollywood and the restriction of outlets would be drastically reduced.

The government should involve serious and self-motivated private sector participants and entrepreneurs desirous of the film business by devising a policy to establish a cinema each in all the 360 senatorial districts in Nigeria in collaboration with the private sector and the local councils' administrations in every state of the federation in the country through the Public-Private Partnership, while the private sector takes care of operations, maintenance and running of the joint ventures. The Lagos State Government through the Ministry of Arts and Culture is already taking a lead in this direction. It has already established theatres across the political divisions in Lagos State including Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos Island, and Epe (IBILE) where the private sector (PPP Model) is responsible for maintaining and operating the venues independently. These venues cater to the artistic and cultural needs of the people and practitioners within their geographical space.

9. Conclusion

The federal government of Nigeria needs to unbundle the film and cultural policy of Nigeria to reflect current realities. It should support the film distribution and exhibition businesses by creating the necessary enablement and environment for them to thrive. It should get involved in policy and help play politics as Nollywood becomes a higher earner for the country just like Agriculture, Oil and Gas, and the telecommunications sectors are doing presently.

The film regulatory agencies of the government need to pay priority attention to the film distribution economy, as many filmmakers are being frustrated out of the business. Filmmakers in Nigeria most times, become producers, directors, distributors, and exhibitors which should not have been. However, it appears regulatory agencies like the National Film and Video Censors Board do not really understand most politics and idiosyncrasies of the film business to be able to intervene at a meeting point and apply the right approach. This paper, therefore, argues for a partnership through the creation of a joint and central agency that will see to the implementation of a public-private film partnership that will ensure that clear-cut guidelines are duly followed for effective implementation and take-off.

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