International Journal of Economics, Business and Innovation Research
https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJEBIR
E-ISSN : 2964-0865
IJEBIR

Youtube And Film Viewing Among Students At Heritage Polytechnic, Eket: An Analysis

Brown, George Nathan[1], Ifeanyi Martins Nwokeocha, PhD[2]

[1]Department of Mass Communication, Western University Network.
[2]Department of Journalism and Media Studies, Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa State Nigeria

E-mail: E-mail: georgenat665@gmail.com +2348164314163
ifeanyimn@fuotuoke.edu.ng+2348038592101

Abstract

This study investigates the patterns, motivations, and implications of YouTube-facilitated Nollywood film viewing among students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket. Employing a survey research design, data were collected from a representative sample of 357 students drawn from six purposively selected departments across three faculties. The study examined the extent of student engagement with YouTube, the factors influencing their preference for the platform over traditional film-viewing channels, and the implications of these viewing habits for the Nigerian film industry. Findings revealed that approximately 60% of students accessed YouTube daily or multiple times weekly, predominantly to watch full films and trailers, while interactive activities such as commenting and sharing were less common. Practical considerations, including affordability, ease of access, and content variety, emerged as the primary drivers of platform preference, whereas peer influence and educational motivations were less significant. The study also found that YouTube promotes cultural engagement, increases awareness of film quality issues, and provides opportunities for independent filmmakers, but simultaneously exposes students to unregulated and pirated content. Grounded in the Technological Acceptance Model and the Uses and Gratifications Theory, the research highlights the dual role of YouTube as both an enabler of accessible film consumption and a platform with potential challenges for content regulation. The findings underscore the need for filmmakers, regulators, and educational institutions to harness YouTube's

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

advantages while implementing strategies for content verification, media literacy, and industry sustainability.

Keywords: YouTube, Nollywood films, undergraduate students, film consumption, digital media engagement

INTRODUCTION

Since the invention of the internet, the world has witnessed rapid growth in the convergence of hitherto widely separated elements. A major sector that has been largely affected by this advancement in information and communication technology is the entertainment industry. The composition and release of works including films and music have grown, breaking the boundaries with seamless ease and some economic impacts. For instance, ring tone and music download as phone alerts is already a global $10 billion business (Baran, 2013). Before now, films and movies are either viewed at the cinemas or watched on television. However, with media convergence enabled by the internet and the world wide web (www), film and movie viewership has significantly moved online. One of the major platforms that have facilitated the availability of films and movies online is YouTube. YouTube allows professionals and non-professionals to publish their videos without any major tutorial. Today, many businesses post their videos on YouTube while some have also chosen to have customised YouTube channels where they publish items such as instructional videos that serve different purposes.

YouTube also provides an opportunity for users to generate income based on Google's offer of revenue sharing for advertisement clicks on the platform (Christensson, 2009). Regarding the adoption of these new platforms, Madden (2007) notes that major adopters of online videos are young people because they are very active in adopting technological innovations. The report also acknowledges that due to the proliferation and voracious rate at which young people diffuse, adopt and consume online video contents, they are among the most contagious carriers of online videos because they comment and share videos that they watch online. The entertainment industry in Nigeria is not left out of the global discussion on how the internet and indeed platforms like YouTube have influenced the production and distribution of films and movies made in Nigeria. The internet has brought a new dimension into the entertainment industry in Nigeria because it has rendered time and distance irrelevant to accessing entertainment contents. For instance, in 2015, Netflix, an international provider of on-demand video streaming, listed selected Nollywood films including *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *October 1* to be viewed on

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

the platform. YouTube also offers numerous Nollywood movies while *iROKOtv*, an online streaming site prides itself as the world's largest online catalogue of Nollywood movies with over 10,000 hours of movies and TV contents (Denzer, 2016; Igwe, 2015). In line with these achievements, it would be interesting to know how frequently Nigerians view these Nollywood films on online platforms using YouTube as a case study.

For instance, a study that was conducted in India and reported by *ET Brand Equity* in 2018 shows that with almost 400 hours of content uploaded on YouTube every minute, over 400 million monthly active YouTube viewers in India have several fresh and varied content to watch on YouTube. Content creators in India are taking advantage of this development to push more native contents with songs and dance on YouTube for viewers. The report further shows that entertainment videos are the most popular amongst viewers with a single video getting 10,000 views on an average while a video in the style category gets about 8,000 views (ET Brand Equity, 2018).

Although other studies (Chappuis, Duncan & Neruda, 2013; Gibson, 2015; Madden, 2007; Nielsen, 2015) have also examined the viewership of online videos along the lines of length of time spent, preferences, demography of viewership and the commercial viability, works on the relationship between Nollywood and YouTube seem limited. Specifically, studies on the viewership of Nollywood films on YouTube in Nigeria appear inadequate from extant literature and that is the gap this research seeks to fill. Also, the population distribution of undergraduates at the Caleb Business School (CBS) Lagos provides an avenue for an exploratory study that may serve as a springboard for other studies in this area. Particularly, Nollywood film producers and advertisers would benefit from the findings of this study because they would have an opportunity to appraise the adoption and engagement of the YouTube platform in promoting their works. Therefore, the objectives of this study are to examine the level of awareness of the availability of Nollywood films on YouTube among CBS undergraduates vis-à-vis the frequency of viewership, interactivity with the platform and factors that may influence their viewership of Nollywood films on YouTube.

Statement of the Problem

The growing appeal of YouTube as a preferred avenue for film viewing among young Nigerians is no longer in doubt, as the platform offers easy access to local and international content, including a wide range of Nollywood productions. Ordinarily, the expectation is that such a platform would enhance the visibility of Nigerian films, promote cultural engagement and support the efforts of filmmakers whose works continue to shape

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

the nation's creative space. A dilemma emerges as the very platform that promises access and expansion also presents concerns that challenge the ideal situation. Nigerian youths, particularly undergraduate students, now rely heavily on YouTube for film consumption, yet their choices appear to be shaped not only by convenience but also by unregulated content exposure, algorithm driven recommendations, and the growing presence of pirated and poor-quality films. These concerns raise questions about whether this trend supports or diminishes the standard of Nigerian cinema. Although studies exist on online video consumption across several contexts, there remains limited empirical evidence on how undergraduates at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, actually engage with Nollywood films on YouTube, what motivates their preferences and the broader implications of their viewing habits for the Nigerian film industry. The absence of such knowledge creates a gap that this study seeks to address, as it becomes necessary to examine how these students use YouTube for film viewing and what this growing shift suggests for the future of film culture in Nigeria.

~~The advent of YouTube has transformed the film viewing industry in Nigeria, offering unparalleled access to a vast array of films, including Nollywood productions. However, despite the burgeoning popularity of YouTube among Nigerian youths, a significant knowledge gap persists regarding the YouTube-facilitated film viewing habits and preferences of undergraduate students in Nigeria. Specifically, the ways in which undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, utilise YouTube for film viewing, their motivations for doing so, and the implications of this trend for the Nigerian film industry remain largely unexplored. This study, thus, aims to investigate the extent to which undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic favour YouTube over traditional film viewing, as well as the factors that shape their choices. It will explore dimensions such as accessibility, content variety, social influence, and the purported educational value of these platforms. This research seeks to illuminate the cultural and social implications of media consumption patterns among Nigerian youths, contributing valuable insights to the fields of media studies and cultural sociology.~~

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. To examine the extent to which students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, engage with YouTube for the viewing of Nollywood films, with particular attention to their level of exposure and patterns of use.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

2. To identify the key factors that influence the preference of these students for YouTube over traditional film viewing channels, focusing on issues of accessibility, content quality, motivation and social influence.
3. To assess the implications of YouTube facilitated film viewing among students for the Nigerian film industry, especially in relation to cultural engagement, film quality, and the growing presence of unregulated and pirated content.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Media Engagement among Tertiary Institutions Students

The rise of digital media has altered how young people seek information, entertainment and cultural experiences, especially within university communities where students often operate in technology rich environments. Research has consistently shown that university students across the world integrate digital platforms into their daily lives in ways that shape how they relate with media content, including films and video materials. The Pew Research Center (2021) reports that young adults are the most active group on online video platforms, with a significant number turning to YouTube as their primary source of video content due to its flexible access structure. Ofcom (2022) also confirms that young people prefer online video services because such platforms allow them to control their viewing schedules while offering diverse content options that align with their personal interests. These findings are not limited to Western contexts, as African based studies point to similar patterns. For example, Nkgapele (2020) observes that university students in South Africa rely heavily on digital platforms for both leisure and academic related media consumption because such platforms provide speed, convenience and opportunities for peer interaction. This trend resonates with the experiences of Nigerian students who often navigate social media and video streaming platforms as part of their everyday routines. A study conducted by Adesina and Olanrewaju (2019) shows that digital engagement among Nigerian undergraduates continues to grow due to increased smartphone penetration and the relative affordability of mobile data packages that give students consistent access to video platforms. These developments illustrate the strong connection between digital media and youth engagement, reaffirming the view that digital platforms are gradually replacing traditional channels among educated young adults.

A closer look at digital media habits among university students reveals that their preferences are shaped not only by convenience but also by the social value attached to online media consumption. Social influence plays a major role in shaping the media choices of young people, as confirmed by the findings of Statista (2023), which show that

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

young adults rely heavily on peer recommendations when selecting films, online videos or entertainment content. This reality is visible in different studies conducted within academic environments where students often discover new film titles from what friends share online or through content that trends within their social networks. Clement and Xu (2020) explain that young people view digital platforms as spaces where media consumption is woven into social interactions, which means their film and video choices are often linked to conversations, shared experiences and peer validation. Nigerian researchers share similar observations. A study conducted by Arokoyo and Ejechi (2022) reveals that university students in Nigeria use YouTube not only for personal entertainment but also to keep up with what peers are watching, a pattern that reinforces the platform's cultural influence among the youth population. These findings suggest that digital engagement among Nigerian students is tied to a mixture of curiosity, social belonging and the desire to remain connected to the wider youth community. As students continue to blend academic work with social media use, platforms such as YouTube become major cultural spaces where they negotiate identity, express preferences and participate in shared media experiences. This evolving pattern expands the need for research on how students choose and engage with film content on these digital platforms.

Concerns are often raised about the implications of high digital engagement among university students, especially regarding media quality, content exposure and the long term influence of online media habits on cultural preferences. Scholars argue that while digital platforms support free access to information and entertainment, they also expose young adults to content variations that may affect taste, judgement and cultural attachment. Ofcom (2023) warns that the absence of strict gatekeeping online means that students often encounter inappropriate content, misleading videos or poorly produced materials that may alter their media expectations over time. UNICEF (2021) also highlights the risk of exposure to harmful content among young digital users, urging the need for stronger digital safety measures, particularly within developing countries where media literacy programmes remain weak. Nigerian studies have echoed these concerns. A study conducted by Nwammuo and Uzoechi (2021) found that Nigerian university students frequently stumble upon questionable video content due to poor regulation on online platforms, which raises questions about the impact of such exposure on their value systems and cultural orientation. Despite these concerns, young adults continue to depend heavily on digital platforms because they offer freedom and control that traditional media do not provide. This dilemma reinforces the need for scholarly inquiry into how students make sense of digital film content, how they navigate the challenges associated

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

with online media and what their choices mean for sectors such as Nollywood that now coexist with digital gatekeepers like YouTube. The growing reliance on digital platforms for film consumption among Nigerian undergraduates therefore calls for an evaluation of the cultural, educational and industry related implications of such patterns, especially at a time when film producers increasingly seek relevance within digital spaces.

YouTube as a Video Sharing Platform

YouTube was founded by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim when they were colleagues at PayPal (Leskin, 2019). The platform's slogan is "Broadcast Yourself" (Christensson, 2009). The first YouTube video titled "Me at the Zoo" was posted from the San Diego zoo on April 23, 2005, by Jawed Karim. As of June 11, 2020, the video has 98,388,071 million views, 3.3 million likes and 6,462,746 comments (YouTube, 2020; Shontell, 2013). Daily, viewers watch one billion hours of videos on YouTube, a platform that is localised in more than 100 countries and available in 80 languages (YouTube, as cited in Moshin, 2021). Originally, YouTube was to serve as an online dating service but the idea did not thrive as expected. However, two significant events in 2004 proved the relevance of the platform. The incidents were Janet Jackson's wardrobe malfunction at the Super Bowl and the devastating tsunami in the Indian Ocean both of which videos could not be found online.

The non-availability of these videos further prompted the founders of YouTube to provide a video-sharing platform that can be easily operated by anyone using a simple interface to publish, upload and view streaming videos. This action made the availability of video on the internet a success (Baran, 2013; Leskin, 2019). YouTube's achievement attracted investors like Sequoia and Artis Capital Management which invested $11.5 million between November 2005 and April 2006 before it was bought by Google on November 13, 2006, for $1.65 billion. To address issues of copyright, Google reached an agreement with some entertainment companies and individuals to allow YouTube users to post copyrighted materials on the platform (Hosch, 2020; Reuters, 2006; Smith, 2014). Some of the advantages of YouTube as a video sharing platform include free and easy use of the platform, good opportunity for users to earn income, ease of video sharing and going viral, increase in search engine optimisation, measurement and analytics, and the ability to watch videos on the go at reduced bandwidth (Burkhart, 2018; De Jong, 2019; Dwyer, 2016; Sharma, 2017; Sofar, 2015). However, the disadvantages of YouTube include the overly public nature of the platform which may raise issues of control for the minors. Other disadvantages are the many rules which are meant to give advertisers an

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

advantage since YouTube has the sole control of the platform; less opportunity for brands to control how their channels look or how their videos are accessed; reduced visit to brand's websites because users watch the brand videos directly on YouTube platforms; and the tendency of showing videos of competition brands as parallel videos, the next video or on the sidebars thereby distracting the attention of the target audience. Other limitations include advertisement clutters which distract users and unpleasant comments by users which may be hijacked by mischief makers (Burkhart, 2018; De Jong, 2019; Dwyer, 2016; Sharma, 2017; Sofar, 2015).

YouTube as a Platform for Contemporary Film Consumption

The steady rise of YouTube as a dominant platform for film consumption has reshaped media practices across different societies, especially among young adults who gravitate toward flexible and user-controlled platforms. Scholars have acknowledged that YouTube has grown beyond a video sharing site to become a major cultural and creative space where audiences locate, view and engage with diverse forms of video content, including films and film related materials. Burgess and Green (2019) explain that YouTube has evolved into a participatory culture space where individuals and organisations circulate creative works while relying on user engagement to sustain relevance. Their position resonates with global patterns that reveal how digital audiences increasingly prefer platforms that offer ease of access and minimal barriers to content retrieval. Cunningham and Craig (2019) draw attention to the fact that YouTube is now central to what they describe as social media entertainment, a space where traditional media boundaries are disrupted as audiences freely choose what to watch without the constraints of linear broadcasting. Nigerian youths, particularly undergraduates, reflect this shift through their heavy reliance on YouTube for the consumption of locally produced films, especially Nollywood productions. Empirical studies conducted in Africa confirm that young audiences now depend on online platforms because such platforms offer choice, mobility and lower cost of access when compared to cinema viewing or broadcast television. For instance, Muyembe and Chavula (2020) reveal that university students in sub-Saharan Africa consume online video content at increasing rates because YouTube offers them an avenue to blend entertainment with peer engagement. This pattern is equally visible in Nigeria where students frequently rely on YouTube to locate films that match their tastes or social conversations. The expanding role of YouTube in film accessibility therefore reveals a shift from traditional film distribution channels to digital platforms that empower audiences to control their consumption habits.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

A number of scholars have attempted to explain the appeal of YouTube for film viewing among young people, pointing to issues such as convenience, content diversity, affordability and ease of interactivity. Lobato (2019) notes that YouTube operates as a hybrid platform where informal distribution coexists with formal, structured video offerings, which gives it a unique strength among digital platforms. His argument provides a useful lens for examining why many young people across the world often use YouTube as their first point of contact for films, trailers, behind the scenes footage and film related commentary. The element of convenience is emphasised in several studies. For example, Westenberg (2020) argues that young viewers gravitate toward YouTube because it allows them to consume content in personalised contexts, while maintaining a sense of community through likes, comments and shared recommendations. This structure creates an environment where audiences not only watch films but also participate in film culture through commentary and peer interactions. Nigerian youths are not insulated from this pattern. Recent studies conducted within tertiary institutions show that undergraduates often choose YouTube because it offers free access to a large collection of Nollywood films that would otherwise require payment on subscription-based platforms. Nweke and Edegoh (2021) confirm that the accessibility of Nollywood content on YouTube encourages repeated viewing among students who lack the financial means to subscribe to paid streaming platforms. This evidence is further reinforced by Afolayan (2022), who notes that YouTube has democratised film viewership among Nigerian youths by reducing the cost barriers associated with traditional film viewing. The appeal of YouTube for Nigerian undergraduates is therefore connected to its capacity to merge convenience with affordability while sustaining active audience participation.

Scholars have also raised concerns about the challenges associated with YouTube's growing influence on film consumption, suggesting that the platform, though valuable, introduces issues that require scholarly attention. Cunningham, Craig and McElroy (2021) argue that YouTube's algorithm driven system, which determines the visibility of content, shapes what audiences see, often raising concerns about whether viewers are exposed to diverse content or are caught in cycles of repeated recommendations. Their work highlights the dilemma associated with a platform that grants access but also influences choice through automated suggestion mechanisms. Film researchers have also expressed worry about the circulation of pirated or poor-quality films on YouTube, especially in regions where regulatory frameworks are weak. Lobato and Lotz (2020) maintain that the informal circulation of films on YouTube sometimes undermines the creative economy of national cinemas, including industries

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

like Nollywood where piracy has long posed a serious threat to revenue generation. Nigerian researchers have echoed similar worries. Aina and Oloruntola (2023) explain that although YouTube provides visibility for Nollywood films, the ease with which unauthorised uploads appear on the platform threatens the economic stability of filmmakers who rely on audience patronage for sustainability. Attention has also been drawn to content exposure among young audiences. UNICEF (2021) reports that young digital users often encounter materials that may be unsuitable due to the absence of strict regulation online. This concern is especially relevant to Nigerian undergraduates whose viewing habits may be shaped by peer influence, curiosity or the desire to follow social trends. The platform therefore represents both an opportunity and a challenge, creating a need for empirical inquiry into how specific groups, such as undergraduate students in Nigeria, relate with YouTube as a source of film consumption. The persistent gap in localised studies thus calls for scholarly engagement that will unveil the patterns, motivations and implications of youth mediated film consumption on YouTube.

Theoretical Framework

The Technological Acceptance Model and the Uses and Gratification theory underpinned this study.

Technological Acceptance Model

Ogunyombo & Onwubere (2018) note that Fred Davis in 1986 proposed the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The TAM explains and predicts users' acceptance of information technology. TAM is an offshoot of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) that examines reasons for users' acceptance or rejection of information technology. The TAM model holds that *perceived usefulness* and the *perceived ease of use* are two factors that eventually determine the acceptance of technology. Perceived usefulness deals with the user's subjective likelihood that using a specific application or system will enhance his performance and experience. On the other hand, the perceived ease of use is concerned with the user's degree of expectation that the application or system will require minimal effort to be used. However, these two factors are influenced by individual behaviour and attitude. While the attitude deals with the user's evaluation of the desire to apply the information system, the behavioural intentions deal with the measure of the likelihood that the technology will be applied by the user. Largely, these assumptions rely on the individual's perception of the utility of the information application or system which will eventually decide the adopter's positive or negative behaviour regarding the new

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

International Journal of Economics, Business and Innovation Research
https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJEBIR
E-ISSN : 2964-0865
IJEBIR

technology in the future amidst external factors that may be social, political or cultural (Ogunyombo *et al*, 2018).

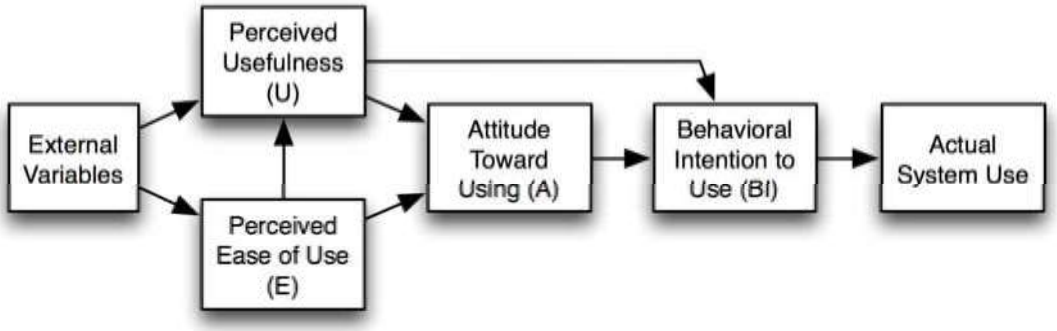


Figure 1: Technology Acceptance Model

Extant literature (Burkhart, 2018; De Jong, 2019; Dwyer, 2016; Sharma, 2017) on the features of YouTube speaks to the perceived usefulness and ease of use of the medium as a video sharing platform including Nollywood films. The literature also established factors that could be external variables that may influence the attitude and behaviour of the adopters towards the technology. In line with the objectives of this study, understanding the interplay of these factors regarding the viewership of Nollywood films on YouTube makes this model relevant to this study.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

The uses and gratifications theory also provides a basis for this study. McQuail (1994) explains that the uses and gratification theory (UGT) is different from the source-dominated theories that focus on studying media effects. The UGT assumes that individuals influence the effects that the mass media have on them as they use the media to gratify their immediate needs. This means that the media do not do things to people but rather, people do things with the media and the influence of the media is limited to what people allow it to be on them (Baran, 2013). Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso (2012) agree that people use the media to their advantage more often than the media use them because when a member of the audience decides to view a particular media, the decision reflects the value the person has placed on such media. Uzuegbunam (2015) agrees that with the advancement in media technologies, more attention is being paid to how the assumptions of the uses and gratifications theory could be applied in media and mass communication studies. Therefore, with the increasing adoption of social media, the

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

assumptions of the uses and gratifications theory provide a basis to examine the influence and the value placed on the viewership of Nollywood films on YouTube among members of the study population.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a survey research design to investigate the patterns, motivations and implications of YouTube facilitated film viewing among undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket. The population comprises 4,700 undergraduate students enrolled across all faculties in the 2024/2025 academic session. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, a representative sample of 357 students was deemed sufficient to achieve a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. To ensure proportional representation across the academic structure, stratified random sampling was employed across three faculties: Faculty of Management Sciences, Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Sciences. Within each faculty, two departments were purposively selected: Mass Communication and Public Administration from Management Sciences, Electrical/Electronics Engineering and Computer Engineering from Engineering, and Science Laboratory Technology and Computer Science from Sciences. Each department's sample was determined proportionally based on its student population relative to the faculty, ensuring that students from each programme had a fair chance of selection. Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire designed to capture information on students' frequency of YouTube use for Nollywood film viewing, awareness of online film content, interactive behaviours such as commenting and sharing, and the perceived educational, social and entertainment value of the films. The instrument's reliability and validity were assessed through a pilot study involving 30 students from departments outside the selected sample, with internal consistency confirmed via Cronbach's alpha. Ethical protocols were strictly observed, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including frequency counts and percentages, to examine relationships between demographic variables and students' YouTube viewing behaviours, thereby generating findings capable of informing both the Nigerian film industry and broader media consumption research.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

RO1: To examine the extent to which undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, engage with YouTube for the viewing of Nollywood films, with particular attention to their level of exposure and patterns of use.

Table 1: Frequency of YouTube Use for Nollywood Films

Frequency of Viewing	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Daily	118	33
2–3 times a week	95	27
Once a week	72	20
2–3 times a month	44	12
Rarely/Never	28	8
Total	357	100

The data in Table 1 indicate that a significant proportion of undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, frequently use YouTube to watch Nollywood films. About 60% of respondents (33% daily and 27% 2–3 times a week) engage with the platform on a regular basis, while 20% watch once a week. A smaller proportion, 12%, view films 2–3 times a month, and only 8% rarely or never use YouTube for this purpose. This suggests that YouTube is a highly preferred platform for Nollywood film consumption among the students, highlighting its accessibility and popularity within this demographic.

Table 2: Patterns of YouTube Engagement with Nollywood Films

Engagement Activity	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Watching full films	182	51
Watching trailers only	96	27
Liking videos	42	12
Commenting on videos	16	4
Sharing videos with peers	21	6
Total	357	100

The data in Table 2 indicate that undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, engage with Nollywood films on YouTube primarily through viewing, rather than interactive activities. A majority of respondents watch full films (51%) or trailers only (27%), showing that 78% of students actively consume content. In contrast, fewer

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

students participate in interactive behaviors such as liking videos (12%), commenting (4%), or sharing with peers (6%). This suggests that while YouTube is widely used for film consumption, active engagement with its social features is relatively low among the students.

RO2: To identify the key factors that influence the preference of these students for YouTube over traditional film viewing channels, focusing on accessibility, content quality, motivation, and social influence.

Table 3: Factors Influencing Preference for YouTube

Factor	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Accessibility (ease of access)	98	27
Free of charge / affordability	106	30
Variety of content	91	25
Peer recommendations	17	5
Entertainment value	31	9
Educational / Informational	14	4
Total	357	100

The data in Table 3 indicate that undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, are primarily influenced to use YouTube for Nollywood films by affordability and accessibility. About 30% of respondents cited free access as a key factor, while 27% highlighted ease of access. Variety of content was also important for 25% of students. In contrast, fewer students were motivated by entertainment value (9%), peer recommendations (5%), or educational/informational purposes (4%). This suggests that practical considerations, such as cost and convenience, are the main drivers for students' preference for YouTube over traditional film-viewing channels.

RO3: To assess the implications of YouTube-facilitated film viewing among undergraduate students for the Nigerian film industry, especially in relation to cultural engagement, film quality, and the growing presence of unregulated and pirated content.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

International Journal of Economics, Business and Innovation Research
https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJEBIR
E-ISSN : 2964-0865
IJEBIR

Table 4: Implications of YouTube Film Viewing

Implication	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Cultural engagement (local content)	114	32
Exposure to unregulated content	71	20
Exposure to pirated films	32	9
Awareness of film quality issues	96	27
Encouragement for independent film producers	44	12
Total	357	100

The data in Table 4 indicate that YouTube film viewing among undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, has both positive and negative implications for the Nigerian film industry. About 32% of respondents reported that it promotes cultural engagement through access to local content, while 27% acknowledged that it raises awareness of film quality issues. Conversely, 20% of students are exposed to unregulated content, and 9% encounter pirated films. Additionally, 12% noted that YouTube encourages independent film producers. This suggests that while the platform enhances accessibility and cultural participation, it also presents challenges related to content regulation and intellectual property, highlighting the dual impact of digital film consumption on the industry.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings on the extent of engagement with YouTube among students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, indicate that the platform has become a central hub for consuming Nollywood films. Data from Table 1 show that about 60% of respondents engage with YouTube daily or two to three times a week, while 20% view films weekly, reflecting a significant level of exposure. This aligns with the Technological Acceptance Model (TAM), which posits that perceived usefulness and ease of use influence adoption of a technology (Davis, 1986; Ogunyombo & Onwubere, 2018). In this context, YouTube's ease of access, convenience, and availability of Nollywood films likely enhance its perceived usefulness among students. Furthermore, patterns of engagement in Table 2 reveal that while students primarily consume content by watching full films (51%) or

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

trailers (27%), their interactive engagement such as liking, commenting, or sharing videos is relatively low, ranging from 4% to 12%. This pattern resonates with previous studies on digital media use among youth, which suggest that passive consumption is often more prevalent than active participation in online media platforms (Clement & Xu, 2020; Muyembe & Chavula, 2020). The predominance of passive viewing may reflect a preference for content consumption over social interaction, or it may indicate limitations in students' digital literacy and confidence in expressing opinions online. These findings underscore the role of YouTube as a convenient and accessible platform that satisfies students' immediate entertainment needs while shaping passive viewing habits, consistent with TAM assumptions about user behavior driven by perceived ease and utility. This high frequency of use suggests that YouTube is not only an alternative to traditional cinema and television but is rapidly becoming the primary medium through which, students engage with Nigerian film content, demonstrating a shift in media consumption patterns within higher education communities.

The data in Table 3 reveal that the choice of YouTube for viewing Nollywood films among students is largely influenced by practical considerations, particularly affordability (30%) and ease of access (27%), followed closely by the variety of content available (25%). This supports the principles of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which emphasizes that audiences actively select media platforms to satisfy specific needs such as entertainment, information, and social interaction (McQuail, 1994; Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso, 2012). In this case, students are motivated primarily by convenience and cost-effectiveness, reflecting a pragmatic approach to media consumption. Peer influence was cited by only 5% of respondents, suggesting that while social recommendations exist, they are secondary to personal considerations, a finding that aligns with Statista's (2023) observation that young adults balance social influence with individual utility in media choices. Additionally, the low proportion of students motivated by educational or informational content (4%) highlights that Nollywood films on YouTube are primarily valued for entertainment rather than academic enrichment, reinforcing the notion that the platform serves as a leisure medium. Scholars like Lobato (2019) and Westenberg (2020) argue that YouTube's hybrid nature, blending formal and informal content distribution, makes it uniquely suited to meet diverse user gratifications, a perspective consistent with the patterns observed in this study. The prominence of cost and accessibility as driving factors further suggests that subscription-based or traditional viewing methods, such as cinema halls or paid streaming services, are less attractive to students due to financial

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

and logistical constraints. This insight is significant for Nigerian filmmakers and content distributors, as it highlights the need to ensure free, accessible, and user-friendly digital platforms to sustain engagement among young audiences, while also considering strategies that may encourage deeper interaction, such as comments, shares, or engagement campaigns.

The findings in Table 4 indicate that YouTube-facilitated film viewing among students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, has multifaceted implications for the Nigerian film industry. Approximately 32% of respondents acknowledged that YouTube promotes cultural engagement through access to local content, while 27% observed that it increases awareness of film quality issues. This aligns with the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which suggests that audiences derive cultural and informational gratifications from media use (McQuail, 1994; Baran, 2013). The platform provides visibility for Nollywood films, enabling students to engage with indigenous storytelling, acting styles, and production techniques, potentially fostering national identity and cultural appreciation. Conversely, exposure to unregulated content (20%) and pirated films (9%) presents challenges consistent with Cunningham, Craig, and McElroy's (2021) critique of algorithm-driven platforms that promote informal content circulation. These trends highlight the duality of YouTube as both an enabler of accessibility and a conduit for content that may undermine the economic and regulatory framework of the Nigerian film industry (Lobato & Lotz, 2020; Aina & Oloruntola, 2023). The finding that 12% of students recognize the encouragement of independent film producers suggests that YouTube can serve as an incubator for emerging filmmakers, providing opportunities for exposure that traditional distribution channels may not afford. Scholars such as Burgess and Green (2019) emphasize that participatory culture spaces like YouTube enable content creators to circulate work and engage audiences directly, bypassing traditional gatekeepers. However, the prevalence of unregulated and pirated content underscores the need for policy interventions, copyright enforcement, and digital literacy among students to maximize the benefits while mitigating negative consequences. The implications, however, suggest that YouTube is shaping both consumption and production patterns in Nollywood, creating opportunities for cultural engagement, awareness of quality, and promotion of independent filmmakers, while simultaneously raising challenges that require strategic industry and regulatory responses.

CONCLUSION

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

The study concludes that YouTube has become a significant platform for Nollywood film consumption among undergraduate students at Heritage Polytechnic, Eket. The findings clearly demonstrated that students frequently engage with the platform, primarily through watching full films and trailers, reflecting the accessibility and popularity of YouTube as a preferred medium for film viewing. The study also showed that students' preference for YouTube is influenced largely by practical considerations such as affordability, ease of access, and the variety of available content, while factors like peer influence and educational purposes play a lesser role. These engagement patterns have important implications for the Nigerian film industry, as YouTube facilitates cultural participation, raises awareness of film quality issues, and provides opportunities for independent film producers, even as it presents challenges such as exposure to pirated or unregulated content. Despite these challenges, the platform has proven to be an effective space for media consumption that aligns with the needs and motivations of young audiences. The research affirms that the impact of YouTube on film viewing is shaped by both technological affordances and user behaviors, highlighting the necessity for filmmakers, regulators, and educators to balance accessibility with quality control. It therefore becomes important for future initiatives to harness the benefits of digital platforms while addressing regulatory, educational, and content-related challenges to ensure sustainable growth of the Nigerian film industry.

Recommendations

1. Film producers and educational institutions should leverage the high engagement of students with YouTube by creating official channels with curated content. This would ensure that students access authentic Nollywood films while promoting structured viewing habits. Universities can also incorporate media literacy programs to encourage critical engagement with online films.
2. To sustain the appeal of YouTube, filmmakers and distributors should prioritize free or low-cost access, maintain a diverse range of content, and enhance ease of navigation on platforms. Additionally, interactive features such as contests, comment sections, and community discussions can encourage active engagement and social interaction, aligning with students' motivational drivers.
3. Policymakers, industry regulators, and content creators should implement measures to curb piracy and regulate unverified uploads on YouTube. Strategies could include copyright enforcement, collaboration with YouTube to flag unauthorized content, and educational campaigns to promote responsible media

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

consumption. Moreover, supporting independent filmmakers through grants and exposure on official channels can strengthen the industry while leveraging the participatory culture of YouTube.

REFERENCES

Adesina, T., & Olanrewaju, S. (2019). Digital engagement among Nigerian undergraduates: Patterns and implications. *Lagos Journal of Media Studies, 5*(2), 45–58.

Aina, I., & Oloruntola, T. (2023). YouTube and Nollywood: Opportunities and challenges for film producers in Nigeria. *Journal of African Media Studies, 15*(1), 23–39.

Afolayan, K. (2022). The democratization of film viewership among Nigerian youths: YouTube as a case study. *Nigerian Journal of Media and Communication Studies, 8*(1), 12–28.

Anaeto, S. G., Onabajo, O. S., & Osifeso, J. B. (2012). *Models and theories of communication*. Maryland: African Renaissance Books.

Arokoyo, T., & Ejechi, J. (2022). YouTube and social influence: University students' media consumption in Nigeria. *International Journal of Communication Research, 14*(3), 87–102.

Baran, S. J. (2013). *Introduction to mass communication: Media literacy and culture* (7th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Burkhart, T. (2018). YouTube marketing strategies: Advantages and limitations. *Digital Media Insights, 10*(2), 55–66.

Burgess, J., & Green, J. (2019). *YouTube: Online video and participatory culture* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Chappuis, P., Duncan, J., & Neruda, J. (2013). Online video consumption patterns and demographics. *Journal of New Media Research, 9*(1), 14–29.

Christensson, P. (2009). YouTube as a platform for content sharing and monetization. *International Journal of Digital Media, 3*(2), 44–53.

Clement, J., & Xu, L. (2020). *Global social media report 2020: Digital media consumption among youth*. Statista Research Reports. https://www.statista.com

Cunningham, S., & Craig, D. (2019). *Social media entertainment: The new intersection of Hollywood and Silicon Valley*. New York, NY: NYU Press.

Cunningham, S., Craig, D., & McElroy, K. (2021). Algorithmic influence on content visibility on YouTube: Implications for audiences and creators. *Media, Culture & Society, 43*(6), 1050–1068. https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437211007120

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

De Jong, M. (2019). Digital video platforms: Benefits, challenges, and marketing potential. *Journal of Digital Marketing, 7*(1), 31–46.

Denzer, L. (2016). iROKOtv and the digital distribution of Nollywood films. *African Film Studies, 8*(2), 45–59.

Dwyer, T. (2016). YouTube and participatory media culture. *Media International Australia, 161*(1), 62–71. https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X1616100110

ET Brand Equity. (2018, June 15). *YouTube India: The world's largest video sharing platform in numbers.* ET Brand Equity. https://brandequity.economictimes.indiatimes.com

Gibson, S. (2015). Online video consumption and viewer behavior. *Journal of Digital Media Studies, 4*(3), 22–35.

Hosch, B. (2020). YouTube and copyright enforcement: Legal implications for creators. *Journal of Media Law, 12*(1), 5–18.

Igwe, C. (2015). Nollywood on digital platforms: Growth and distribution trends. *African Cinema Journal, 7*(1), 88–103.

Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30*(3), 607–610. https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447003000308

Leskin, P. (2019). The rise of YouTube: From startup to Google acquisition. Business Insider. https://www.businessinsider.com

Lobato, R. (2019). *Netflix nations: The geography of digital distribution*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Lobato, R., & Lotz, A. D. (2020). The informal circulation of films on YouTube sometimes undermines national cinema. *Media, Culture & Society, 42*(8), 1199–1215. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443720907981

Madden, M. (2007). *Digital media and youth adoption patterns*. Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org

McQuail, D. (1994). *Mass communication theory: An introduction* (3rd ed.). London, UK: Sage Publications.

Moshin, R. (2021). *YouTube in numbers: Global statistics and trends*. Digital Media Analytics. https://www.digitalmediaanalytics.com

Muyembe, F., & Chavula, H. (2020). University students' online video consumption in sub-Saharan Africa. *African Journal of Communication, 12*(2), 34–51.

Nielsen. (2015). *The digital video consumer: Patterns, trends, and insights*. Nielsen Media Research. https://www.nielsen.com

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Nkgapele, L. (2020). University students' digital media habits in South Africa. *South African Journal of Communication, 16*(3), 101–115.

Nweke, O., & Edegoh, L. (2021). YouTube as a platform for Nollywood film consumption in Nigeria. *Journal of African Media Research, 9*(2), 55–71.

Nwammuo, S., & Uzoechi, C. (2021). Exposure to questionable online video content among Nigerian university students. *International Journal of Media and Cultural Studies, 13*(4), 45–59.

Ogunyombo, O., & Onwubere, B. (2018). Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and its application in media adoption studies. *Nigerian Journal of Communication Research, 6*(1), 20–35.

Reuters. (2006, November 13). Google acquires YouTube for $1.65 billion. Reuters News. https://www.reuters.com

Sharma, A. (2017). Advantages and limitations of YouTube for marketers and educators. *Journal of Digital Communication, 5*(2), 14–26.

Shontell, A. (2013, April 23). YouTube co-founder reflects on the first video ever posted. Business Insider. https://www.businessinsider.com

Smith, C. (2014). YouTube and copyright agreements: A historical overview. *Media Law Journal, 11*(2), 37–50.

Sofar, P. (2015). The YouTube ecosystem: Opportunities and risks for creators. *Journal of Internet Media, 4*(1), 7–19.

Statista. (2023). *Social media usage and peer influence among young adults*. https://www.statista.com

Uzuegbunam, C. (2015). Advances in social media research: Applying uses and gratifications theory. *Journal of Mass Communication, 8*(1), 12–25.

UNICEF. (2021). *Digital safety and online media consumption among youth*. https://www.unicef.org

Westenberg, M. (2020). User motivations and engagement on YouTube: Patterns of consumption. *Journal of Digital Culture, 15*(2), 88–102.

YouTube. (2020, June 11). *Me at the zoo: First YouTube video*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNQXAC9IVRw

YouTube (as cited in Moshin, 2021). *Global YouTube statistics*.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.