

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In our consumption-oriented and mediated society, much of what comes to pass as important is based often on the stories produced and disseminated by media institutions. Much of what audiences know and care about is based on the images, symbols, and narratives in radio, television, film, music, and other media. How individuals construct their social identities, how they come to understand what it means to be male, female, black, white, royal, common –even rural or urban, is shaped by commoditised texts produced by media for audiences (Brooks & Hebert, 2006). Media, in short, are central to what ultimately come to represent our social realities. The way certain groups of people are represented in the media can have a huge social impact on audience. When media producers want the audience to assume certain things about a character, they play on existing representations of such a character. At other times, media producers can change the way certain groups are presented, and thus change the way audience see that particular group. In the present information society, the image of monarchy in the eyes of the public is partly established by the media.

The institution of monarchy is a common phenomenon with states, empires, countries and other similar entities, which makes the institution a universal concept, with a long history. In Nigeria, a traditional ruler is identified as the paramount ruler in any community. Generally, he is recognized by his subjects as the chief custodian of the people's culture and tradition, even though as Whiskey (2004, p. 78) observes "they may not wield political power in Nigeria and only honour the wealthy, the strong and the great, however, so long as men worship social titles, so also will the men (the traditional rulers) who confer these social titles wax strong, be relevant and command loyalty and respect."

Perhaps, due to its resilience, the institution of monarchy is not only appealing to the wealthy that crave the social titles and privileges it confers; the artist and film maker is drawn to the institution to feed his creativity and imagination. Consequent on the foregoing, the manner in which this institution is represented in the media becomes important, being that such representation is critical to how people view and relate to this institution. In other words, representation shapes meaning (discourse) in relation to such institution and as a result, affects its place, functionality, impact and value as a component of the societal dynamics (Hall, 1997; Fairclough, 2003; McQuail, 2010).

Interestingly, monarchy has in recent times become one of the recurring themes in Nollywood productions (Uwah, 2009; Osondu, 2016). As a mode of representation, films have the capacity to make real and legitimate, certain ideas and beliefs through their portrayals, and, in so doing, structure our perception of the social world (Taylor & Willis, 2002). Amobi & Shaibu (2015) write that one unique and empowering feature of film is its ability to mirror society. They stress that, in fact, one of the reasons that the Nigerian movie industry, affectionately called Nollywood, has caught on so well on the continent and among blacks in Diaspora, is because most of the offerings of the industry, in spite of their flaws, have fairly well mirrored the challenges, hopes and aspirations of Nigerians.

The Igbo tribe is one of the three major and popular ethnic groups in Nigeria with the largest group of people living in southern Nigeria in their unique culture. The very fact that the topic of the Igbo monarchy exists so much as part of Igbo common sense makes it an important and worthy area for academic attention; for a culture's common sense represents a heterogeneous body of understandings, knowledge, values and practices into which members of that cultural community have been socialized (Malmood, 2013). When watching Nollywood movies, audience is forced to see characters of monarchy meeting civic dignitaries, performing some cultural and spiritual roles. The way royalty is constructed and portrayed in film thus matters. It is arguably compelling to empirically examine the way monarchy has been constructed in Nollywood films, the patterns, the evolution and the underlying themes.

1.1. Background to the Study

Like most other pre-modern human societies, the traditional societies in the territories later to be amalgamated as Nigeria were largely administered by monarchies. This is with particular reference to societies in the Northern, Western and Niger Delta parts of the country (Adebayo, 2011). The traditional societies of the West were ruled by Obas and there was the famous Oyo Empire ruled by the very powerful Alaafin (Adebayo, 2011; Durojaiye, 2013; Mua'azu, 2015). In the Niger Delta area, there was the Oba of Benin who controlled a famous empire and the Olu of Warri (Adebayo, 2011). The Northern part of Nigeria had traditional monarchs who were eventually replaced by the Islamic Emirs following the Fulani Jihad and the conquest of these parts in the 19th century (Adebayo, 2011; Durojaiye, 2013; Mua'azu, 2015).

For the Igbo ethnic group, however, the situation was quite different as the political administration of the communities before the coming of the Europeans was a collective

responsibility of all heads of individual family units who passed on their decisions to the youths for implementation (Afigbo, 1981; Anyaele, 2011). Onwumechili (2000) equates Igbo traditional governance to the scientific culture, according to him, it recognizes no kings and chiefs with divine knowledge. In Igbo communities, as in science, he says, “promotion is by achievement.” And since everybody has the right to attend and express his views in a scientific seminar, in Igbo village assembly, everybody has the freedom to express his views, and decisions are arrived at by consensus.

However, this is not to say that kingship was totally unknown in Igbo land as there are Igbo communities known to have had monarchies before the colonial contact. Notable among these are the Obi of Onitsha and Eze Aro of Aro communities, the latter being a powerful and territorially ambitious monarch (Afigbo, 1981; Nnadozie, 2014; Okachie, 2016). But a larger proportion of Igbo communities acquired their monarchy as a result of the colonial institution of warrant chiefs; a native governance system intended to serve the administrative convenience of the imperial British power (Nnadozie, 2014).

Today, the monarchy system has come to stay in Igboland. Most, if not all Igbo communities, now have their own kings, who preside over their traditional and cultural affairs. Eke (2009, p. 14) opines that the Igbo king is the product of mere mortals, ordinary human beings. “He was not made by the gods or by spirits, and hence, does not wield absolute powers”. However, Eke’s observation should also apply to other monarchies in the country today as those of them traditionally attributed with spiritual qualities and vested with absolute powers have essentially lost such status following the imposition of the western-style constitutional governance structures that started with colonialism (Afigbo, 1981; Anyaele, 2011; Nnadozie, 2014; Okachie, 2016).

This change in fortune notwithstanding, the monarchy institution in Igboland, like in other Nigerian societies, still occupies an important place as a symbol of cultural heritage and pride, a governing authority on cultural matters, an agency of political power and a driver of social development (Okachie, 2016). Hence, the monarchy institution acts as the custodian of culture when, for instance, the kings exercise their prerogative as officiating heads in the New Yam festival in Igboland. It acts as the traditional governing body when, for example, kings settle disputes, impose sanctions and regulate communal life generally. The institution of monarchy also acts as an agent of political power when, for instance, kings influence political decisions or are invited to offer advice as seen with the Advisory Committee of Chiefs and Elders in the

former Eastern Region. Lastly, it can also act as an agent of social development when, for instance, kings attract government projects to their community, mobilise the people for communal work or otherwise influence developmental initiatives (Okachie, 2016).

In view of this crucial position of the monarchy system in the contemporary Igbo society, the media's role in representing it becomes vital knowing that media representation is a powerful element that shapes social experience (Hall, 1997; McQuail, 2010; Fairclough, 2003). Given the glamour and sensationalism that are usually associated with monarchy, it has become an attractive subject for media producers, generating its discursive dynamics (Lawrenson, 2000; Baldin, 2012). Speaking in relation to the British monarchy, Baldin (2012) opines that the relationship between the royals and the media has always been a delicate one. Ideally it is symbiotic in that the royals need the media for continued projection of their prestige, glory and power while the media, on the other hand, require the royals as an important source of sensational content that typically attracts the audience. However, when this relationship becomes parasitic, according to Baldin (2012), the royals hit out.

The above author also argues that the prestige enjoyed by the monarchy in human societies is not permanent; the allure of the institution can wane over time. In the past, the British monarchy, for instance, retained a fair degree of mystique and was held in much great reverence. The media regarded anything that was embarrassing to the British monarchy as untouchable because of their instinctive respect for rank and authority. But now the media, highly commercialized, have stopped thinking in that manner. For instance, world renowned media proprietor, Rupert Murdoch, was reported to have directed his editors at *The Sun* and *News of the World* to “stop worshipping these people (British royals), stop treating them as gods. They are ordinary human beings and will help sell newspapers.” (Baldin, p.84).

Thus, while monarchy has been highly exploited to boost sales and profits as the media are preoccupied with royal gossip, the decline of royal power and public warmth towards monarchy due to democratic drives seems to have affected this culture. So the monarchy is now the one more in need of the media on whom it relies for public recognition and positive influence to consolidate its shaky position. This type of relationship between the royals and the media, as stated earlier, is symbiotic or what has otherwise been described as a co-dependent relationship, where the royals depend on the media for recognition and the media depend on news about the royals to boost sales (Lawrenson, 2000; Baldin, 2012). Thus, the dynamics of economic interest and consumption enters into the depiction of monarchy in the media; a trend since observed by the Frankfurt School scholars as a fundamental feature of popular culture (Adorno, 1999).

In today's Nigeria, the local film industry, the Nollywood, has emerged as an important agent of representation being that it has become a popular media channel amongst the indigenous audience (Onuzulike, 2009; Omijie, 2015; Osondu, 2016; Ozele, 2016). The emergence of the Nollywood in 1992 following the release of the blockbuster, *Living in Bondage*, has been greeted with enthusiasm by scholars and stakeholders who see it as a monumental opportunity for Nigeria (and by extension Africa) to tell her story by herself as against the "biased" representation by foreign (largely Western) media and books (Okoye, 2008; Nwosu, 2008; Agba, 2002; Nbeta, Ikiroma-Owiye & Somieari 2014). In fact, representation of Africa in mass media and books has been a subject of so much contestation over the years, as African intellectuals accuse the West of capitalising on their privileged grip on modern instruments of representation (films, television, books, etc) to distort her (African) culture and history to suit their racial superiority template (Orizu, 1992; Agba, 2002; Onuzulike, 2009). Ekwenchi (2015), on the other hand, noted that Nigerian film producers have only managed to domesticate, reinforce and legitimate dominant racist images of Africa and African people circulating in western popular culture, in spite of their effort at reversing some stereotypes of the black race.

Ekwuazi (1991) writes that Nollywood is arguably Africa's first mass popular culture phenomenon, enjoying widespread popularity and cultural influence across the continent. Buttressing this point, Ugwushi (2015) submits that:

The emergence of the Nigerian video film industry is a cultural phenomenon and Nigerian movies serve as a representation of Nigerian culture, which has revealed the uniqueness of video films as popular culture that has impacted Nigerian and other African cultures, the viewers and the continent. They can help to better understand our own lives, the lives of those around us and even how our society and culture operate. It has provided a platform for Africans to tell their own stories and it is about the best organized group that has put Nigerian culture beyond our national boundary (p. 97).

However, Nollywood has also, at times, been criticized for what has been described as its tendency to misrepresent the people they purport to tell their story (Asogwa, Onoja & Ojih, 2015; Ojukwu & Ezenandu, 2012; Opeyemi, 2008; Onuzulike, 2009). It is in this regard equally that the film industry has been accused of advertently or inadvertently becoming a source of cultural imperialism as its representations of the indigenous reality seems to at times embody western cultural bias (Omijie, 2015; Uche, 1996).

All this interest about representations in Nollywood is hinged on the fact that the industry has emerged as a dominant site for cultural production; a popular source for the construction of meaning and a powerful creator of memory. Consequently, its representation of any aspect of the people's experience is to be taken seriously (Omijie, 2015; Omenugha, Omenugha & Duru, 2016). Monarchy, as an aspect of the people's cultural experience, also comes under this consideration.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

One of the media's significant functions is the provision of cognitive knowledge through their various contents and representations. This is why scores of studies have been concerned with how the media represent a particular set of people or phenomenon. The media without doubt represent the major channel of image constructions in the mind of the audience. Thus, the images, perceptions and value judgement of the general audience concerning monarchy could, to a large extent, be influenced by the media. This study's focus is based on the increasing popularity and accessibility of the Nigerian movie industry globally with the proliferation of satellite cable television and its multiple channels dedicated to the Nigerian movies. This media channel (film) can be seen as representing the emergent cultural aesthetics that play vital cultural roles as producers express themselves, and their cultures by mapping out their own space of articulation based strictly on their emergent aesthetic principle.

Some scholars (Eze-Orji, 2015; Ndugu, 1996; Ayakoroma, 2011) have condemned and scowled at the film producers who always seem to want to fill in the gap with just anything without considering its sociological impact on the people. A study of the Nigerian home video productions should in no small way make one understand the sum total of being a Nigerian, the people and their cultures. This is why it is pertinent to find out the pattern of Nollywood films construction of the images of Igbo monarchy to her audience for two decades (1996 – 2015) by critically examining the extent to which royalty characterisations, costume, settings and themes are depicted and constructed in Nollywood productions through these two decades. In other words, what are the emerging dominant depictions of Igbo traditional royalty that the home video producers portray for their audience within the 20 years under study? Where do the Nollywood film producers derive their ideas from? There is need to understand the evolution of constructions of Igbo royalty in Nollywood films and ink wells where film makers draw such portrayals from.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the representations of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films over the two decades of 1996 to 2015. More precisely, the study aimed to:

1. Ascertain how Nollywood films have constructed Igbo monarchy from 1996 to 2015
2. Identify qualities portrayed of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films over the period.
3. Determine the evolving themes in Nollywood Igbo monarchy films over the decades.
4. Determine factors that have shaped portrayal of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood.
5. Examine the sources of ideas of Nollywood film producers in their construction of Igbo monarchy.

1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How is Igbo monarchy constructed in Nollywood films from 1996 to 2015?
2. What are the qualities portrayed of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films over the period?
3. What are the evolving themes in Nollywood monarchy movies across the 20 years?
4. What factors have shaped portrayal of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood?
5. What are the sources of ideas of Nollywood film producers in their construction of Igbo monarchy?

1.5. Scope of Study

This study focused on the movie makers' representations of Igbo monarchy in Nigerian movie industry narratives. Investigations were restricted to the following variables: construction of Igbo monarchy in the films; qualities portrayed of the Igbo monarchy over the two decades; evolving themes in the representations and filmmakers sources of ideas.

Due to the available approved film data with National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) that started in 1996; the period of this study began in 1996 and stopped in 2015 to cover a period of 20 years and the data collection and analysis were limited to films released from 1996 to 2015: only 20 films (one per year) were analysed.

1.6. Significance of the Study

There is a wealth of literature showing how mass media, particularly film, has influenced societal life through its contents. To date, most of that literature has examined representations in

films in the form of how film has represented certain people or phenomenon to its audience; most studies were based on stereotypes and themes like gender, race, class, age, religion, and ethnicity among others. The current study in contrast looked at a largely under-explored area of representation – how Nollywood productions have represented the Igbo monarchy to her audience over a period of twenty years; this helped to fill a knowledge gap in the literature and possibly stir scholarly interest in this area.

Most of the studies in literature employed either qualitative or quantitative design but this study uniquely combined and drew data from both quantitative and qualitative designs (content analysis, critical discourse analysis and key informant interview) to examine the progression of Igbo monarchy representations in Nollywood movies and determine various underlying discourses as well as know the film makers' sources of ideas for film productions.

The findings of the study are useful to film producers, directors and scriptwriters who are involved in representation of monarchy and other aspects of the people's culture in films as they serve as a form of feedback to them for self-assessment. Through the study, they could gain useful insights that will possibly help them as they seek to improve their productions, particularly as far as depicting the monarchy aspect of the people's cultural experience is concerned.

Similarly, the audience who watch Nollywood films would find the study beneficial. It could serve in informing and enlightening them regarding the dynamics of representation of culture in these films; a situation that would help them as they negotiate the meanings embodied in these productions.

Finally, this study's findings and recommendations could be the basis for further research into re-building the Nigerian movie industry for greater productions of movies that depict better cultural and social representations.

1.7. Operational Definition of Key Terms

Evolution: This is the process of development or growth of any phenomenon which implies the gradual emerging patterns of Igbo monarchy in Nigerian films.

Home video/Film/Movie: It is pre-recorded media that is rented or sold for home cinema entertainment.

Igbo: It is one of the major tribes in Nigeria who are identified with particular material and immaterial culture. They occupy the Southeast geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Monarchy: It is an institution of governance headed by a king or queen and the royal household in accordance with the custom of the society. Monarchy is most times identified through a crown, which is the traditional symbolic form of headgear worn by a ruler for whom the crown traditionally represents power, authority, victory, honour, and glory. In this study, monarchy and royalty are used interchangeably to convey the same meaning.

Nollywood: This is the popular Nigerian film industry known for its promotion of indigenous culture.

Representation: It is the description, interpretation or depiction of something in a particular way. It refers to the construction in the mass media, of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts.

Royal movies/films: They are pre-recorded media that are rented or sold for home cinema entertainment which are centered on the activities of a traditional ruler or king.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focused on the review of related literature on the topic understudy which includes: overview of media representation, history of film globally and locally, relevance of traditional royalty to the Nigerian society; reviews of related empirical studies; theoretical framework built around the social representation theory and summary of literature. An examination of literature revealed that there was paucity of studies on representations of monarchy in developing countries, especially Nigeria. Studies on representation of monarchy in the media are mostly of the British culture, constraining the literature review to dwelling more on representations of other aspects in the media.

2.1 Media Representation: An Overview

Media representation refers to the construction in any medium of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts. Such representations may be in speech or writing as well as still or moving pictures. The easiest way to understand the concept of representation is to remember that watching a television programme is not the same as watching something happen in real life. All media products re-present the real world to us; they show us one version of reality, not reality itself. So, the theory of representation in media studies means thinking about how a particular person or group of people is being presented to the audience (Gunter, 1995).

The concept of representation has come to occupy a new and important place in the study of culture. It is the way in which the media portray particular groups, communities, experiences, ideas or topics from a particular ideological or value perspective. Representation is a fundamental key factor by which a meaning is produced and shared between members of a culture which involves the use of language, signs, images and most importantly intention to represent things. Representation is a basic need for communication; without representation we would not be able to communicate with one another, as representation is mainly about meaning, which then leads to understanding. Meaning is produced when someone assigns a certain word to an object, the object might have existed before but it did not have a meaning until someone came along and gave it a name. According to Hall (1997), representation is produced by two systems that complete each other to form meaning, the mental representation which includes all objects, people, concepts, and language, which allows us to describe these objects, and people,

and, concepts producing meaning that could be communicated through signs like words, sounds, images and objects. One might interpret representation to mean presenting something which is already there; to “represent” the true meaning of an object in contrast to how it is being represented by the media. Hence media shifts the real meaning or what is already there, so what is given to us is the representation of what is already there. Thus, the truth is inevitably distorted.

Representation draws our attention to the media productions; therefore, film, as a means of communication, with the portrayal of its surrounding events, gives a new world to its audiences; a world that originates from the representation of events. Representation involves not only how identities are represented (or rather constructed) within the text but also how they are constructed in the processes of production and reception. A key concern in the study of representation is with the way in which representations are made to seem ‘natural’.

It is important to note the distinction between representation and reflection. Reflection implies that there is a direct correlation between phenomena in the "real world" and their application in texts. Representations however, indicate that some kind of modulation or interpretative process is involved in re-presentation; hence some manipulation or transference becomes inevitable. Perception therefore plays a key role in reflection.

It is now widely acknowledged that the media are not a simple mirror of society, reflecting ‘the world out there.’ If this were so, journalists would simply need to point their camera or recorder in a random direction and let it roll. Rather, active decisions are taken at every stage of the process of producing and transmitting media material, regarding what should be included and what should be omitted, and how and when the content should be presented. It can therefore be argued that the media have the potential to play an active part in shaping and framing our perception of the world, and indeed in affecting the nature of that world.

All texts, however realistic they may seem to be, are constructed representations rather than simply transparent reflections, recordings, transcriptions or reproductions of a pre-existing reality. However, representations which become familiar through constant re-use come to feel natural and unmediated. Representations require interpretation (Nichols, 1981).

2.2 Film: A Global Historical Perspective

Dirks (2016), records that the history of film reaches as far back as ancient Greek theatre and dance, which had many of the same elements of today's film world. The commercial, public screening of ten of *Lumiere brothers*, short film in Paris on December 25, 1895 can be regarded as the breakthrough of projected cinematographic motion pictures. The first decade of motion picture saw film moving from a novelty to an established large-scale entertainment industry. The films became several minutes long consisting of several shots. Special effects were introduced and film continuity, involving action moving from one sequence into another, began to be used. In the 1900s, continuity of action across successive shots was achieved and the first close-up shot was introduced. Most films of this period were what came to be called "chase films". The first use of animation in movies was in 1899. The first feature length multi-reel film was a 1906 Australian production. The first successful permanent theatre showing only films was "The Nickelodeon" in Pittsburgh in 1905. By 1910, actors began to receive screen credit for their roles, and the way to the creation of film stars was opened. Regular newsreels were exhibited from 1910 and they soon became a popular way for finding out the news. Overall, from about 1910, American films had the largest share of the market in Australia and in all European countries except France. The first film studio was built in 1911 in the Hollywood area of Los Angeles, United States of America.

2.2.1 Film in Nigeria

Ekenyerengozi (2014) asserts that the earliest feature film made in Nigeria is the 1926's *Palaver* produced by Geoffrey Barkas; the film was also the first film ever to feature Nigerian actors in a speaking role. As at 1954, mobile cinema vans were used to play to at least 3.5 million people in Nigeria, and films being produced by the Nigerian Film Unit were screened for free at the 44 available cinemas. The first film entirely copyrighted to the Nigerian Film unit is *Fincho* (1957) by Sam Zebba; this is also the first Nigerian film to be shot in colour.

After Nigeria's independence in 1960, the cinema business rapidly expanded, with new cinema houses established. As a result, Nigerian content in theatres increased in the late 1960s into the 1970s, especially productions from Western Nigeria, owing to former theatre practitioners such as Hubert Ogunde and Moses Olaiya transitioning into the big screen. In 1972, the Indigenization Decree was issued by Yakubu Gowon, which demanded the transfer of ownership of about a total of 300 film theatres from their foreign owners to Nigerians. This resulted in more Nigerians playing active roles in the cinema and film. The oil boom of 1973 through 1978 also

contributed immensely to the spontaneous boost of the cinema culture in Nigeria, as the increased purchasing power in Nigeria made a wide range of citizens to have disposable income to spend on cinema going and on home television sets (Adegbola, 2011).

Obiaya (2015) narrated that after the decline of the Golden era, Nigerian film industry experienced a second major boom in the 1990s, marked by the release of the direct-to-video film *Living in Bondage* (1992); the industry peaked in the mid 2000s to become the second largest film industry in the world in terms of the number of annual film productions, placing it ahead of the United States and behind only India. They started dominating screens across the African continent and by extension, the Caribbean's and the Diaspora, with the movies significantly influencing cultures, and the film actors becoming household names across the continent.

The Economist (2010) noted that as at 2004, at least four to five films were produced every day in Nigeria. At the peak of the video era at around 2008, the industry had become the second largest producer of films (Vourlias, 2014), releasing approximately 200 video films monthly. Moreover, there has also been the production of Nigerian video films in other Nigerian languages such as Efik, Ijaw and Itshekiri. Nigerian movies now already dominate television screens across the African continent and by extension, the Diaspora. The movies significantly influence cultures in many African nations; from way of dressing to speech and usage of Nigerian slangs. Also, the film actors became household names across the continent (Onikeku, 2012). This was attributed to the fact that Nigerian films told "relatable" stories, which made foreign films to "gather dusts" on the shelves of video stores, even though they cost much less.

In his article, 'Reflections on Nigerian Video Films', Emmanuel (2010) identified the following as the dominant themes of Nigerian video films: religion\hallelujah, cultural values and traditions versus modernity, tradition/leadership, modernization\upward social mobility, materialism, everyday life, regional orientation, folklore and folk tales, violent crime, sexism, love, occultism, stereotypes, melodrama and propaganda.

2.2.2 The Growth of Nollywood Films over the Past Decades

In 1992, the release of the classic *Living in Bondage* kicked off a new era in the Nigerian film industry. This era produced movies that are still referred to as classics like "Violated," "Silent Night," "Domitila," "Nneka The Pretty Serpent," "Hostages," "Blood Money," "Out of Bounds" and more.. It produced actors that were and are still household names in Nigeria like Genevieve

Nnaji, Uche Jombo, Eucharia Anunobi, Tony Umez, Saint Obi, Ramsey Nouah, Rita Dominic, Kate Henshaw, Emeka Ike, Stephanie Linus, Chidi Mokeme, Liz Benson, Pete Edochie, Kenneth Okonkwo, Kanayo O Kanayo, Richard Mofe Damijo, Omotola Jalade-Ekeinde, Bob Manuel Udokwu, Funke Akindele, Bimbo Akintola, Joke Silva, Francis Duru, Jim Iyke, Grace Amah, Desmond Elliot among others.. In the 90s, the Nigerian cinema culture faced a major decline as the home video market boomed. Alaba Market became a vital commercial domain - becoming the hub of video distribution, and finally, the center of piracy in Nigeria.

In 2004, a new cinema era began with the launch of a series of modern Cinema houses by the Silverbird Group. The first New wave film to be shown at a modern cinema was Kunle Afolayan's 2006 "Irapada", which screened at the Silverbird Galleria in Lagos. Ever since then, high and small budget movies like "Ije," "Suru L'ere," "The Figurine," "The CEO," "93 Days," "Half of a Yellow Sun," "The Meeting," "October 1," "The Arbitration" have screened at various cinemas in Nigeria. Since the launch of Silverbird cinemas, new cinemas like Ozone, Viva, Filmhouse and Genesis Deluxe have been launched and are playing important roles in the evolution of the Nigerian film industry. In the 2000s, the industry started witnessing the arrival of new actors including Nse Ikpe-Etim, Majid Micheal, Yvonne Nelson, Susan Peters, Ini Edo, Mike Ezuruonye, Toyin Aimakhu, Mercy Johnson, Chika Ike, Chioma Chukwuka, Queen Nwokoye, Omoni Oboli among others.

Currently in the 2010s, the Nigerian film industry has grown and seen the arrival of a new set of actors including Adesua Etomi, Chacha Eke, Kiki Omeili, OC Ukeje, Blossom Chukwujekwu, Somkele Idhalama, Beverly Naya, Daniel K. Daniel, Deyemi Okanlawon, Linda Ejiofor, Bayray McNwizu, Kunle Remi, Okey Uzoeshi, Uzor Osimkpa, Tomi Odunsi, Osas Ighodaro, Rahama Sadau, Kemi Lala Akindoju among others. In recent years, the Nigerian film industry has gone from being just 'Nollywood' to being divided along regional, and ethnic lines, thus, the distinct film industries like Kannywood, Callywood and the Yoruba film industry. Through the years of the industry's evolution, segregatory terms such as "New Nollywood/cinema movies," "Asaba movies/actors" and "Old Nollywood" became popular. One major difference between the 'Asaba' and 'New Nollywood' movies is the art. Most cinema movies have the perfect blending of cinematic style, technicality, beauty, and storytelling like *Deadly Price*, *Ladies Runs*, *Last Flight to Abuja*, *30 Days in Atlanta*, *October 1*, *Ije*, *Women on Strike*, *Road to Yesterday* among others.

However, the cinema is considered a luxury, thus their availability to the mass audience is limited. Due to the limited availability of these cinema productions, the popularity of “Asaba movies” is constantly on the rise, and readily available for mass consumption, and at a cheaper rate.

Presently, the advances in sound technology, storytelling, and technological special effects are proofs that Nollywood has grown (Izuzu, 2017). The current era has seen the success of various genres including horror, comedy, action, thriller and romantic drama. From conventional movie plots, the Nigerian film industry has moved on to experimental and innovative films. The industry has become more profitable with movies like *The Wedding Party* grossing over 405 million naira in just two months, and *A Trip to Jamaica* earning a Guinness Book of World Record spot for its box office success. Over the years, web platforms like iRoko TV, iBaka TV and CixTV that provide paid-for Nigerian films on-demand have become affordable. Pay TV entertainment platforms like Africa Magic have also invested in the Nigerian film industry, creating shows and award platforms that further project the industry in a good light.

2.2.3 Nollywood: Benefits and Shortcomings

Today, video film production is a multi-billion naira industry which provides a source of livelihood for many people both at home and abroad. The industry has also produced many “stars” as well as its own international events. Initially, when the video film came into existence some actors were not well remunerated but currently the appearances of actors like Pete Edochie, Fathia Balogun, Liz Benson, Omotola Jalade- Ekeinde, Racheal Oniga, Bukky Wright, Nkem Owoh, Ramsey Nouah, Desmond Elliott, Genevieve Nnaji, Kayode Fash-Lanso, Patience Ozokwo and others in a video film guarantees good box office success.

Nollywood films have attracted consumers within and outside Nigeria and are hugely entertaining for Africans, (Uwah, 2010). One of the reasons Nollywood films are successful is the construction of contemporary African identities. Uwah (2008) attributes this to the Nollywood aesthetic which, he explains, has the following elements: emphasis on cultural identities, the use of symbols of ‘memorability’, portrayal of the vastness of nature, the presentation of persons as one with the environment, the premise of unity and connectedness of the inanimate, the animate and spiritual world, and the assumed communalistic nature of human existence.

In his work on Nollywood and post-colonial pan-Africanism, Uwah (2011) argues that Nollywood films present a filmic system of representation close to Africa's perception of existential realities. He argues further:

The films provide the audience with different views of their identity construction. The portrayals of the people's cultures not only connect them to richer meanings and larger forces operating but also continental and ecological symbiosis towards realizing the ideological mission creating the vision of pan-Africanism" (p. 113).

Video films have transformed how contemporary African film-makers tell their stories. These film-makers use video films as a 'secondary orality' to represent evolving African environments. Secondary orality, coined by Ong (1982), is "essentially... voice-centered productions of communication enabled by technologies based in literacy" (Lambke, 2012, p.209). Basically, Nollywood video film "stories are deeply rooted in Nigerian cultural traditions and social texts that focus on Nigerian community life, the stories are told using African idioms, proverbs, costumes, artifacts, cultural display, and the imagery of Africa" (Onuzulike, 2007, p. 233). Although, Nollywood showcases Nigerian and African environments (McCall 2004; Okome 2007; Omoera 2009; Alamu 2010), recently it has been incorporating and emulating western culture in its productions (Abah 2008).

Some of the benefits of Nollywood are that it provides a platform for Africans to tell their own stories, and it makes employment options available to many individuals. Nollywood also creates avenues for minorities and the voices of non-dominant ideologies to be heard, in part, because it is not uniformly constructed or influenced by corporations. As a by-product for Africans, Nollywood serves as a source of cultural preservation.

On the other hand of this relevance, Nollywood continues to depict some stereotypes that were originally formulated and perpetuated by the West. Even, Jeyifo (2013) flaws the Nigerian home video on the basis that it leads the rest of the world in how cheaply, how quickly and how effortlessly films are produced and released; that the creative depth of the productions has predictable story line, and petty domestic issues and rituals. In spite of these flaws, Nigerian home video still receive rapid acceptance by the public (Gauteng, 2008). Keeping the Nigerian audience in mind, video film has been selected as the most appropriate medium to study Igbo royalty representations as it goes across the literacy level and encompasses all sections of the Nigerian population.

2.2.4. Film Genre in Nollywood

In Nigeria, films are classified along the traditional line of genres categorization, namely, tragedy and comedy; but more recently, films with stories that transcend these core or basic differentiations are emerging on the Nigerian film landscape. Adenugba (2008) identifies the following genres in Nigerian film industry:

The Ritual Film

Ritual films are about the infliction of bodily harm and physical and spiritual attacks on persons for the purpose of demonic, diabolical and spiritual sacrifices often for money, material wealth or power. Ritual films can be described as the Nigerian horror films. Notable ritual films include *Rituals*, *Witches*, *Domitilla*, *Alase Aaye*, *Final Year I & II*, *One Chance*, *Abuja Big Girls III*, *Living in Bondage*, *Okija* amongst others. The ritual films seek to capture the activities of ritualists, the experience of victims and try to demystify these very mysterious, diabolic and secretive activities.

The Romance Film

These are stories of love usually featuring a man and woman who face obstacles before they could be together or openly declare their affection for each other. Some popular examples in this genre include *Not with my daughter*, *Vendetta*, *Two worlds*, *Against All Odds*, *Nkem*, *Keeping Faith*, *Romantic Attraction*, *Love You Forever*, *Ayo Ni Mo Fe*, *Hostages*, *Because of You* amongst others.

The Comedy Film

This comprises of a genre of film that is packaged to evoke laughter in the audience. According to Dirks (2012), comedies are light hearted drama crafted to amuse, entertain and provide enjoyment. The comedy genre humorously exaggerates the situation, the action and characters. Comedies deal with stories of human travail and strife which ends happily. Some comedies are simply made up of exaggerated and overblown actions while others deal with real life issues but generate laughter from it.

The Action/Gangster Film

The genre encompasses films that revolve around a gang of robbers, a drug syndicate or a human trafficking squad; these films either tell the story of the members of the gang, usually the leader,

or a law enforcement officer on the trail of the group . Action films are drama driven by intense action, physical combat, fighting, car chases, gun shootouts etc. The action/gangster film genre is adapted from the Chinese Kung Fu genre and the Hollywood “Action” genre. Notable action movies produced in Nigeria include *RattleSnake I, II & III, Silent Night I & II, Ole, OwoBlow I, II & III, The Bandits, Issakaba I, II and III* etc.

The Epic/Adventure Film

The Nollywood epic/adventure films involve stories in traditional locales and ethnic situations. It also expresses cultural experiences. The adventure films are packaged to present energetic and action filled experiences for the film spectators. Adventure films deals with love, conquests, travels and are often spiced with magic and fantasy. A good number of the adventure/epic films produced deal with popular legends, myths, folklore and common lore. Common examples include *Igodo, Oduduwa, Basorun Gaa, Amazoni* etc. Adventure films are often concerned with situations that confront a hero who is patriotic and courageous and who engages in altruistic fighting to defend his beliefs, rights or those of persons who cannot defend themselves.

The Cultural Film

Cultural films are synonymous with historical films in that many of them deal with historical phenomenon. Cultural films are produced along the three main ethnic groups – Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa; there are Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa cultural films. They are majorly concerned with cultural promulgation. They seek to promote the culture, language and way of life and experience of the people. Examples include *Basorun Gaa, Afonja, Sango* etc.

The Fantasy/Intrigue Film

The intrigue and fantasy films deals with speculative fiction outside the realm of reality such as ghosts, witches, wizards, and the stories are often diabolical in nature. The belief of society in witchcraft, wizardry, occultism, the existence of God and the supernatural is one of the factors aiding the success of the genre. The fantasy /intrigue film tends to progress from the unknown to the known by discovering and solving a series of clues. They often feature illusionary or imagery locales - hell, heaven, witchcraft coven etc.

Royal Film Genre

This film genre deals with stories revolving around the traditional royal family that include the king, queen, prince, princess, chief priest, royal guards and maids. It does feature colourful

traditional costumes, the supreme position of royalty and the relevance of cultural beliefs and tradition. Examples of these movies include *Iyore*, *Royal love*, *Blind king*, *Oba Ana* etc.

Evangelical Genre

This deals with plots in which the solution to the dilemma being faced by the protagonist is occasioned by the intervention of a higher celestial power usually “Christian” in nature such as angels, a pastor, prayer power etc. Oftentimes, evangelical films feature the triumph of good over evil. It involves the turning around for good of evil/bad circumstances. The evangelical genre also covers all films made about Christianity, the Christian faith, experiences of Christians in their quest for salvation and solutions to their different problems etc. Examples of these movies include *Agbara Nla* (the Ultimate Power), *The Wounded Heart*, *The Attack from Home*, *When God Says Yes* amongst others.

City Girl Genre

The city girl films feature ladies who engage in prostitution or some form of “Aristorism” either as a pimp or an operator; some are often forced into the trade by circumstances beyond their control such as poverty, homelessness, others are lured into it unsuspectingly by those who they love and respect, such as husbands, boyfriends, brothers, mothers, fathers, uncles and/or trusted relations; still others get into the trade as a result of greed for gain, laziness to work or as a result of contracting HIV/AIDS. Successful films in the genre include *Domitilla*, *Onome I and II*, *Computer Girls*, *Abuja Big Girls*, *City Angels*, *Basirat Baseje* etc.

2.3 Monarchy and its Relevance to Nigerian Society

Monarchy throughout the world has always been fortified by a protocol of symbolism and etiquette meant to distinguish the ruler from the ruled: the golden crown, the ornate throne, velvet and fur, exotic people (including pets), gold jewelry and precious stones.

According to Oloko (1976), traditional royalty institution during the pre-colonial era was quite simple, as it was organized to manage affairs, resolve tension and administer justice in the society. Also, the institution was controlled by certain unwritten laws which ensure the security of the institution.

In the colonial era, the British system of colonial administration employed the system of indirect rule. Indirect rule was a British system of ruling colonies with the use of local chiefs or other

approved intermediaries and traditional laws and customs with British officials merely supervising the administration. Indirect rule used the existing traditional system of administration and it recognized the status of traditional rulers who served as the “priest of indirect rule” (Abdullahi, 2007). The advent of colonial rule ushered in a transformation in the role of traditional rulers. This change was necessitated by the desire to realize the objectives of colonialism, which were to exploit the natural resources of Nigeria to meet the industrial needs of the capitalist metro poles. Traditional rulers were therefore used to serve these objectives.

In spite of the subordination to the British overlords, it could be argued that, the powers of traditional rulers were not eroded. Rather, the positions of rulers were strengthened.

The role and status of traditional rulers in post independent Nigeria varies though with different administrations, Nwankwo (1992) stated that chiefs are custodians of the land and they hold the land in trust for the people. They serve as a link between the rural people and the government. They assist the government in political education and socialization of the rural people. They act as the custodians of the traditional religion, arts and culture of the people. They explain the customs and try to preserve it.

Following the abolition of the monarchy in 1963, the regional monarchs were stripped of all their constitutional powers. But far from fading into obscurity, they mostly remain popular leaders and are held in great regard by their hundreds of thousands of loyal subjects, as well as being closer to the people than the governors.

As Economic Commission for Africa Study (2011) notes, chiefs often operate as custodians of customary law and communal assets, especially land. They dispense justice, resolve conflicts and enforce contracts. They also serve as guardians and symbols of cultural values and practices. At the 2011 international conference on chieftaincy in Africa, held in Niger Republic, there were numerous reports from African countries such as Nigeria and South Africa as well as Ghana about the development role of chiefs – mobilizing their people for the execution of development projects, sensitizing them to health hazards, promoting education, preaching discipline, encouraging various economic enterprises, inspiring respect for the law and urging the people to participate in the electoral process. Most of these efforts are done without formal recognition or financial support from the government.

Despite the spirited denial of formal political roles to traditional rulers in the four most recent constitutions, traditional rulers continue to exercise enormous power and influence over the lives and well-being of millions of Nigerians. As Vaughan (1991, p. 308) has rightly pointed out, the apparent limitation of modern state structures at the grassroots has inevitably enhanced the status of paramount chiefs as important actors in a loosely defined ruling coalition at the federal, state and local government levels.

Lawal (1989, p.83) observes that “even as the federal and state governments try to diminish the political significance of traditional leaders, they nevertheless continue to rely on them as the link to the people in the rural areas.” Thus, ironically, the traditional institutions are still the most effective channel by which the federal and state governments reach the people in the rural areas. Traditional political institutions in most cases are held in high esteem; there is still a great deal of reservoir of goodwill for the institution in the minds of many Nigerians. They are quite accessible to ordinary people. They are more relevant to the daily lives of most Nigerians, particularly those in the rural areas. As a result of their closeness to the people, federal, state and local governments use them as conduits for disseminating government views and for the mobilization of the citizenry.

Agbese (2004) states that wealthy, powerful and well-known Nigerians continue to show considerable interest in traditional rulership by actively contesting to sit on the thrones. In recent years, the list of victorious candidates reads like a who-is-who of Nigeria: Ibrahim Dasuki as Sultan of Sokoto, Oladele Olashore as the Oba of Iloko in Ijeshaland, Omo n’Oba Erediauwa, the late Oba of Benin, to name just a few. Some Nigerians even place traditional rulership on a higher pedestal than state governorship or some other leadership position within the top hierarchies of the Nigerian state.

Oladesu (2013) postulates that what has fuelled the clamour for constitutional roles for monarchs is the rise of elite traditional rulers endowed with intellect, professional acumen and track record of performance in public and private sectors. Although education or high literacy is not a criterion for mounting the throne, there is no village, town or city in the country that would make an illiterate its traditional ruler today. Indeed, many traditional rulers have reached the highest pinnacle of their professions before ascending the thrones of their forefathers. For example, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Okunade Sijuwade, was an accomplished company executive and successful industrialist. The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Saa’d Abubakar, is a retired Brigadier-General. The

Emir of Ilorin, Alhaji Kolapo Gambari, is a retired Court of Appeal Judge. The Olowo-Eko of Lagos, Oba Rilwan Akiolu is a retired Police Assistant Inspector-General. The Asagba of Asaba, Edozie, is a retired Professor of Economics. The King of Brass, Diете Spiff, is a retired Army General and former governor of Rivers State. The Obi of Onitsha, Igwe Achebe, retired from the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation. The Igwe of Igbakwu, Professor Onuora Nwuneli is a retired erudite academia of mass communication and a former staff and consultant of the United Nations.

Both the federal and state governments emphasize the importance of traditional leaders by appointing some of them to prominent roles such as chancellorships of federal and state universities. For example, the Emir of Zaria, Emir of Kano, Obi of Onitsha, are chancellors of various universities. In addition, some of the traditional rulers were appointed as special emissaries of various military governments to help explain government's stance on various issues to Nigerians both at home and abroad.

The counsel and direct interventions of traditional leaders are frequently sought by federal and state governments in periods of national or local political crises. As Lawal (1989, p. 83) has rightly noted:

Whenever the policy-makers are overwhelmed by a sense of inadequacy in carrying the masses with them in their programs and dread the consequences of failure, the assistance of traditional rulers is usually sought . . . In April 1993 when the failed economic policy of the Babangida regime was exacting a heavy toll on many Nigerians, Ernest Shonekan, the head of the Transitional Government, called an ad hoc meeting of traditional rulers. He met with all the chairmen of the states councils of chiefs. During the crisis triggered by the annulment of the June 1993 presidential election, traditional rulers in Lagos, Kano and other major metropolitan areas helped to prevent the total break-down of law and order. Similarly, in the wake of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other members of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) in November 1995, the federal government hurriedly set up a National Committee of Leaders of Thought and Traditional Rulers as a response to the national and international condemnation of the execution.

Oloko (1976) maintained that the traditional rulers were responsible for nation building task such as the maintenance of the main road linking their areas, the supply of man-power for the

kingdom's army, the upkeep of the royal capital and collection of taxes and tributes due at various times. In the socio-cultural aspect, he continued that in their role as the patrons of the creative and expressive arts of their people, traditional rulers took active steps to encourage the work of talented African carvers, sculptors, potters and so on. Miles (2007) opined that traditional rulers have served as important adjuncts in the administration of post-colonial governments in both Nigeria and Africa.

Nwankwo (1992) identifies some relevant roles played by traditional rulers in Nigeria during pre-colonial, colonial and, even, modern times. He states that traditional rulers perform amongst others the role of making or contributing to law making and judgment, adjudication in disputes in their communities. They also maintain peace, order and security. Traditional rulers of modern times perform vital roles in their domain like embarking on awareness campaign or the sensitization of their community populace on HIV/AIDS epidemic, the construction of classroom blocks and providing learning materials in school to help develop education system, provision of medical facilities and the building of the community health centre.

Traditional rulers have succeeded in boosting community development through the provision of boreholes, rural roads, formation of co-operative societies, setting up of markets, construction of culverts, construction of earth dams, mobilizing people for health programmes and resolving disputes within their domains. This reveals precisely that traditional rulers are the major agents in transforming the attitude of the rural people provided they are answerable to a titled ruler vested with the authority of governing the affairs of the people.

2.3.1 Igbo Monarchy

Okodili (2014) describes kingship in Igbo land as a sacred and highly revered institution. Its awe-inspiring mysteries, myths, glamour and royalty have been major preoccupation among historians and experts in mores of the land. It is essentially a unifying factor and custodian of the people's norms, beliefs and cultural heritage. Being a highly respected institution, a king's life, in principle and practice, is significantly free from any form of blame. She noted thus:

Kingship is almost mystic in Igbo land. For instance, a king is seen as a representative of the gods and is restricted by norms and traditions of the people from doing certain things, of which he must diligently observe. In the past, a king cannot be seen beyond his palace. This, however, had to be reviewed to allow the king the luxury of carrying out his wider responsibilities, which cannot

satisfactorily be done within the confines of the palace. It is also a tradition in Igbo land that before a person aspires to become a king, his father must have been dead, for the simple reason that a king must not be subjected to the control of any person. He must be of impeccable character and free from all charges such as robbery, covetousness, indebtedness and drunkenness, among other crummy lifestyles. (p. 122)

Scholars generally believe that Igbo kingship institutions originated from three sources. The first source is indigenous and ancient priesthood, which traditionally combined clerical and political duties in the village-based republics. The second source is the colonial imposition on Igbo communities by the neighboring Benin Empire. There is, however, an opposite view wherein the Eze of Nri imposed or influenced the constitution of the Benin Oba's status. The third source of origin of Igbo kingship is believed to be 19th and 20th century colonial impositions by the British Empire. Under an indirect rule policy, Warrant chiefs (recognized noblemen who served as tax collectors) were created by the colonial administration. Though native to the communities, the Warrant Chiefs were usually selected from among those most cooperative with the foreign rulers (Eke, 2009).

The king in Igbo land embodies all virtues and the people see him as a symbol of purity. This is outwardly confirmed by the fact that kings in Igbo land always wear white regalia. Eke (2009) notes that there are certain modes of behaviour which are characteristic of kings in Igbo land. For example, the king's mouth cannot be seen while he is eating; neither does he eat in public places. He is regarded as a representative of the ancestors, who is above human errors and as such, is seen as an embodiment of truth and justice. Apart from being a secular ruler, the king is also imbued with spiritual powers and authority. He is the High Priest, and therefore at the head of all traditional religious functions in the community. The priestly duties of the king start in the early hours of the morning when the royal gong is sounded. He wakes and offers sacrifice to the gods on behalf of the people. After this, he retires to the palace to discharge his duties and receive homage from his subjects (Afigbo, 1986).

Okodili (2014) recalls that in the yesteryears, the royal household is usually served by three servants known as *Ngbaloto Eze* meaning the naked servants. They are responsible for the king's needs and must be naked while attending to him. They are usually very young boys who are considered virgins. Their heads are uniquely shaved in a traditional manner. One serves as the

king's interpreter while the other two are always in attendance during an audience; standing at both sides of the king bearing the royal sword.

The wives and children of the king live apart from him. While he can see the children at all times; he can only see the wives only during the day. The king can marry as many wives as he desires, and cannot be asked to pay bride price for his would-be wife, though his in-laws are accorded great respect throughout the kingdom. They are also secluded from the public and are restricted to their royal quarters, but friends and relations can pay visits to them. Male visitors can only see them during the day with the permission of the king and guided by one of the palace guards.

In most communities, the kingship stool is rotational among royal families who take turns to produce the kings. But the age-long practice has often led to prolonged litigations that had torn most communities apart. In the past, potential contenders to any throne were brought before the Chief Priest who consults the gods to know the best person to be crowned king and the outcome is accepted by all without complaint for fear of the anger of the gods.

In keeping with the tradition of secrecy that surrounds the affairs of the king, his illness and eventual death is kept secret from the public for a long time to allow the performance of all traditional rituals that precedes his burial to be performed. The news of the king's death is broken to his subjects in a metaphor-laden linguistic expression such as *igwe ejiri* or *igwe ejiele*, meaning the steel or iron is broken. The Igwe's second in command, the *Onowu* or traditional Prime Minister immediately assumes the office of the late king as a regent until a new king is appointed. But with the advent of civilisation, Okodili notes that the concept of kingship in Igbo land has changed:

In our day, it is no longer the revered institution it used to be. Gone are the solemnity, sacredness and royalty of the throne. The process of selecting a king now is manipulated by politicians who can also depose any king at will. There are also more reported cases of kingship tussle resulting from faulty selection processes than it used to be when the procedure was guided by established norms and traditions.

Kings have also abandoned their hallowed palaces to hobnob with politicians thereby desecrating the traditional institution. With more political roles trusted to kings, the original role of providing leadership at the community level has been

abandoned, resulting in increased impunity among the people. For instance, in Imo State, traditional rulers are no more restricted to their palaces from where they administer their kingdoms but are now given a new role that warrants them to participate in the day-to-day running of the government. Their new role, encapsulated under the newly created Traditional Parliament of Imo State has given the monarchs the opportunity to collaborate with the government and the people in the process of development and improving the well-being of their subjects. Today once a man makes enough money, he returns home to buy the traditional throne of his people, even though he was an ex-convict, who has questionable means of livelihood. This has cost the confidence of the people on the traditional institution. It was a taboo to see kings indicted in serious crimes such as robbery and kidnapping. In the past, kings were men of impeccable characters (Okodili, 2014, p.38)

Based on the above importance of Igbo traditional rulers to Nigerian society and the description given to traditional institution, the researcher finds it pertinent to examine the way Nigerian home videos represent this class of people who belong to the traditional royalty, since it is clear that the way they are presented to the public has a way of influencing the way the public perceives them.

2.4 Portrayals in Nollywood Movies

Nigerian movie industry no doubt has contributed in no small measure to the socio-economic gains of the country, yet, it is also replete with negative tendencies. Starting with the box-office hit, *Living in Bondage*, Nollywood has projected Nigeria and the Igbo in particular as a ritualistic society, where sacrifices involving human beings are perpetrated per second billing.

Most of the Igbo video films take all the time to glamorize evil and unethical behaviours like prostitution, sexual vulgarity and bawdiness, armed robbery, money laundering, money ritual, occultism, scammers, internet fraudsters, 419ners, etc. all these themes run through the whole length of the film, consuming about 85minutes of the 90minutes duration of the film. At the end, a paltry five minutes is used to right the wrongs that spanned through the whole film, just to fulfil the Aristotelian concept of good triumphing over evil. With such films, the aspiration and desire of the audience to come to terms with their culture and life style must have been dashed by the incessant show of all forms of amoral life style and conduct replete in the films.

The thematic pre-occupation of most, if not all, Igbo films in the words of Ekwuazi (2005, p.55) “has succeeded in branding Nigeria as a country of occultists, swindlers, drug barons and go-go girls”.

Eze-Orji (2015, p.33) stresses that:

themes from rituals through the portrayal of sudden possession of wealth, sorcery and the portrayal of magic and witchcraft, voodoo and the extent to which the oracles kill, and armed robbery has been recycled more than any other theme in Igbo film culture. This has necessitated some critical approach to why creativity has nosedived in the film industry and quest for monetary returns elevated beyond imagination. The themes, the high imaginative intensity and ability to communicate at a level that immediately holds emotions and captures interest is a reflection of how good these movie makers have become in false fabrication of Igbo cultural reality and how conversely lies can easily be peddled and disseminated for the unsuspecting and gullible viewers to believe what they see (visual reality different from the cultural reality).

Some scholars have however criticized what they see as the 'rape' of Nigerian culture in these home videos. Ndugu (1996, p. 56) voices her concern about the high level of misrepresentation of Nigerian culture by home movies when she writes that “the misrepresentations of these cultural values deal a big blow on the people, whose culture is misrepresented and might lead to a wide range of societal trends and individual effects, including the distortion of reality, violence and stereotyping.” Ndugu therefore advocates that makers of home movies should not freely wield their creative ingenuity, but bear in mind that the films they produce are at the detriment of our country’s image and therefore should expunge some cultural aberrations in the home movies. However, the Nigerian home movies have also in form and content at several points tilted towards the reproduction of some foreign cultural values as opposed to the set out goals, which, as earlier stated, are the creation and provision of a local expression of the Nigerian society.

This clearly can be seen as the effect of the hegemonic nature of the dominant culture (western culture). This dominance is no more a forced one but one by consent. The Nigerian movies practitioners have in their production of arts yielded to the subtle manipulation of hegemony. Nigerian home videos themes should be broad and diverse including not only entertainment films or contents reflecting and promoting some of the Nigerian government policies but also

movies that are educative and portray Nigerian culture, while others could also be in form of documentaries, showing the history of Nigerian society, the culture as well as how it has evolved. An example of such documentary movies is *Towards a metaphysics*, produced in 2010. But unfortunately, the most common themes evident in the majority of Nigerian movies include; violence, which umbrellas cultism, murder, rape, aggressive fights, etc, and romance, which covers sex, nudity and vulgarity or the use of strong language, etc. Another common theme is that of rituals and the use of traditional medicine.

Most of these are evidently negative themes and are therefore malevolent to the development of the personality and behaviour of its audience members in our contemporary society. This becomes the fear of Ayakoroma (2011, p. 44) that “the dominant focus of these films and video on witchcraft, violence, corruption, cultism, crime, sex scenes and fetish practices may encourage negative stereotypes about Nigerians and indeed, Africans”. Utoh –Ezeajugh (2008, p. 71) makes a relevant point when she bemoans some negative scenes in home movies including: sex scenes, nudity, obscenity, vulgar language, indecent dresses, killings, murder, rape, beating up women, smoking, molestation and harassment. According to her, these are self-injurious in nature, and likely have socio-cultural implication on the country and may affect its national development.

Okorie (2015) in a paper projected the hegemonic activities of home movie practitioners in the business of film making. She stressed that Nollywood has not really succeeded in portraying the culture and image of Nigeria as a result of local hegemony on the side of the practitioners who are more concerned with enriching their pockets, relegating to the background the cultural implication of such representation. Her findings showed that though Nigerian culture is being promoted, there are still mounting challenges as the image of Nigeria is being represented positively and at the same time, negatively. The problem she identified has to do with local hegemony in form of money bags who determine what the thematic thrust of each movie made will be. They engage in making movies that are full of obscene behaviours thus, creating what is alien to the Nigerian society. The implication lies in the fact that promoting the Nigerian culture has not been well understood and handled by film makers. “Nollywood, knowingly or unknowingly incorporates negative themes and cultures which are capable of corrupting the members of the society. Behavioural decadence in recent times has become the overriding factor in some of the movies which impacts negatively on Nigerians and non-Nigerians, (p.190).” To buttress her view, Okorie cited Musa (2002) who conducted a survey on nudism and the national

image, in his attempt to discuss the proliferation of nudity and eroticism in Nigerian movies and outright disregard for the demand of Censorship. Musa asserted that:

Seduction movies assault the psyche of the Africans as they violate all known rules of decency, good taste and mobility within their culture. In his analysis, data show that almost all the theatre workers, artistes, production and managerial crew are guilty of glamorizing aspects of immorality. Artistes subject themselves to this act of immorality in order to achieve fame and material wealth instead of professionalism. This can be counted as some of the reasons artistes expose, debase and “sell” their bodies with impunity. Therefore, Musa concludes that the southern Nigerian movies crews (Igbo and Yoruba) are common rivals trying to outdo each other in the noxiousness of nudism (Musa, 2002, p.196).

Sesan & Shittu (2015) examined varied views on Nollywood and the cultural essence of the movies produced in the country for cultural nationalism and re-orientation. As a cultural product, a film is expected to represent the culture that informs it and the practitioners are expected to be cultural ambassadors. What is observed in Nollywood, however, is that most of the films have been influenced by Western and Asian cultures in content and thematic pre-occupation. They stressed that “Nollywood does not produce films that actually reflect the indigenous cultural episteme. Most of the films produced in Nigeria are imitative of foreign films particularly from America, India and China.” They further recommended that all the stakeholders in the industry should re-assess the activities of the industry through viable policy statement with a view to re-energizing our socio-cultural milieu through the movie industry.

Amobi & Akinfeleye (2010) carried out a study to resolve contradictions of meanings and tensions between the western and African identities. They argued that Nigerian films today, present a driving force in popular culture and as such present a valid platform for reconstructing the African cultural identity. Their argument was premised on the fact that the Nigerian film Industry *Nollywood* which has developed with meteoric speed enjoys astounding patronage of the thousands of movies which it releases into the market yearly, by Africans around the world. Against this backdrop, three Nigerian films were content analyzed to determine the extent to which they reflect the Nigerian culture. This was done in the context of the following cultural variables: Storylines, language, characterization, theme, setting, costumes, props, events, traditional practices, music/ songs/and dance. Results showed that though Nollywood has been shown to be doing quite a bit towards the reconstruction of Nigeria’s cultural identity, its

ultimate test remains its reactions to the challenge to stay profitable without compromising the rich cultural heritage of Nigeria and indeed Africa.

Onuzuluike (2007) asserted that the corpus of songs and oral literature, festivals, rituals, the traditional religion, performing arts, music, dance, and indeed, the entire range of artifacts constituting traditional oral performance of Nigerian culture are represented in Nigerian movies. Since its emergence at the turn of the twenty-first century, the Nigerian movie industry "Nollywood" has had a profound influence on African culture. The Nigerian accents, style of dress, and behavioral idiosyncrasies, all of which are distinctly Nigerian, are now being transmitted as images around the globe. The medium of film has come to be directly associated with the culture industry. In Nigeria such a role for the film industry is still evolving. However, certain factors are altering the profile of what could be regarded as the country's culture, while the film industry itself is undergoing a crucial transition.

Eze-Orji (2015) opined that more than any other video films (Yoruba, Hausa, Ibibio/Efik and the Ijaw films in Nigeria), the Igbo film culture has been at the vanguard of sustaining what many have described as the other Hollywood culture in sub-Saharan Africa, maintaining a gigantic viewership and an economically viable enterprise. However, the most disturbing aspect of this success story is the thematic preoccupation of these films, otherwise known as the content. In the near two scores of its existence, the Igbo film culture has more often than not presented the Igbo as a nation of voodooes, occultists, dupes, witches, sorcerers, ritualists and prostitutes. It has deliberately and heavily misrepresented its primary constituents: the Igbo. He emphasized that the Igbo image in the Nigerian movie industry is replete with misrepresentations and casts doubts about the sincerity in their business successes and general life-style; and this is invariably as a result of misconceptions from Nigerians about Igbo cultural matrix and mores. Eze-Orji revisited the image myth currently surrounding the Igbos in their films vis-à-vis the Igbo reality. He concluded that placing too high premium on financial gains, the inability to conduct credible research, the impatience to allot time to a particular film project, lack of professionalism that is associated with the video format, and lack of creative and critical borrowings from foreign film cultures have masterminded the ignoble trend that characterizes the Igbo film culture and has conversely cast doubts on the true image of the Igbo.

Apakama (2015) reviewed the stance of Nollywood in the great role of cultural reorientation. Findings revealed that Nollywood has produced so many films including those in Igbo language.

The names, background, stories and cultural values exhibited in the films can help the viewer to understand where it came from. Igbo language is used or interjected and some proverbs, idioms, anecdotes and all are transliterated. However, she pointed out that the status of our Igbo culture is begging for salvaging and solution; with Igbo language as a medium, orientation can also embrace a re-orientation. It is pertinent therefore, to examine how Nollywood movies have projected the sacred royal family to her audience locally and internationally.

2.5 Review of Empirical Studies

Zaperta (2008) applied content analysis to analyse the British press articles on how Queen Elizabeth II is portrayed in relation to other members of the British royal family. She analysed the representation of Queen Elizabeth II in two British quality daily newspapers, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*, and their Sunday counterparts, *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Observer*, covering the period from 1997 to 2006. The main purpose of the research presented was to examine the representation of Queen Elizabeth II in the selected newspapers in order to show how the textual differences correspond with an individual paper's general political attitude. The analysis aimed at discovering the similarities and differences in the Queen's representations in *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian* and their Sunday sister papers, *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Observer*. It revealed wider socio-cultural dilemmas, the values of modernity, tradition, democracy and freedom as well as constitutional monarchy as a form of government. The most prominent, however, were the themes concentrated around British national identity. It revealed that newspapers are the means whereby the sense of national culture can be reproduced. However, they can also provide the platform for some norms of a shared culture to be contested. The analysis has revealed that *The Guardian* criticises the monarchy as an abstract, anachronistic, undemocratic institution, still, it cannot negate the merits of the Queen as an individual person. This thesis has indicated that analysing mass media material can provide an abundance of valuable information for media-culturally oriented research.

Farinde (2008) looked at the portrayal (positive and negative) of the Nigerian society by Nigerian movies using textual analysis and hinged the study on framing theory. He found out that the movie industry has not fully reflected an appropriate image of Nigeria. The paper concluded that we (Nigerians) owe it to our country to help uplift her image, one that has been battered by our governments and Nigerians themselves. All the same, the movie business has become a template of unity and a mirror of what is not ideal. On the same vein, the researcher

looked at the portrayal of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films to determine the level of representations given to the Igbo monarchy in spite of their relevance in Igbo society.

Tongyun (2009) is a contextual study on the role of the media, the New Labor politics and the public, in facilitating modernization toward a more intimate royalty as represented by *The Queen*, an Oscar-winning film made in 2006 about the political event of Princess Diana's death in 1997. The paper not only deals with the film itself, but also looks into the broader media and political context of the historical event reflected in the film. It argues that the film displays two themes: in confirming the media power, the film conveys that royal popularity depends on the media for its projection; and in exploring the conflict between the emotional public and the stoical monarchy. The film is significant in vividly portraying the mediated monarchy and mediated politics, revealing that the media have altered, perhaps, distorted, the very basis of royalty and politics. The film cheers the Queen's compromise for continuity and encourages the audience to understand the royal identity. This work therefore hinged on the same premise with Tongyun to reveal if Nollywood films have distorted the very basis of Igbo royalty.

Hibbeler (2009) carried out a research project to examine representations of male characters and masculinity in Disney animated feature films. Social learning theory, gender and hegemonic masculinity were used to theoretically frame the study. Twenty-two movies were examined; a total of ninety-one characters were included in the analysis. The results of the study regarding character role indicate that good characters were most often middle aged, slender and fit but not muscular, single, royalty, and did not have community as family. They were most often heterosexual, equally likely to be romantically involved as to be not romantically involved, were sexual in nature, and were most often the victims of physical aggression. Evil characters were most often middle aged, slender and fit but not muscular, single, royalty, did not have community as family, and were well dressed. Evil characters were most likely to trap other characters and to steal. Neutral characters were most often old/elderly, overweight and not muscular, and were most often employed as inventors, royalty, and diamond miners. They were also most often single and would have community as family. The results regarding character centrality indicated that central characters were most often white, slender and fit but not muscular, single, middle aged, showed physical strength, and were well dressed compared to peripheral characters. Central characters were heterosexual, romantically involved, sexual in nature, engaged in hand to hand fighting, and engaged in social isolation and name calling. Peripheral characters were most often white, slender and fit but not muscular, single, and also

more likely than central characters to be old/elderly. For the analysis of masculinity across time, it was found that the types of masculinity shown in Disney films did not match with hegemonic masculinity historically. Overall, the most common theme of masculinity that was observed throughout all decades was the fatherhood movement.

Brock (2009) carried out a study on representations of Nigerian women in Nollywood films, the study analyzes the ways in which women are portrayed in film and how the media contributes to this influence. It explored certain themes such as sexual objectification, social constructions of gender, modernity, religion/morality, beauty and love and compares them with reality of life for women in Nigeria. He looked at Nollywood from a traditional and modern perspective. The theoretical framework was based on several socio-cultural and media theories which include the reinforcement theory of mass communications, the cultural norm theory, modernity, the double consciousness theory, the feminist theory/feminism, and the objectification theory. A content analysis of five Nollywood films showed that the imagery of women in media significantly impacts how viewers perceive women in Nigeria. The images which are being portrayed result from the influences in Nigerian society. Additionally, it shows how Nigerian society has been impacted by modernity which creates a wide range of problems. More importantly, even with all of the issues within the Nollywood industry it seeks to serve as a moral teacher and provides valuable lessons to its viewers.

Ekwenchi & Adum (2010) used Segun Arinze and Steph-Nora Okere, two well known Nollywood actors as cases, and drawing also from interview excerpts with both actors, the article employs critical discourse analysis to argue that a contradictory structure of feeling has developed in the actors in relation to Nollywood and social practices elsewhere, symbolized by Hollywood. This tension comes mainly from the reality of working in the country's video film industry and the global ideals as imagined by the actors. The paper concludes by arguing that imagination has combined with wide availability of foreign cultural materials to foster mental migration in the two Nollywood actors.

Amobi (2010) examined how Nollywood's women audiences interpret the representations of women in Nollywood films. Guided by the Media reception, Representation, Visual rhetoric, and Feminist film theories, the qualitative research method was used to examine how female Nollywood actors, students, and lecturers of the University of Lagos and Ibadan, Nigeria make sense of the sexist and stereotypical representations of women in Nollywood films and if and

how their social contexts shape these interpretations. Four Nigerian films were content analyzed and views of Nollywood female audiences were sampled through a combination of Focus group and In-depth Interview techniques. Results show that Nigerian female audiences receive and interpret the representations of women in Nigerian home video films similarly. They do this oppositionally and even agitatively as they rework the meanings in order to effect changes in their stereotyped and negative representations. However, the author argues that the ability of the female audiences to interpret these films may not necessarily translate to changes in the continued stereotypical depictions of women, nor the society's image of the woman.

Adesina (2010) investigates how Nigerians, particularly women, interpret the meanings of the representations of women in Nigerian films. It aims at understanding how Nigerian audience interpret the meanings of the images of women in Nigerian films, with a focus on investigating whether or not there is a marked difference in the ways different individuals and groups interpret the representations. To achieve the objectives of the study, three sessions of focus group discussion involving a representative sample of viewers of Nigerian video films, from different socio-economic groups were undertaken. The participants ranged according to age, sex, ethnicity and educational level. The study finds that there is a marked difference in the ways women and men interpret the meanings embedded in the representations of women in Nigerian films. It also concludes that there is a marked difference in the ways women, with high education and those with little or no education, perceive the representations of women in Nigerian films. The difference is related to the way each group of women understands and identifies or dis-identifies with the meanings of the images of the films. On that basis, the study proposes a new model for understanding how women in Nigeria interpret popular culture. So also, this study planned to understand the model in which the Igbo monarchy is constructed in Nollywood films.

Using empirical data from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with female audiences of Nollywood films drawn from four states across Nigeria, Kur, Aagudosy & Orhewere (2011) examine female audiences' consciousness of the content of sexual harassment against women in Nollywood films. The article argues that the audiences are able to identify acts of physical and threatening sexual harassment against women in the films, but not those of verbal, non-verbal, and environmental harassment. While some of the audiences are critical of the negative identities created and false representations of womanhood in these films, others are not.

Brooks (2011) compiled the findings of Dr. Malik and colleagues who identified and analyzed 13 mostly mainstream Bollywood movies that depicted electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). For each film, the researchers assessed the accuracy of the portrayal of ECT. In all 13 movies, ECT was used to punish and/or mistreat characters, and the methods used were unscientific. They said the results are "unsurprising, echoing largely negative depictions of ECT in American movies and media generally, but at odd with the largely positive views about ECT among treatment recipients and their families." "Indian movies," Dr. Malik noted, "are a staple source of information and entertainment for Indian masses, and such negative views of an important psychiatric treatment further stigmatize mental illness in Indian society." Just as Dr. Malik stated in this study, the Nigerian movies are a staple source of information and entertainment for Nigerian masses, and such views of an important institution (Igbo monarchy) might further make or mar the mental ideology in Igbo society; which is part of the business of this study.

Bagehot (2011) in an article, content analyzed a royal film about King George VI of Great Britain, *'The King's Speech'*, which he sees as partly uplifting and partly absurd. But to him, it is a deeply flattering film and it wallows in sentimental anachronism. Bagehot stressed some of the disparity between emerging themes in the movie and the real life of King George IV. On the same vein, this study looked at the emerging themes in the selected Nollywood movies to observe any disparity.

Usman, Agu, & Diko (2012) examined the role of movie industry in the transference and preservation of cultural heritage. The plots of some selected Hausa movies are analysed with the view to examine the application of these cultural values. In-depth interview and textual analysis of aspects of these cultural values in the selected movies is carried out and their use in the movies is also analyzed. The study discovers that Hausa movies, through the employment of cultural values, improves the quality of the messages; promotes good governance, enlightens the public on conflict resolution mechanisms and cautioning against anti-social behaviours. It also discovers that our cultural and historical heritage could be preserved through entertainment. The researcher in this work found it necessary to question the origin of Nollywood stories about the Igbo monarchy: Do they actually preserve its cultural and historical heritage?

Sabharwal & Sen (2012) adopt content analysis and survey research methodologies to find out the answers to the questions raised in their work. They compare the portrayal of sexual minorities in mainstream and alternative Hindi cinema. They talk about how mainstream Hindi

cinema, which is the most widely distributed cinema in India and abroad, has traditionally adopted an attitude of denial or mockery towards lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community. Representations of sexual minorities have veered amongst the sarcasm, comic and the criminal. Whereas alternative cinema which is confined to film festivals and a handful selected group of viewers portrays sexual minorities in more realistic manner and is successful in raising, expressing and suggesting possible solutions to their problems in more effective manner as compared to the main stream cinema.

Alawode & Sunday (2013) carried out a study based on Agenda-setting as theoretical framework through content analyzing of fifty (50) video films televised by television stations in Lagos and Africa Magic (cable network). They sought to determine how the film makers have showcased Nigeria through portrayals and representations in the home videos. The result reveals that the film producers extensively project the nation's traditional societies with applicable cultures, beliefs, lifestyles, values, norms, dressing and sometimes languages, amongst other things. They have also done a great deal to show Nigerians as very religious people with diverse kinds of persuasions. The lifestyle and attitudes of Nigerians in urban settings as they portray are often flawed with exaggerations of flamboyance, affluence and elegance. Other kinds of exaggerations are in their exposition of corruption, violence, ritualism, thuggery, hooliganism, witchcraft, occultism/cultism and other kinds of fetish acts amongst others. Very little is done in the home videos to showcase the nation's natural resources, agricultural produce, mineral resources, monumental and historical centres and settings, tourist centres and attraction as well as the nation's flags, currencies, coat of arms to mention but a few. The impacts and efficacy of offerings of the home videos, being a medium for showcasing the nation and its people would be evidenced in the responses and attitudes towards Nigeria, its products and services as well as its people.

Dossonumon (2013) examines class and gender representations in Nollywood films through textual analysis of a sample of films retrieved from the website of the largest Nollywood streaming service, irokoTV. The study investigates patterns in class and gender representations in terms of similarities in portrayals, instances of stereotypes, and value assumptions in terms of who has power. The study uses an exposure approach to select a sample of convenience of the top five films most attended to by the audience on iROKOTv and relies on close reading and a distancing technique called the "commutation test" to discuss the meaning of class and gender representations in the films. Findings indicate that even when they appear to subvert dominant ideologies, the films still reinforce long established societal norms about the importance of

wealth and female gender stereotypes such as submissiveness in domestic households. The tales are often aspirational but the films lack grand ideological narratives to make them relevant to social transformation. The findings support Stuart Hall's Theory of Ideology which allows for a subversive agenda in media texts while retaining the flexibility needed to critique connections between dominant ideologies and social practices and structures.

Ekwenchi, Adum & Uzuegbunam (2013) applied critical discourse analysis to analyse a sample of three feature Nigerian films starring Osita Ihome and Chinedu Ikedieze in order to direct attention to some of the ways that the films as popular discourses and social imaginations of youth help to perpetuate negative images of youth as well as to highlight their complicity in the demonization and subordination of youth in the Nigerian society.

Eze (2015) took a cursory look at the evolution of the kingship system in Igboland and the criteria set out by successive administrations for selecting and recognizing the Igbo king. The methods adopted in the work are historical, analytical, expository and critical. He then compared the Igbo king with his counterparts in other parts of Nigeria, in particular, the Hausa/Fulani and the Yoruba kings. He realized that Igbo communities now have their own kings (Traditional Rulers), who preside over their traditional and cultural affairs. The Igbo king reflects the republican character of traditional society, where the Council of Elders took charge of political governance of the community. As such, the Igbo king rules in concert with members of his cabinet, made up of some selected prominent members of the community. Unlike the Hausa/Fulani Emir, or the Yoruba Oba, the Igbo king does not possess communal land, and he is not even paid any royalty for usage of the land. The Igbo king may be respected, revered and paid obeisance as father of the community, but he does not possess extraordinary wisdom or intelligence. He is just like every other person, and therefore, cannot swing the pendulum one way or the other. The Igbo king reigns but does not rule. In a normal situation, the Igbo kingship stool is for life. However, on the passage of the occupant, the stool could be an object of tussle and litigation, even when there may be an existing constitution that clearly spelt out the mode of occupying a vacant stool. Even in trying to meet with the ideal, the Igbo king still mirrors the republican character of traditional Igbo society.

Ekwugha, Adum & Ebeze (2015) in a study looked into the impact Nigerian home videos' portrayal of women have on women's position and status in the society. The study also investigated the influence of home video on women's and girls' perception of themselves and its

effect on their development potentials. With 300 respondents drawn from a select range of home videos viewers, a survey research was designed using Awka-urban, Capital of Anambra State, Nigeria, as the research area and finds a negative perception of women as regards their image portrayal in the home videos by the viewers. However, this image portrayal has a negative effect on the development potentials of women and that of girl child and as well reflects on how women are seen and treated in Nigerian society.

Dunu, Ukwueze & Okafor (2015) carried out more broadened reception study of the entire women from different socio-cultural backgrounds in south eastern Nigeria and sought to determine how and in what ways, these greater number of women, especially those in rural communities, negotiate or perhaps either reject or accept their identities as given in Nollywood. A mixed method of 'Survey' and 'Focus Group Discussion', were employed whereas the 'Cultivation' and 'Deconstruction' theories served as the reception frameworks to couch these reception. Findings demonstrate that the women aside from being widely exposed to the movies identified the negative female stereotypes and though accepted being 'entertained' and influenced by looks of most female characters, upheld that their attitudes, beliefs, goals, ideologies and relations towards other women were not influenced. What came out quite distinct is the women's perception of these films as media constructions and not realities and their distancing themselves from such portrayals, even in their relationships with one another, thereby calling to question the assumed powerful and uniform effects of media messages and validating the notion of the active audience.

Asogwa, Onoja & Ojih (2015) in a study to appraise the representation of the Nigerian (African) culture in the global market by the Nigerian Nollywood, found out how the Nollywood projects Nigerian rich local cultural values to the outside world; and appraise how the influx of foreign cultural values into the Nigerian local film production affects the nation's cultural heritage. The study employs case reference analysis method and analyzed some films purposively selected for the performance of this task. The study observes among others that Nollywood dwells too much on the negative aspect of the nation's cultural practices to the detriment of the nation's image. It was also discovered that the act of borrowing themes, plots etc, from foreign films has done much harm than good to the preservation of the indigenous culture. The study concludes that the increasing quantity of filmic contents from the Nollywood had not helped much in the area of projecting the nation's positive image and rich cultural heritage to the outside world as the quality of the filmic contents that emanate from the Nollywood remains grossly inadequate or

usually situated out of context, thereby re-enforcing the negative image fostered on Nigeria and Africa at large by the foreign media.

Ekwenchi (2015) delved into how the popular culture industry, Nollywood, represents colour difference in today's Nigeria. The article, through an analysis of three Nollywood's feature films: *White Hunters*, *John Bull My Son* and *Brain Masters* gave some revelations. Ekwenchi employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as well as historical analysis and identified binary opposition and stereotype as dominant strategies used by the makers of the three feature films in representing 'whiteness' and 'blackness'. The article argued that as discourses of racial difference, while the three feature films may have made some efforts at reversing some stereotypes of the black race, they have mostly, however, managed to domesticate, reinforce and legitimate dominant racist images of Africa and African people circulating in western popular culture.

Bemigho (2015) investigated the representations of political corruption in some selected Nigerian video films using the Social Responsibility Theory of the media as its theoretical framework. The study used a textual analysis of some selected video films which have strong political motifs as a major thematic fare and data collected from personal interviews with leading scholars and Nigerian video film practitioners – writers, director/producers and film critics. The research findings revealed that the portrayal of political corruption in Nigerian video films is largely consistent with social reality irrespective of the narrative approach. The stories, which interrogate the political strata of society, are told in a compelling narrative that allows for empathy and audience identification and association with the subject matter. This dissertation challenges the argument that films would lose their popularity if they serve as a platform for engagement through their portrayals of societal ills.

Amobi & Shaibu (2015) explore the representation of conflicts in the Niger Delta in Nollywood movies. they textually analysed selected Nollywood films of the *Niger Delta genre namely Amnesty, Liquid Black Gold, King of Crude, Militants, and Operation Niger Delta* to determine how the conflicts are framed and represented. It also employed the Focus Group Discussion and Interview methods to determine the level of congruity between the audiences' interpretation of these films and the filmmakers' preferred readings. Findings reveal that the way the conflicts motifs are portrayed is largely consistent with social reality irrespective of the narrative

approach and it reinforces the assumption that films serves as a platform for the representation of social reality as well as a forum for engagement and conflict resolution.

Francois (2015) examines the parallels and distinctions of representations of women during the slavery era with that of Blaxploitation films, while exploring how this portrayal affects the shifting values, identities and ideologies of Black women. Results showed that when the Blaxploitation films of the 1970s emerged; Black women received a jolt of empowerment. The depictions of them were sexy, strong, independent with a 'take no mess' attitude. This was quite contrary to everyone else having control over a Black woman's life, especially her sexuality. In these films, the woman is represented as being in control of her own life, her own issues and especially her own sexuality. The distinctive portrayal of Black women in Blaxploitation films to that of the slavery era shows how the shift in representations can affect the values, identities and ideologies for these women.

Aromona (2016) examines the prevalent portrayals of women in the Nigerian movie industry and the effect of these portrayals on reinforcement of stereotypical norms and perpetuation of gender disparity. Cultivation and Objectification theories were the theoretical frameworks for this study. Findings revealed no significant change in the stereotypical portrayals of women in the past five years. From the movies analyzed, Nollywood movies appear to remain persistent in typically depicting women as unambitious domestic servants. Applying Fiske's stereotype content model, this study found that women are typically depicted as warm and incompetent, but cold and competent when they compete for same resources as the dominant group. With such portrayals in Nollywood movies, women are further subdued and beliefs that normalize these norms are cultivated.

Usaini, Chilaka, & Nelson (2016) investigate how women are portrayed in Nollywood films, as well as the interpretation of their representations. It aims at understanding how the images of women are reflected in films, with a focus on investigating the influence of such portrayals on their role in national development. The methods adopted were Quantitative Content Analysis (five Nollywood films were content analysed) and Focus Group Discussion (three sessions of FGDs were organised). Data collected and analysed show that over two-thirds of major female characters analysed were portrayed as dependent, 80% were depicted in such situations of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, while only 30% of the major female characters were portrayed as career professionals and intellectuals. It was observed from the analyses that

portrayals and representations of women have negative influences on their contributions towards national development. The study concludes, therefore, that positive portrayal of women in Nollywood films should be encouraged. This can only be made possible through changing the narrative style of the film scripts. This is a call for more female script writers and directors to be involved in charting the narratives that will adequately give women a voice, new roles, and the right representation in Nollywood films.

Asiegbu Bature-Uzor (2017) examines rituals in Nollywood films as statements on the life patterns of the Nigerian society. This research involves a textual analysis of the video film text, *Issakaba 1*. The choice of this film narrative is informed by the thematic content in relation to the ideologies of the Nigerian society. The findings reveal that rituals are part of the culture and belief systems of the Nigerian society. In that case, Nollywood films can only present their narratives against the backdrop of culture by relating content to existing situations within the society. The paper therefore recommends that for proper critical assessment of rituals in Nollywood films, an understanding of the culture and belief system of the Nigerian society is important. This is also the case with the present study as the understanding of the Igbo society's culture is necessary in developing a filmic narrative of the Igbo monarchy to viewers.

Ibbi (2017) looks at the various issues associated with stereotype representation as a concept in film. The Feminist Media Theory was used as supporting theory for the paper. His findings revealed the 12 classifications of stereotypes of Nollywood female roles: The femme fatale; the deadly woman; the girl next door; gold diggers and trophy wives; the career woman; the housewife; the object of barter; the object of ritual; objects of sexploitations; the witch; prostitutes; second choice; and husband killer. Part of the recommendations for the paper is the need for research to be properly conducted on the society before screenplays are written, to avoid misleading the public.

Onuzulike (2017) analyzes Nigeria's Nollywood film *Osuofia in London*, produced and directed by Ogoro, K. In 2003/2004, to understand how the film synthesizes African and Western cultural identities via the prisms of hybridity and post-colonial theory. The paper uses a critical approach within the contexts of three tenets (African, Western, and hybrid) to read the film. The analysis resulted in five themes: African/folk belief systems and Christianity; traditional Igbo attire and English garb; African/folk music and Western music; African and Western food and drinks; and African/traditional medicine and modern medicine. The analysis indicates that

unequal power relations and the forces of globalization are inescapable. Even though the protagonist, Osuofia, challenges the Western ideology, he reproduces it as well.

Okafor (2017) examines the extent in which the film, *Idemili*, (an Ernest Obi film) has presented the character called of the woman, in its guise to representing the persona therewith. Also, it explores the nature of the African woman; this in context is the revelation of an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of the character of the woman, her behavioural leanings, which has now formed the nature and nurture which she now embodied. Hence, the paper seeks to correct the anomaly created in the process of revealing the nature of woman, especially as being portrayed by Nollywood. The work also proffers dynamic representation of the female character which will reduce and consequently eradicate the stereotypic view of the African woman in Nollywood films.

Nsereka & Enyindah (2018) investigate the perception of female movie audience about the portrayal of women characters in Nollywood movies. To achieve this broad objective, a combination of survey and in-depth interview methods of research were employed. The survey data were analysed using frequency distribution tables and percentage while views from the in-depth interviews were presented using explanation building. Findings show that gender discrimination and moral decadence accounted more for the way in which women are portrayed in Nollywood movies. Based on this, it is recommended that movie producers and directors endeavour to always edit their movies, especially new ones to ensure that negative portrayal of women characters are balanced or curtailed; that gender-based films should be properly critiqued before their release to the viewing public; and that the Nigerian Video and Film Censors Board screen contents of Nollywood movies so as to ensure that only the acceptable Nigerian/African cultural values - in content and in costuming – are retained in the movies.

Onwutuebe (2019) looks into how Genevieve Nnaji has produced a film with a feminist message that does not exaggerate the agenda of the movement but marries it to a world Nigerians and global audiences can relate with. Due to the paucity of female filmmakers in Nollywood—Nigeria's film industry—stereotypical portrayal of women in films have prevailed and there persists a poor interpretation regarding the ways women navigate their lives in a patriarchal society. The blame rests on poorly researched stories, hastily written screenplays and laxly executed films. Nnaji through her movie *Lionheart*, has created a female lead, who owns her ground without renegading culture.

Onyenankeya, Onyenakeya & Osunkunle (2019) seek to examine various ways women are depicted in Nollywood films, including physical appearance, domestic and family life, occupational life and interpersonal relationships over a 20 year period spanning the video film era. The research employed a quantitative content method to analyse 10 films while the coding sheet that contained established content categories served as the data gathering instrument. A multistage sampling technique was used to draw the sample. The findings revealed that although there is a higher percentage of women than men in Nollywood films, women still play diminished central roles, and continue to be portrayed less frequently in roles that reflect current social realities than men, especially regarding the professions. Nollywood continues its penchant of depicting successful and powerful women in social and domestic settings as dangerous and doomed for destruction. This characterisation apart from the potential of discouraging females from creating a niche for themselves, simultaneously severely hampers the critical role of generating new cohorts of outstanding independent and powerful females in business, politics or the professions. It can be concluded that the representation of women in Nollywood has not witnessed any radical departure from the traditional preconception of women roles in societies over the two decades. Roles and contemporary treatment of women in Nollywood films should rather emphasise current accomplishments or successes of women in several spheres of life and do away with negative representations which only help in accentuating and perpetuating stereotypes.

2.6 Theoretical Review

Two theories are found relevant to this study. They are framing theory and social representation theory. These theories are discussed towards building a theoretical framework for the study.

2.6.1. The Framing Theory

The framing theory holds that in reporting events, media gatekeepers inevitably construct their message within specific frames of meaning-making. The major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives and be construed as having implications for multiple values or considerations. In other words, framing is the way a communication source defines and constructs any piece of communicated information. Framing is an unavoidable part of human communication – we all bring our own frames to our communications (Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996; Scheufele, 1999).

The concept of framing is related to the agenda-setting tradition but expands the research by focusing on the essence of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic. The basis of framing theory is that “the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning” (Scheufele, 1999). The theory was first put forth by Goffman in his work, *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. There he argues that people interpret what is going on around their world through their primary framework. This framework is regarded as primary as it is taken for granted by the user. Its usefulness as a framework does not depend on other frameworks (Goffman, 1974).

In putting forth the framing theory, Goffman (1974) states that there are two distinctions within primary frameworks: natural and social, both play the role of helping individuals interpret data so that their experiences can be understood in a wider social context. The difference between the two is functional. Natural frameworks identify events as physical occurrences taking natural quote literally and not attributing any social forces to the causation of events. Social frameworks view events as socially-driven occurrences, due to the whims, goals, and manipulations on the part of other social players (people). Social frameworks are built on the natural frameworks. These frameworks and the frames that they create in our communication greatly influence how data is interpreted, processed, and communicated. Goffman’s underlying assumption is that individuals are capable users of these frameworks on a day to day basis whether they are aware of them or not (Goffman, 1974).

Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) put forth what they term “framing techniques”. These include:

- **Metaphor:** To frame a conceptual idea through comparison to something else.
- **Stories (myths, legends):** To frame a topic via narrative in a vivid and memorable way.
- **Tradition (rituals, ceremonies):** Cultural mores that imbue significance in the mundane, closely tied to artifacts.
- **Slogan, jargon, catchphrase:** To frame an object with a catchy phrase to make it more memorable and relatable.
- **Artifact:** Objects with intrinsic symbolic value – a visual/cultural phenomenon that holds more meaning than the object itself.
- **Contrast:** To describe an object in terms of what it is not.
- **Spin:** to present a concept in such a ways as to convey a value judgment (positive or negative) that might not be immediately apparent; to create an inherent bias by definition.

Framing is in many ways tied very closely to agenda setting theory. Both focus on how media draws the public's eye to specific topics – in this way they set the agenda. But Framing takes this a step further through the way in which the news is presented which creates a frame for that information. This is usually a conscious choice by journalists – in this case a frame refers to the way the media as gatekeepers organize and present the ideas, events, and topics they cover.

Framing theory has been upheld due to the following reasons: it influences interpretation and forms a system; framing gives room to the media to encourage some stories and interpretations while discouraging the others; and framing constructs a social reality. However, framing theory is not without criticisms which include: affecting the choices and decisions made by people; building mistrust against the media; creating a gap between the truth and the public awareness by creating a point of view; distorting truth; and limiting debates by placing vocabularies and metaphors that can be used in news by all members of the public.

Gamson and Modigliani (1987) conceptually define a media frame as “a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events . . . The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue” (p.143). Viewing media or news frames as necessary to turn meaningless and non-recognisable happenings into a discernible event, Tuchman (1978, p.193) offered a similar definition for media frames: “The news frame organizes everyday reality and the news frame is part and parcel of everyday reality . . . [it] is an essential feature of news”. Media frames also serve as working routines for journalists as they allow the journalists to quickly identify and classify information and “to package it for efficient relay to their audiences” (Gitlin, 1980, p.7). This concept of media framing can include the intent of the sender, but the motives can also be unconscious ones (Gamson, 1989).

In essence, framing theory is relevant to this study because it suggests that how something is represented to the audience (called “the frame”) influences the choices people make about how to process that information. Frames are abstractions that work to organize or structure message meaning. Fairhurst & Sarr (1996) opine that they are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience, in this way it could be construed as a form of second level agenda-setting – they not only tell the audience what to think about (agenda-setting theory), but also how to think about that issue (second level agenda setting, framing theory). In this case, the film producers do not only give the audience what to know about the Igbo monarchy but also how to view the institution of monarchy.

2.6.2. Social Representation Theory

Social Representations Theory (SRT), as developed by Serge Moscovici (1961/2008); in Cultural Studies has been described as a theory of communication since its inception. Indeed, as Duveen (2000, pp. 12-13) has pointed out, “representations may be the product of communication, but it is also the case that without representation there could be no communication”. Representations (as common structures of knowledge and social practice produced in social psychological activity) can *only* exist in communication through the development of shared systems of values, ideas and practices; and social representation (as a psychological process that is at once cognitive *and* cultural) is *only* possible through the communication of emergent and relational identities, shifting claims to differences and claims to commonalities. SRT studies make use of many different communicative genres: everyday talk, narratives, scientific discourse, media images, historical documents, institutional practices, cultural artefacts, advertising posters, and even drawings and weavings.

SRT does not offer a precise theory of communication *per se*. Rather it is a theory about the role of representations in communicative practices, particularly in the transmission of knowledge and the presentation of identities. Hall describes his approach as being:

more concerned with the effects and consequences of representation – its ‘politics’. It examines not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct, makes up or constrains identities and subjectivities, and defines the way certain things are represented, thought about, practised and studied (Hall, 1997, p.6).

Social representations are “systems of values, ideas and practices with a two-fold function: first, to establish an order which will enable individuals to orient themselves in their material and social world and to master it; and secondly to enable communication to take place among members of a community by providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history” (Moscovici, 1973, p, xiii).

Simply as Hall (1997, p. 228) has put it, “meaning floats. It cannot be finally fixed”. Hence, the process of representation in and of itself invites social and psychological change. As Philogène’s

(2001, p. 113) research demonstrates: “social representations are vectors of change, because they are the medium by which we communicate new situations and adjust to them”.

The most frequent criticism of the theory of social representations is that it is too broad and too vague. A more specific criticism of social representations theory is that it relates to an alleged overemphasis of social influence (Parker, 1987) that is said to neglect the human capacity of reflexivity (Jahoda, 1988).

The reality of yesterday controls the reality of today, says Moscovici, such that intellectual activity constitutes a mere rehearsal or representation of what has already gone before, in that our minds are conditioned by representations which are forced upon us. (McKinlay & Potter, 1987, p. 475)

A third major criticism maintains that the theory characterises representation as an overly cognitive phenomenon that can chiefly be explained by psychological processes with scant reference to social influence (Jahoda, 1988; Parker, 1987; Semin, 1985). McGuire (1986), for example, describes social representation as a process of abstracting small units of information received and assimilating them into pre-existing cognitive (rather than socially constructed) categories. Social representations theory has also been charged with being critical, in failing to seriously address issues of power and ideology (Ibañez, 1992; Jahoda, 1988). Parker (1987), for example, asserts that the way Moscovici treats the term ideology “blunts any critical cutting edge” (Parker, 1987, p. 458) as it is turned into “a harmless label for a system of beliefs” (Parker, 1987, p. 465).

Representation is something done in order to understand the worlds in which we live and, through communicating our understanding, we convert these systems of values, ideas and practices into a social reality, for others and for ourselves. In this process, the idea or practice may be confirmed or perhaps re-articulated in some way (Hall, 1980). SRT is suitable for this study since its constructs provide a good theoretical framework that is relevant to the study of representations of Igbo royalty in Nollywood films.

2.7. Visual Rhetoric Theory

Visual rhetoric theory propounded by Sonia Foss, allows scholars to understand what meaning images are likely to have for an audience (Foss, 2005). Visual rhetoric is “used to mean both a visual object or artifact and a perspective on the study of visual data” (Foss, 2005, p. 143). Using Saussurian logic of words as symbols, Foss argues that visual rhetoric, like all communication, is

a system of signs. In the simplest sense, a sign communicates when it is connected to another object, as the changing of the leaves in autumn is connected to a change in temperature or a stop sign is connected to the act of stopping a car while driving. To qualify as visual rhetoric, an image must go beyond serving as a sign, however, and be symbolic, with that image only indirectly connected to its referent. Using either inductive or deductive methods, scholars analyze the symbolic meaning of visuals, which persuade an audience in much the same way that verbal communication does. While using either of these two methods, the purpose of visual rhetoric is to discover the communicative dimensions of images through attention to their nature, function, or evaluation.

Visual rhetorical scholars are interested in symbols as forms of communication such as music videos, film, commercials, and advertisements. This theory allows scholars to make sense of visual information. It is similar to cultural studies because symbols under scrutiny are produced within particular cultural contexts and become artifacts of the culture. The difference between visual rhetoric and cultural studies is that while visual rhetoric looks at the meaning of the symbol or visual message, cultural studies' expressed political agenda asks questions about power relations regarding such visual productions. If Nigerian home movies tell stories or narratives, then visual rhetoric says that the images also contain stories, thus meaning for audiences.

Using Saussurian logic of words as symbols, Foss argues that visual rhetoric, like all communication, is a system of signs. In the simplest sense, a sign communicates when it is connected to another object, as the changing of the leaves in autumn is connected to a change in temperature or a stop sign is connected to the act of stopping a car while driving. To qualify as visual rhetoric, an image must go beyond serving as a sign, however, and be symbolic, with that image only indirectly connected to its referent. Using either inductive or deductive methods, scholars analyze the symbolic meaning of visuals, which persuade an audience in much the same way that verbal communication does. While using either of these two methods, the purpose of visual rhetoric is to discover the communicative dimensions of images through attention to their nature, function, or evaluation.

Visual rhetoric theories support the idea that Nollywood videos present messages that contribute meaning to society. Nollywood videos tell stories visually, and people interpret those messages based on their social contexts.

2.8. Theoretical Framework

The social representation theory, propounded by Serge Moscovici, is a theory about the role of representations in communicative practices, particularly in the transmission of knowledge and the presentation of identities. It is found appropriate in building a theoretical framework for this study. Since the study is all about representation of a phenomenon – Igbo monarchy in the media, the theory of representation is apt for interrogating the nature and dynamics of this process. Nollywood film, like any other media of expression, is a form of representation; and like other instances of representation, it embodies the beliefs, biases and ideologies of the producers as individuals and those of the society as a collective (Hall, 1997; McQuail, 2010). Thus, from the perspective of this theory, Nollywood film depictions are viewed as originating from and rooted in a given context of meaning making – culture. Therefore, the social representation theory provides a conceptual framework for inquiring into the beliefs, biases and ideologies that tend to underlie representations of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood. It will help in looking at these representations beyond their manifest (surface) manifestation in order to reveal their inner (connotative) meaning as embedded in ideologies.

2.9. Summary of Literature

Consequently, the above literature review reveals that there is the presence of representations in media contents depending on the area one intends to examine particular media content; several themes evolve as representations are sought in media contents. Thematically, it includes class, age, gender, ethnicity, or more broadly via identity, stereotyping, ‘prejudice’ (typically racial) or ‘bias’ (typically political); also topics such as disability, journalism, religion, nationhood et cetera. Generically, it involves ‘bias’ in news, class in soap operas or sitcoms, and gender in advertisement. Media-specifically, it includes television, film, comics and magazines.

Some studies as cited in Ekwenchi (2015), Abiola (2013); Amobi & Sunday (2012); Prinsloo (2011); Ukata (2010)a; Ukata (2010)b; Dunu (2008); Okunna (1996) have also focused on stereotype portrayal of women in Nollywood film productions. Abiola (2013, p.1) is of the opinion that there is a cultural dimension to the stereotype depictions of women in films. Amobi and Sunday (2012, p.4) identify an aspect of this as consisting in portraying women as ...lower or lesser beings. Boys and/or men are portrayed as active, aggressive and sexually aggressive persons while women are portrayed as quaint, passive, pretty and incompetent beings.

Various researches on Nollywood films have largely undertaken studies on representations of some ideologies: Ekwenchi (2015) has studied race in Nollywood films. Adeseke (2015); Ekwugha, Adum & Ebeze (2015); Abiola (2013); Amobi & Sunday (2012); Shaka and Uchendu (2012); Ukata (2010); Brock (2009); Duru (2008); Ekwenchi (2000) and Okunna (1996) have focused on stereotype portrayal of women in Nollywood film productions. Moreover, studies like Asogwa, Onoja and Ojih (2015); Onuzuruike (2010) looked at the representation of Nigerian culture in Nollywood. Even in Hindi cinema, Mohapatra (2012), Duryjary (2015) and Adhikari (2015) observed that Bollywood has come a long way in depicting disabilities which has often been represented as dependence and punishment. Farinde (2008) looked at the portrayal of the African and Nigerian society by Nigerian movies.

In terms of works on monarchy representations, few works have been done and they are majorly on British monarchy; how they have been portrayed in the media (Newspapers and films). There seems to be a noticeable gap in the reviewed literature: the evolution of representations of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films, how Nigerian home video as a medium has evolved in representing the Igbo traditional royalty in their productions and the ideological constructions of Nollywood film producers over the past two decades. By tracing this evolution, the researcher explored how the content of these films has advanced over the past two decades. The totality of the ways of life of Igbo monarchy- including their costumes, characterization, setting and themes; which represents the bedrock of the essence of the institution of monarchy. How have the portrayals developed over the past twenty years? This study is concerned about the advancement of film content in a given era. It takes as a premise that media representations are not simply a mirror of society but rather that they are highly selective and constructed representations. It is the capacity of these representations to develop from one stage to another that is under consideration in this study. Therefore, the major concern of this study revolved around this gap in literature and sought to trace the way Nollywood films represent Igbo monarchy.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the research method that was used to generate the data in this study. The key components discussed include: the research design, period of study, population of study, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instrument and method of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods: Content Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Key Informant Interview (KII). Content analysis provided statistical data thus making for precision and the CDA offered some interpretative depth to the analysis. KII was added as a further data collection method used in getting data from filmmakers. As a research design, KII seeks to interview in an open-ended (unstructured) manner, certain persons who by virtue of their special training, experience and engagement are considered to be in a position to provide insightful information on a given phenomenon (Kumar, 1989). The researcher considered the insight of filmmakers i.e. producers, directors and scriptwriters as important key informants for the subject studied.

3.2. Period of the Study

The time frame of this study is 20 years from 1996 to 2015. This covered the earliest period of Nollywood and the more recent years. The decision to study film production in the two decades was informed by the belief that the industry is in constant evolution and so its representation of any phenomenon such as Igbo monarchy would also be evolving. Furthermore, the researcher started with 1996 because that was the year National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) started keeping data of films censored and approved after their establishment in 1993.

3.3. Population of the Study

The universe of this study consisted of all the 16,459 Nigerian home movies censored and approved by NFVCB from 1996 to 2015.

3.4. Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample size for the quantitative content analysis was 20 films embodying representation of Igbo monarchy in order to ensure that the chosen sample is accessible to the researcher just as Du Plooy (2002, p.101) suggests “the use of an accessible population to ensure ease of access to the population”. The choice of 20 was to represent each of the 20 years that make up the period

of study; hence, one film was selected for each year. The sampling was done in two stages as follows:

- **First Stage: Selecting films on Igbo monarchy**

The researcher employed purposive procedure to select films representing Igbo monarchy from 1996 to 2015. The purposive sampling method allows the researcher to decisively select those texts from the population that fit the parameters required for the study. Determining films with content related to Igbo monarchy was done via examining the title, the synopsis, the film pack or watching part of a film where necessary. The following were considered in selecting any film:

- It must have been approved for release by NFVCB from 1996 to 2015
- It must embody representations of Igbo monarchy
- It must have been produced in Igbo or English language.

A total of 207 films were selected at this stage and were grouped alphabetically and according to their year of release (see appendix iv).

- **Second Stage: Selecting the 20 films to be analysed**

At the second stage, the researcher employed simple random approach to select one film from among those selected in each year from 1996 to 2015. Thus, the films were arranged alphabetically for each year, then employing a table of random numbers, the researcher picked one from each year. This resulted in 20 films that were selected on the whole as shown below.

Table 3.1.

List of the 20 Selected Films

SN	Title of Film	Year of Production	Director	Producer
1.	Ojadike	1996	Ojiofor Ezeanyeuche	Ojiofor Ezeanyeuche
2.	The Missing Princess	1997	Andy Chukwu	John Ekeh David Nwaebu
3.	Oracle	1998	Andy Amaechi	Ojiofor Ezeanyeuche
4.	Igodo	1999	Ojiofor Ezeanyeuche	Ojiofor Ezeanyeuche
5.	Ijele	2000	Fred Amata	Chidi Nkem Aruoma
6.	My Throne	2001	Andy Amaechi	Mac Collins Chidebe
7.	Okochi	2002	Moses Ebere	Osondu Odom
8.	Egg of Life	2003	Andy Amaechi	Ojiofor Ezeanyeuche
9.	Azima	2004	Andy Amaechi	Ojiofor Ezeanyeuche
10.	Ola: The Morning Sun	2005	Andy Amaechi	Nwafor Anayo
11.	Warrior's Heart	2006	Ikechukwu Onyeka	Kingsley Okeke Emeka Ugwumba
12.	Royal Tears	2007	Ikenna Aniekwe	Charles offor
13.	Kings of Kings	2008	Iyke Odife	Kenneth ike
14.	Royal Wives	2009	Anayo Uzo Philips	Anayo Uzo Philips

15.	Royal Decision	2010	Bruce Benmarkson	Ifeanyi Nnam
16.	King Makers	2011	Ugezu J. Ugezu	Obi Cajetan
17.	The Kingdom	2012	Christopher Ikpoenyi	Christopher Ozoemena
18.	King's Offer	2013	Vincent Anointed	Charles Offor
19.	The Palace	2014	Sylvester Madu	Monday Nnam
20.	Royal Favour	2015	Ugezu S. Ugezu	Precious Okafor

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The critical discourse analysis involved only five out of the 20 films selected for the study. This reduced number was necessitated by the fact that the more manageable the number of units of sample to be analysed, the richer a qualitative analysis becomes (Arnold, 2010). Also, a small sample size can be an apt sampling choice for a qualitative research method in order to complete a required analysis: as in this case, each film has to be watched and re-watched numerous times in order to ensure the identified codes are comprehensively analysed. The goal of qualitative research is to provide in-depth understanding and target a specific group, type of individual, event or process. To accomplish this goal, qualitative research focuses on criterion-based sampling techniques to reach a targeted small sample size (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 1998; Morse, 1994). So, the researcher grouped the initially selected 20 films into five according to their years of release. Then from each group, a film was randomly selected as follows:

Table 3.2.

Films Selected for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

S/N	Period	Films
1.	1996 to 1999	Ojadike
2.	2000 to 2003	Egg of Life
3.	2004 to 2007	Royal Tears
4.	2008 to 2011	King of Kings
5.	2012 to 2015	Royal Favour

Source: Fieldwork 2019

For the KII, key informants were chosen because of their training, experience and position which makes them “informed” and “reliable” sources for the particular information sought (Kumar, 1989). Therefore, the researcher purposively selected six key informants as follows:

- Two film producers
- Two directors

- Two scriptwriters

The researcher looked out for the following characteristics as the criteria for sampling:

- The years of experience by the professional
- The number of films he/she has been involved in
- Whether he/she has been involved in a film portraying Igbo royalty

3.5. Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was the film scenes. Thus, each film was broken into scenes, with each scene constituting the unit of data generation and data analysis.

3.6. Coding Categories

The following coding categories guided the data collection:

- Period:** This refers to the period within which a film's year of release fell i.e. 1996 – 1999, 2000 – 2003, 2004 – 2007, 2008 – 2011, or 2012 – 2015.
- Setting:** This refers to the period the location of a film depicts i.e. period, contemporary or mixed.
- Major character:** This refers to the character around whom the plot of a film revolves; a king, a queen, a prince, a princess or any other person.
- Dominant theme:** This refers to the major subject around which a film's storyline is woven i.e. war (clashes, rifts, power tussle); love (romance, affection, marriage); intrigue (conspiracy, plot, deception); crime (cultism, murder, rape, aggressive fights, vulgarity, theft, kidnapping, abduction) or others (those not among the aforementioned).
- Role(s) attributed to a royal:** This refers to whether a royal person is presented as playing a domestic role, political role, economic role, spiritual role or any other role.
- Power exercised by a royal personality:** This refers to whether a royal person is presented as exercising dictatorial powers or liberal powers
- Attitude of a royal towards subjects:** This refers to whether a royal person is presented as exhibiting benevolence, wickedness or indifference in acting towards his/her subjects.

- viii. **Conduct of a royal towards a non-royal:** This refers to whether a royal person is respectful or disdainful towards a non-royal person.
- ix. **Royal Attribute(s) emphasised:** This refers to the attribute which a royal person is presented mainly as possessing i.e. power, wealth, dignity, or any other quality.
- x. **Charismatic traits attributed to a royal:** This refers to the charismatic trait which a royal person is portrayed mainly as possessing i.e. courage/bravery, Wisdom, discipline, talent etc.
- xi. **Character portrayed of a royal:** This refers to whether a royal person is portrayed as being strong or weak.

3.7. Instrument of Data Collection

Instrument of data collection was a coding sheet. It was designed for the quantitative content analysis (see Appendix II). The degree of consistency among the different studies on representation contents in Nollywood agreed to the decisions made in this study which is the coefficient employed to determine the reliability and validity of the instrument. The researcher coded the films herself and did not employ research assistants, thus dispensing with the need for an inter-coder reliability test.

The instrument of data collection for the KII was a key informant interview guide. This contained major interview questions and guidelines for follow-up questions.

3.8. Method of Data Collection

Data collection involved face-to-face interview. Telephone interview was utilised only in cases where it became impracticable for the researcher to meet physically with a respondent.

The researcher raised questions and follow-up questions, strictly following the interview guide referred to above. The questions of the researcher and answers of each respondent were recorded on tape in addition to the notes the researcher took.

3.9. Method of Data Analysis

Data analyses were both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative data extracted via content analysis were analysed using the quantitative approach. The statistical tool employed was simple

percentage. The analysis was computer-based via the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

For the qualitative data, the analysis was qualitative in nature. Data extracted through CDA and KII were thematically presented and analysed. Eventually, both the quantitative and qualitative data were read and interpreted together in order to arrive at the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The study utilized triangulated research methodology, therefore, the presentation of the data was in three parts; starting with the presentation of data from the quantitative research instruments to data from qualitative instruments. The data resulting from the content analysis was presented first, followed by the data from critical discourse analysis and finally the data from the key informant interview. Thereafter, the three sets of data were read together towards answering the research questions.

4.1. Quantitative Content Analysis

Data obtained from quantitative content analysis were presented in cross-tabs showing patterns of distribution of the categories across the years of release of the films. The categories measured were major character, film setting, dominant theme, role(s) attributed to a royal, power exercised by a royal personality, attitude of a royal towards subjects, conduct of a royal towards a non-royal, royal attributes emphasised, charismatic traits attributed to a royal, and general character verdict on a royal.

Table 4.1.

Major Character

	Year of Release					Total
	1996 to 1999	2000 to 2003	2004 to 2007	2008 to 2011	2012 to 2015	
Major Character						
King	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	25% N = 1	0% N = 0	5% N = 1
Queen	25% N = 1	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	25% N = 1	10% N = 2
Prince	25% N = 1	50% N = 2	25% N = 1	25% N = 1	25% N = 1	30% N = 6
Princess	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	50% N = 2	50% N = 2	0% N = 0	20% N = 4
Others	50% N = 2	50% N = 2	25% N = 1	0% N = 0	50% N = 2	35% N = 7
Total	100% N = 4	100% N = 4	100% N = 4	100% N = 4	100% N = 4	100% N = 20

Source: Fieldwork 2019

Table 4.1 shows the categories of royal personalities that featured as the major character in the films across the years of study. Across the twenty years, the scenes about other people that are not royals featured most with 35%. This is followed by the scenes that featured the prince with 30%, then the scenes of princess and the king with 20% and 10% respectively. Thus, a king featured least frequently as the major character while other persons, a prince, and a princess featured most frequently, in that order. This may be implied that a kingdom is not all about the king rather about the people; a king becomes irrelevant without the people to rule. So, a king relevance depends on the existence of the people in as much as he rules them, the king is because the people are. It can also be deduced from this table that in Igboland, the glory and authority of a king is seen in his immediate family; the members of the the king's family are as well very important to the kingdom and are very well relevant to the affairs of the kingdom.

Table 4.2.

Film Setting

Setting	Year of Release					Total
	1996 to 1999	2000 to 2003	2004 to 2007	2008 to 2011	2012 to 2015	
Period	25%	50%	50%	50%	0%	35%
	N = 1	N = 2	N = 2	N = 2	N = 0	N = 7
Contemporary	50%	50%	25%	25%	100%	50%
	N = 2	N = 2	N = 1	N = 1	N = 4	N = 10
Mixed	25%	0%	25%	25%	0%	15%
	N = 1	N = 0	N = 1	N = 1	N = 0	N = 3
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	N = 4	N = 4	N = 4	N = 4	N = 4	N = 20

Source: Fieldwork 2019

Table 4.2 shows that 25% of the films released between 1996 and 1999 were period movies, 50% in the contemporary time, while 25% was a mixture of period and contemporary. Also, 50% of the films released between 2000 and 2003 were period movies; another 50% were set in the contemporary, while none (0%) was a mixture of ancient and contemporary settings. Further, 50% of the films released between 2004 and 2007 were period movies, 25% were contemporary, while another 25% was a mixture of period and contemporary movies. Similarly, 50% of the

films released between 2008 and 2011 were period movies, 25% were contemporary, while 25% was a mixture of period and contemporary. Lastly, none (0%) of the films released between 2012 and 2015 was period movies, 100% were contemporary while none (0%) was a mixture of ancient and contemporary settings. These data indicate that there appears not to be a significant variation across the years (from 1996 to 2015) in terms of film setting. Overall, there is preponderance of period and contemporary settings meaning that the films tended to be usually more specific in terms of time setting; they tended not to integrate the period and the modern historical settings in their narratives.

Table 4.3.

Dominant Theme

Dominant Theme	Year of Release					Total
	1996 to 1999	2000 to 2003	2004 to 2007	2008 to 2011	2012 to 2015	
War/Strife/ Conflict/Struggle	100% N = 4	50% N = 2	25% N = 1	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	35% N = 7
Love/Romance	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	50% N = 2	100% N = 4	25% N = 1	35% N = 7
Intrigue	0% N = 0	50% N = 2	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	10% N = 2
Crime	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	50% N = 2	10% N = 2
Others	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	25% N = 1	0% N = 0	25% N = 1	10% N = 2
Total	100% N = 4	100% N = 4	100% N = 4	100% N = 4	100% N = 4	100% N = 20

Source: Fieldwork 2019

Table 4.3 shows that 100% of the films released between 1996 and 1999 had war/strife/conflict/struggle theme. Also, 50% of the films released between 2000 and 2003 had war/strife/conflict/struggle theme, Further, 25% of the films released between 2004 and 2007 had war/strife/conflict/struggle theme and 50% had love/romance theme, In the same vein, 100% of films released between 2008 and 2011 had themes based on love/romance These data show that in the earlier years, there was a preponderance of war/strife/conflict/struggle and intrigue themes in the films while the later years (particularly from 2004 to 2011) saw dominance of

films centred on the themes of love/romance and crime. But overall, the theme of war/strife/conflict/struggle significantly featured across 12 years (1996 – 2007) out of the 20 years studied. This may be as a result of the fact that monarchy is a political institution that may agitate conflict over land boundaries, freedom from oppression, crown heritage and so is often likely to generate narratives of power struggle, war and other forms of conflict. Moreover, people want to be identified with the royals and there may tend to be competition on who the royals associate with in terms of romantic relationships.

Table 4.4.

Role(s) Attributed to a Royal (By Scenes)

Role(s) Attributed	Year of Release					Total
	1996 to 1999	2000 to 2003	2004 to 2007	2008 to 2011	2012 to 2015	
To A Royal (by scenes)						
Domestic role	14.1% N = 22	5.3% N = 10	22.2% N = 43	45.9% N = 85	42.3% N = 82	26.4% N = 242
Political role	40.4% N = 63	51.4% N = 96	49.5% N = 96	22.2% N = 41	22.1% N = 43	37% N = 339
Economic role	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	0% N = 0	1% N = 2	0.2% N = 2
Spiritual role	10.2% N = 16	7% N = 13	3.1% N = 6	1.6% N = 22	0% N = 0	6.2% N = 57
Others	0% N = 0	14.4% N = 27	10.8% N = 21	11.9% N = 18	19.1% N = 37	11.6% N = 103
Not Applicable	35.3% N = 55	21.9% N = 41	14.4% N = 28	10.3% N = 19	15.4% N = 30	18.9% N = 173
Total	100% N = 156	100% N = 187	100% N = 194	100% N = 185	100% N = 194	100% N = 916

Source: Fieldwork 2019

Table 4.4 shows that 40.4% of the scenes in the films released between 1996 and 1999 portrayed the royals in a political role.. Similarly, 51.4% of the scenes in the films released between 2000 and 2003 portrayed the royals in a political role. In the same vein, 49.5% of the scenes in the films released between 2004 and 2007 portrayed them in a political role. Also, 45.9% of the scenes in the films released between 2008 and 2011 portrayed the royals in a political role,

42.3% of the scenes in the films released between 2012 and 2015 portrayed the royals in a domestic role and 22.1% portrayed them in a political role. Hence, over the 20-year-period, there was preponderance of political and domestic roles in the portrayal of the royals with political role featuring most. The dominance of political role appears to stem from the fact that royalty is basically about power, influence and prestige which are constituents of politics. On the other hand, the prominence of domestic role may have stemmed from the fact that a good number of the scenes centred on happenings in the royal household including familial relationships among members. However, the near absence of spiritual role in the characterisation of the royals may have been inspired by the near disappearance of the spiritual functions of the Igbo royals in the face of Christianisation that significantly diminished the influence of the traditional religion (Afigbo, 1986).

Table 4.5.

Power Exercised by a Royal Personality (By Scenes)

Power Exercised By A Royal Personality (by scenes)	Year of Release					Total
	1996 to 1999	2000 to 2003	2004 to 2007	2008 to 2011	2012 to 2015	
Dictatorial	30.8% N = 48	21.9% N = 41	13.9% N = 27	16.8% N = 31	12.9% N = 25	18.7% N = 172
Liberal	3.8% N = 6	6.4% N = 12	35.6% N = 69	35.1% N = 65	44.3% N = 86	26% N = 238
Not Applicable	65.4% N = 102	71.7% N = 134	50.5% N = 98	48.1% N = 89	42.8% N = 83	55.3% N = 506
Total	100% N = 156	100% N = 187	100% N = 194	100% N = 185	100% N = 194	100% N = 916

Source: Fieldwork 2019

Table 4.5 shows that 55.3% of the scenes in the films released over the twenty years did not lend themselves to such consideration because of the nature of the scenes. Also, 26% of the scenes in the films the royals as liberal, while 18.7% presented the royals as dictatorial. Hence, across the 20 years, there was dominance of liberal power in portrayal of the royals, particularly among the films released later. This pattern may be a reflection of the more democratic, more republican nature of the traditional Igbo society as against the decisively dictatorial monarchies of Benin and Oyo empires, (Adebayo, 2011; Durojaiye, 2013; Nnadozie, 2014).

Table 4.6.
Attitude of a Royal Towards Subjects (By Scenes)

Attitude of a Royal Towards Subjects (by scenes)	Year of Release					Total
	1996 to 1999	2000 to 2003	2004 to 2007	2008 to 2011	2012 to 2015	
Benevolent	9.6% N = 15	3.2% N = 6	13.9% N = 27	18.4% N = 34	14.4% N = 28	12% N = 110
Wicked	22.4% N = 35	20.3% N = 38	11.9% N = 23	10.3% N = 19	12.4% N = 24	15.2% N = 139
Indifferent	6.4% N = 10	9.6% N = 18	20.6% N = 40	22.7% N = 42	32.5% N = 63	18.8% N = 173
Not Applicable	61.5% N = 96	66.8% N = 125	53.6% N = 104	48.6% N = 90	40.7% N = 79	55.9% N = 494
Total	100% N = 156	100% N = 187	100% N = 194	100% N = 185	100% N = 194	100% N = 916

Source: Fieldwork 2019

Table 4.6 shows that 9.6% of the scenes in the films released from 1996 – 1999 portrayed the royals as benevolent towards the subjects, 22.4% portrayed them as wicked, 6.4% portrayed them as indifferent, while 61.5% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Furthermore, 3.2% of the scenes in the films released from 2000 – 2003 portrayed the royals as benevolent towards the subjects, 20.3% portrayed them as wicked, 9.6% portrayed them as indifferent, while 66.8% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Similarly, 9.6% of the scenes in the films released from 2004 – 2007 portrayed the royals as benevolent towards the subjects, 11.9% portrayed them as wicked, 20.6% portrayed them as indifferent, while 53.6% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Again, 18.4% of the scenes in the films released from 2008 – 2011 portrayed the royals as benevolent towards the subjects, 10.3% portrayed them as wicked, 22.7% portrayed them as indifferent, while 48.6% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Lastly, 14.4% of the scenes in the films released from 2012 – 2015 portrayed the royals as benevolent towards the subjects, 12.4% portrayed them as wicked, 32.5% portrayed them as indifferent, while 40.7% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Overall, benevolence and wickedness featured almost evenly as the attitude portrayed of royals in their relationship with their subjects. There was

dominance of indifference and which frequency increased with the progression of years. This may imply that the royals were mainly portrayed as being detached in dealing with their subjects as against acting with bias – positive or negative. Also, the portrayal of their attitudes depict that the king is either liberal or wicked. It showed that the early years, kings were portrayed as wicked, owning powers to banish or kill but in later years, there appeared the liberal attitude and cases of indifference, which may imply that civilization and christedom tend to play some roles in this growth as they tend to teach tolerance, forgiveness, service in leadership, love, unity et cetera.

Table 4.7.

Royal Attribute(s) Emphasised (By Scenes)

Royal Attribute(s) Emphasised (by scenes)	Year of Release					Total
	1996 to 1999	2000 to 2003	2004 to 2007	2008 to 2011	2012 to 2015	
Power	18.6% N = 29	13.4% N = 23	26.8% N = 52	23.8% N = 44	15.5% N = 30	19.7% N = 180
Wealth	0% N = 0	1.1% N = 2	3.1% N = 6	3.2% N = 6	14.9% N = 29	4.7% N = 43
Dignity of Conduct	6.4% N = 10	7.5% N = 14	14.4% N = 28	15.1% N = 28	13.9% N = 27	11.7% N = 107
Others	10.3% N = 16	1.1% N = 2	2.6% N = 5	1.6% N = 3	7.7% N = 15	4.5% N = 41
Not Applicable	64.7% N = 101	77% N = 144	53.1% N = 103	56.2% N = 104	48% N = 93	59.5% N = 545
Total	100% N = 156	100% N = 187	100% N = 194	100% N = 185	100% N = 194	100% N = 916

Source: Fieldwork 2019

Table 4.8 shows that 18.6% of the scenes in films released between 1996 and 1999 emphasised power as the attribute of the royals, 0% emphasised wealth, 6.4% emphasised dignity of conduct, 10.3% emphasised other attributes, while 64.7% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Also, 13.4% of the scenes in films released between 2000 and 2003 emphasised power as the attribute of the royals, 1.1% emphasised wealth, 7.5% emphasised dignity of conduct, 1.1% emphasised other attributes, while 77% of the scenes did not lend themselves to

such consideration. Furthermore, 26.8% of the scenes in films released between 2004 and 2007 emphasised power as the attribute of the royals, 3.1% emphasised wealth, 14.4% emphasised dignity of conduct, 2.6% emphasised other attributes, while 53.1% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Similarly, 23.8% of the scenes in films released between 2008 and 2011 emphasised power as the attribute of the royals, 3.2% emphasised wealth, 15.1% emphasised dignity of conduct, 1.6% emphasised other attributes, while 56.2% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Lastly, 15.5% of the scenes in films released between 2012 and 2015 emphasised power as the attribute of the royals, 14.9% emphasised wealth, 13.9% emphasised dignity of conduct, 7.7% emphasised other attributes, while 48% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Overall, power was the dominant attribute across the years which tend to reflect the data in Table 4.4 showing preponderance of portrayal of the royals in a political role across the scenes. Dignity of conduct was also significant suggesting that the filmmakers viewed this as an important attribute of Igbo monarchy.

Table 4.8.

General Character Verdict on a Royal (By Scenes)

General Character	Year of Release					Total
	1996 to 1999	2000 to 2003	2004 to 2007	2008 to 2011	2012 to 2015	
Strength	12.2%	20.3%	43.8%	35.8%	37.1%	31%
	N = 19	N = 38	N = 85	N = 70	N = 72	N = 284
Weakness	22.4%	18.2%	10.3%	20.5%	21.2%	18.6%
	N = 35	N = 34	N = 20	N = 38	N = 43	N = 170
Not Applicable	65.4%	61.5%	45.9%	39.7%	40.7%	50.4%
	N = 102	N = 115	N = 89	N = 77	N = 79	N = 462
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	N = 156	N = 187	N = 194	N = 185	N = 194	N = 916

Source: Fieldwork 2019

Table 4.10 shows that 31% of the scenes in the films released across the twenty years portrayed the royals as generally strong, 18.6% portrayed them as generally weak, while 50.4% of the scenes did not lend themselves to such consideration. Overall, the royals were portrayed as dominantly strong and the frequency was higher in the later years. This suggests that kings are

seen as strong individual who should never be intimidated by another individual, must be strong enough even in times of war, decision making and calamity. To the filmmakers, a royal should more often than not emerge a hero and not a villain.

4.2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was the procedure for the qualitative aspect of the study. As stated in chapter three, the CDA involved five out of the 20 films selected for the content analysis. They were *Ojadike*, *Egg of Life*, *Royal Tears*, *King of Kings* and *Royal Favour*.

4.2.1. Synopses of Selected Films

The synopsis of each of the selected five films is presented below. It is a short summary of each film to give an insight into its plot and theme.

4.2.1.1. *Ojadike*

The film *Ojadike* is a story of power play characterised by betrayals and intrigues. Produced by Ojiofor Ezeanyaeche and directed by Ojiofor Ezeanyaeche and Kabat Esosa Egbon, the 1996 film is set in the pre-colonial time. King Ojadike who rules over the people of Umuoba is portrayed as a great king, brave and invincible in battle. But unknown to the king, his brother, Egwu, spurred by inordinate ambition, is plotting to take over the throne of the kingdom from him.

The birth of the king's only child, Obiora, is a thing of joy for him and a significant development for the Ojadike dynasty as the successor to the throne has been born. This development is, however, not pleasant to Egwu who is bent on becoming the king. King Ojadike, who is completely ignorant of these secret plans of his brother, goes on preparing his little son for the throne by educating him on matters of tradition and kingship. Egwu, meanwhile, has unsuccessfully plotted to have the life of Prince Obiora ended by persuading him to go to "the land beyond the valley" which unknown to the little prince is inhabited by the notorious Agunze warriors – rebels who were exiled from Umuoba for attempting to usurp the throne of Ojadike. Obiora, however, becomes lucky to return with his life.

One day, Egwu asks Obiora to come and meet him in the bush. Egwu leaves Obiora behind and runs and informs Ojadike that the Agunze warriors are descending the hill and invading Umuoba. The king and Egwu run to meet the rampaging warriors. When the two sides meet, a

fight ensues. However, unknown to the king, his brother Egwu is a traitor working with the Agunze warriors. Soon, Egwu stabs the king from behind and he drops dead. He then instructs the warriors to seek out Obiora and kill him as well. However, Egwu is able to meet Obiora before the warriors are able to find him. He convinces the little boy to run away and never to return to Umuoba as the circumstances of his father's death are such that people will believe he murdered his father and so put him to death. While Obiora escapes, Egwu asks the Agunze warriors to pursue him and kill him. Though they eventually fail to catch up with him, they returned and lied to Egwu that the prince has been killed. With all obstacles out of the way or so he thinks, Egwu takes over the throne. He imposes a dictatorial rule, killing those that challenge him, selling people into slavery, forcefully taking people's wives and engaging his subjects in forced labour.

Meanwhile, Prince Obiora remains in exile where he continues to train himself in fighting. He meets two musicians in the bush who became his friends and constant companions. He grows to adulthood and becomes a formidable brave and invincible fighter like his late father. Following the apparition of his father as shown to him by a priest he met in the bush, Obiora storms Umuoba with his fighters, defeating and killing Egwu, thus deposing him, taking over his father's throne and liberating his people from his dictatorship.

4.2.1.2. *Egg of Life*

Egg of Life is a film which centres around the desperate effort of the people of Efuru Kingdom to save the life of their crown prince who is bound to die unless a perilous journey is made to the land of *Ogbanje* to bring his life force – “egg of life” to the kingdom. Produced by Ojiofor Ezeanyaeche and directed by Andy Amaechi, the 2003 film revolves around the themes of determination, courage, bravery and sacrifice as particularly exemplified by the seven maidens, who were sent to go and seek for and bring the egg of life.

The king of Efuru has been without a child. However, his wife, the queen, conceives at last after nine years of fruitlessness. The childbirth turns out successful, after a moment of anxious wait by the king. The male child is named Ikemefuna and the king is at last fulfilled that a successor to his throne has been born.

However, as Ikemefuna grows, certain strange occurrences are noticed around him. He falls seriously sick from time to time bringing anxiety to his parents especially the mother. At times,

he is seen appearing to be chatting, playing or eating with some unseen characters, and when confronted about this, he denies interacting with any invisible entities. This leads to the suspicion that the prince is an *ogbanje* – an evil child that comes to the world to torment his parents by falling sick all the time and dying prematurely. However, the king would have none of the suggestions that his son is of such evil.

One day, Ikemefuna falls sick again, this time becoming unconscious with all efforts to revive him failing. The priestess of Efuru is invited and she confirms that the boy is an *ogbanje* and that his time on earth is up; “his soul is in limbo”; he must die unless his life force i.e. egg of life is brought from the land of *ogbanje*. It is an extremely perilous journey through “the land of the dead”, to be embarked upon by seven maidens who are to be chosen by Efuru the goddess of the pure and innocent.

As expected, the journey turns out to be an eerie and deadly adventure. Five of the seven chosen maidens lost their lives to evil forces as the team struggle their way through the forest of Ekwensu. Eventually, only Amarachi and Chioma return successfully with the egg of life. However, Chioma dies as soon as they arrive at the palace having sustained a fatal injury in one of their numerous fights with the malevolent entities encountered on their way back. It is with mixed emotions that the king and others welcome back the hero Amarachi as well as mourn the other heroes who could not make it back, safely. With the egg of life, the priestess of Efuru revives Ikemefuna, who rises energetically, brimming with life. The king, in fulfilment of his earlier pledge, betroths Amarachi to the prince – she is to become the royal bride. He also gives her some substantial amount of wealth as also pledged.

4.2.1.3. *Royal Tears*

Royal Tears tells the story of how a royal family meets their tragedy as a result of the king’s insistence on forcing his daughter to marry a man she does not wish to marry. Produced by Charles Offor and directed by Ikenna Emma Aniekwe, the film’s plot is woven around love, class difference, vindictiveness and its evil consequences. Princess Olaedo, an asthmatic young woman, is so much loved by her father who would do anything just to please her. One day, against the wishes of her father, Olaedo goes to the Iyiogbu Lake to swim. Soon after she has jumped into the water, she begins to drown, requiring the timely intervention of Kasie, a young man washing by the lakeside, to rescue her. The princess has been seized by asthmatic attack and she is gasping for breath. Kasie runs to the palace to get her inhaler and succeeds after serious

exertions that see him fall on his way back. This role played by Kasie in saving Olaedo's life brings the two an affinity that eventually develops into a love affair, which the king is not comfortable with for the reason that Olaedo has been betrothed since her childhood to Cassidy Nwabueze, a son of a senator whose status is considered befitting of a princess. However, the princess continues her friendship with Kasie secretly.

Eventually, Cassidy Nwabueze returns from Texas, United States. His dressing, speech and mannerism bear an exaggerated imitation of the style of trendy young Americans. He is also rude and impulsive. Olaedo does not find him likeable and they cannot get on smoothly. However, the king is determined to ensure that the marriage between him and his daughter materializes. He would have no commoner in the person of Kasie jeopardizing the marriage.

As the wedding approaches, Princess Olaedo persuades Kasie to attend, a request he hesitantly obliges. On the D-day, events take a new twist when Olaedo, instead of presenting the traditional cup of drink to Cassidy, presents it to Kasie. All hell is let loose as Cassidy pounces on Kasie and the wedding event ends in disarray. It is at this point that the princess confesses that she is pregnant for Kasie.

Now living with Kasie as his wife, Olaedo continues to nurse his early pregnancy, and soon a fresh trouble surfaces. She is diagnosed with a health condition requiring that the fetus in her womb be expelled through dilation and curettage (D & C). The couple cannot afford the 100 thousand naira charged by the hospital for this surgical procedure prompting Kasie to approach his father-in-law, the king, for help, but he flatly turns him down. His mother equally goes to plead on his behalf; still the king would not budge. However, there is a miraculous turnaround of events as the doctor declares that Olaedo's condition is improving and that the D & C may no longer be required.

Having attended a job interview with success after a long time of being unemployed, Kasie requires a reference letter from his traditional ruler to proceed. He approaches his father-in-law for this, and he completely declines. His erstwhile school principal equally goes to plead with the king on his behalf but to no avail. Kasie consequently loses the job offer.

Again, the pregnant Olaedo is hospitalized and money is required for an intervention. Kasie again approaches his father-in-law but he once more declines. As the delay in treatment continues, Olaedo's condition degenerates and eventually she needs some blood. Kasie donates

blood and his wife is cured. However, he eventually dies of shock owing to his history of heart condition for which he ought not to have been a blood donor. Upon hearing of Kasie's death, Olaedo's father who has become remorseful pays her a visit to condole with her and ask for forgiveness. His daughter, however, rebuffs him for being wicked and insensitive. He goes home devastated, only to die of stroke shortly after.

4.2.1.4. *King of Kings*

King of Kings is a story woven around a struggle for the kingship stool of Okofia village. Produced by Kenneth Ogbuikwe and directed by Iyke Odife, the 2008 film presents a kingdom with a vacant throne and ambitious claimants to the throne, setting the stage for a fierce contest filled with arm twisting and intrigues. The death of King Okofia I (the monarch of Okofia) has seen his eldest son become Okofia II. However, the new king is killed by his younger brother, Afoka, who then assumes his position and exiles the deceased's pregnant wife from the village.

Upon the death of Afoka, his son, Prince Okadigbo, who has just returned from abroad, is persuaded by his mother, the queen, to work his way to the throne even though the throne rightly belongs to Joshua, his father's brother. Okadigbo accepts this counsel and is poised to give any opponent including Ichie Oguguo, the Onowu of Okofia, a good fight.

Meanwhile, a delegation of chiefs has gone to city to persuade Joshua who is a teacher and the rightful successor to the throne to return to become the king. Upon his return, Okadigbo feels threatened and does not hide his antagonism towards the "impostor". Soon, he uses the palace guards to throw Joshua out of the palace to ensure he is not so close to the seat of power.

However, a certain man whose identity is not exactly known apart from the fact that he is "an illustrious son of the land" has been gaining fame and influence in the land due to his philanthropy including building a secondary school and borehole in Okofia. Okadigbo is so uncomfortable at this situation as that might threaten his position in the village. Eventually, this powerful man reveals himself as Nwabueze Aguiyi Udoka, the son of King Okofia II whose brother (Okadigbo's father) killed to take over the throne. He goes by the nickname "King of Kings" and carries himself with extraordinary pomp and circumstance.

Nwabueze, who is also interested in the throne, thus becomes a bitter rival of Okadigbo. His attempt to persuade Joshua to drop his kingship ambition in his favour is unsuccessful. However, his rivalry with Okadigbo continues. Okadigbo, nonetheless, is out to get the throne at all costs,

so every obstacle must be quashed. He schemes a series of kidnappings which sees his adversaries; Ichie Nwokolo, Joshua and the Onowu disappear one after the other. The way the abductions are set up makes it appear it is Nwabueze that is behind them.

Faced with the stigma of being seen as a kidnapper, Nwabueze involves the police. Eventually, the police is able to rescue the kidnapped victims, exposing Okadigbo's complicity and consequently arresting him. The rescued Joshua is willing to relinquish the throne to his nephew Nwabueze, but the latter has given up his ambition. Consequently, he turns down Joshua's offer, preferring to rather support him in becoming the next monarch. The climax comes with Joshua being crowned King Okofia III in an elaborate ceremony.

4.2.1.5. *Royal Favour*

Royal Favour focuses on the matrimonial intrigues that ultimately destroy a prince and leave his family devastated. Produced by Precious Okafor and directed by Ugezu J. Ugezu, the film tells the story of how a family suddenly assumes a royal status as a result of the decision by the town of Urukpeleke to replace her long-time tradition of hereditary kingship with a rotational arrangement. Thus, royalty is taken away from the Ugwu family where it has resided since time immemorial to the Umugoagu village where Chief Onyenna is chosen to become the first king under the new rotational arrangement. This results in a sudden change of status for the Onyenna family as his wife, hitherto an ordinary poor village woman, becomes the queen, while his son, Nosike, a graduate who has unsuccessfully searched for job for three years, becomes the prince. However, this change of status immediately becomes a source of ordeal for Chinenyenwa, Prince Nosike's fiancée, as the queen suddenly begins to see her as backward and lacking the class to be married to the prince. All efforts made by Prince Nosike and Chinenyenwa to have the queen change her hostile attitude and accept her as part of the family fail.

The visit to the palace by Chief Ilodibe, the most influential man of Urukpeleke, alongside his beautiful daughter, Jane, would worsen the ordeal of Chinenyenwa, as the queen immediately becomes impressed with what she sees as Jane's classy personality and starts to work towards having Prince Nosike marry her. Jane succeeds in luring the prince under the influence of alcohol to sleep with her and thereafter she reports that she has become pregnant; a development that eventually forces Prince Nosike to marry her. However, this marriage becomes a source of constant pain to the Prince and her family, as Jane, the new bride, becomes insolent and aggressive towards everybody. After months of hide and seek, luck finally runs out on Jane, as

her pregnancy is discovered to have been faked. Finally, the whole truth is let out by Jane who confesses that it is her father, Chief Ilodibe, that hatched the whole conspiracy to get her married to the royal family where she would work to destroy the family so that kingship would be taken away from them and given to the Ilodibe family.

Meanwhile, as Prince Nosike and his family mourn their losses, Chinenyenwa, his erstwhile fiancée, who has moved on following the marriage of the prince to Jane, is working hard to build her life by pursuing her small fish farming business. She finally makes a life-changing breakthrough when, through the help of her friend, Afoma, whose husband is an official of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, she is appointed to head a Youth Engagement Scheme of the ministry.

4.2.2. Analysis of Discourses

In analysing the films, the researcher looked out for discourses that emerged dominant in the films' representation of Igbo monarchy. The discourses, as observed by the researcher, were as follows:

- i. The discourse of power
- ii. The discourse of class/privilege
- iii. The discourse of divine legitimisation, and
- iv. The discourse of gender power relations

4.2.2.1. Discourse of Power

Dominant across the selected films is the theme of power as exercised by the royals. This discourse of power projects the royals as either dictatorial and ruthless or democratic and kind in their exercise of power. In *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life* – two films set in the pre-colonial times – the monarchs are generally presented as possessing absolute powers including the power to order execution and banishment of subjects. For instance, King Ojadike tells his brother, Egwu, who is about to walk out on him: “Never you turn your back on me or I will order your execution”. In another instance, as he departs for battle and leaving Osondu in charge of his little son, he warns: “If anything happens to my son, your head will go off.”

In *Egg of Life*, the king's dictatorial powers is manifest in his insistence of banishing the friend of the queen for suggesting that his son, Prince Obiora, is an *ogbanje*. It is an incident that portrays the king as a law unto himself; he can take actions of such magnitude in the heat of

passion, totally at his own discretion and no one can question or fault it. In *Ojadike*, the king is portrayed as capable of dividing the kingdom into two; the kingdom is like his personal property. “On no account will I divide the kingdom into two and give one to you,” King Ojadike replies to his brother Egwu’s demand. Even though he is declining this demand, the reason for the decline is not his lack of powers but political and moral reasons.

On the contrary, in *King of Kings*, *Royal Tears* and *Royal Favour* – films set in the post-colonial period – absolute powers are not depicted as a legitimate attribute of monarchs. The royals are presented as less dictatorial and more tempered in exercise of power. In fact, they do not possess absolute powers like their counterparts of films set in the pre-colonial times. In *Royal Tears*, for instance, the king appears to be handicapped in the face of the continued “intrusion” of Kasie into the palace. Similarly, in *Royal Favour*, both the king and the queen can do little about Chinenyenwa’s similar stubbornness as she fights to become married into the royal family. Such defiance, apparently, would have earned these two some ruthless punishments were it to be in the setting seen in *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life* where the monarchs exercise more dictatorial powers and routinely take drastic and cold-blooded decisions. Similarly, in *King of Kings*, dictatorial power is delegitimised by associating it with an usurper of the throne – Prince Okadigbo. The dictatorial powers he exercises, such as seen in his ordering people to be whipped and throwing out his uncle Joshua from the palace, are presented in a negative light; they are projected as immoral and unlawful machinations of an impostor who wants to cling on to a throne that does not belong to him. That he has to resort to secret abductions and hostage taking to neutralise his opponents is a testimony to the limits of his legitimate powers. In *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life*, the monarchs would not have required such hidden machinations as it is in their powers to openly and legitimately order executions and banishments to neutralise enemies. This discourse of limited power finds its climax in Prince Okadigbo’s attempted escape and ultimate arrest by the police when his machinations become exposed. Thus, what he legitimately possesses is not absolute powers as his authority is still subject to a higher authority – the government and her police force. This limitation of powers has brought a major shift in the position and role of African monarchs since the advent of colonialism and its imposition of western-styled political institutions (Anumba, 2017). Thus, it may be argued that the films set in the pre-colonial and post-colonial periods are merely trying to reflect this historical reality. Interestingly, these films with pre-colonial setting were found among the films released in the first seven years of the 20-year period under study. In other words, royal characters were portrayed as dictatorial and ruthless in their exercise of power in the earlier films than they were in the later films within the

study period. This pattern is reflected in the quantitative data as seen in Table 4.5 which shows that in the films released between 1996 and 2003, the royals were portrayed as exercising dictatorial powers in more number of scenes as against the films released between 2004 and 2015 where they were portrayed as exercising liberal powers in lesser number of scenes. Also, Table 4.6 indicates that in the films released between 1999 and 2003, more scenes portrayed the royals as wicked while a lesser number of scenes portrayed them as benevolent; contrarily, more scenes among the films released between 2004 and 2014 portrayed the royals as being benevolent even as a lesser number portrayed them as wicked. Table 4.4 may also be instructive here; films released between 1996 and 2007 portrayed the royals as playing political roles in about 40% to 50% of the scenes as against the films released between 2008 and 2015 where they dominantly played domestic roles. Dictatorship is associated with political power; hence portraying a royal in a political role enables dictatorial characterisation.

The discourse of power in the films also juxtaposes power as a function of physical strength and valour and power as a function of moral and legal authority. In the two films with earlier release dates and set in the pre-colonial times – *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life* – royal power is represented much more as a function of sheer physical strength and valour. In *Ojadike* in particular, the king's bravery and pedigree as an unconquerable warrior are continuously foregrounded all through the film. He embodies an image of a formidable fighter. He easily pulls his sword, ready to crush any adversary. The dialogue between him and his son, Prince Obiora, after the latter has taken the risk of crossing over to the hill inhabited by Agunze warriors, also emphasises valour as a character of monarchy. In the course of it, the king boasts affirmatively “I Ojadike have never lost any battle”, he tells Obiora. While growing up as a child, Obiora is in the regular habit of training to be a fighter; in fact, these regular training sessions constitute a dominant image in the narrative of the prince's growth and maturity towards becoming a king. He has been indoctrinated by his father to pursue valour as a quality befitting of his royalty. “Father said fear defeats strength”, Prince Obiora tells his uncle Egwu when the latter accuses him of fearing. As a grown-up, Prince Obiora emerges a tall, huge and muscular man exuding an imposing, if not intimidating, physicality.

In *Egg of Life*, physical strength and valour continue to be foregrounded as an attribute of royalty. The king is a physically tough character, so his successor ought to be tough as well. Hence, he is enraged when his wife appears to suggest that their repeatedly sick son Ikemefuna

is a frail person. “Do you mean that my son is not strong enough to succeed me?” he angrily complains to his wife. Here, the attribute “strong enough” refers to physical toughness.

Hence, the image of masculinity dominates the discourse of royal power. In *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life*, the king is portrayed as invariably unemotional, not showing fear or compassion. This quality, instructively, is a recurring theme in the discourse of nobility and greatness in Igbo cosmology as found in Igbo folk tales, proverbs and idioms (Okwenna, 2013). An instance is seen in Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* where Okonkwo’s nobility is, to a large extent, realised in his valour and formidability as a wrestler – a quality that distinguishes him from his father, Unoka, portrayed as a weakling. Okonkwo’s drawing of his machete to cut down Ikemefuna validates his unemotional character; a quality worthy of his greatness – “He was afraid of being called weak,” (Achebe, 2012, p.31). Absence of emotionality is associated with masculinity across cultures (Hall, 1997); thus masculinity becomes dominant in the discourse of monarchical power in these films.

The theme of physical strength and valour also reflects in the costuming of the kings in *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life*. The two kings have tiger skin as part of their regalia; this piece of animal skin evokes the image of a formidable fighter – *ogbu agu* (tiger killer) – a name invoked among Igbo people to connote a person of valour. Strikingly, tiger skin also appears as part of the decorations on the king’s throne in the two films.

While valour and physical strength are not emphasised in the films set in the post-colonial period and with latter release dates – *Royal Tears*, *King of Kings* and *Royal Favour* – such theme is not entirely absent. The tiger skin in the costume of the kings in *Egg of Life* and *Ojadike* re-appears in these latter films, but this time more subtly – in the dressing of royals who sometimes wear flowing tops with images of tiger head (*isi agu*) dominating their designs – a trademark attire for Igbo titled men. Thus re-emerges the symbolism of tiger – connoting physical strength and valour – as an element in portrayal of royalty. But generally, these latter films tend to deemphasize valour, physical strength and violence as royal attributes. In *King of Kings*, Prince Okadigbo, the usurper is portrayed as a travesty of royalty largely due to his aggressiveness and reliance on violence. “This is not how our king should be behaving”, the Onowu laments on hearing how the prince threw Joshua out of the palace. Okadigbo’s aggressiveness is juxtaposed with the cool-headedness of Joshua portrayed as the rightful claimant to the throne. Interestingly,

aggressiveness is legitimized as a royal attribute in *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life*, while the opposite disposition is delegitimised as a sign of weakness.

Nonetheless, there is a pattern that appears to have introduced some contradictions into the narrative of royal power in the films set in pre-colonial times. While these films definitely portray dictatorial monarchs, a few scenes in them yet appear to idealise democracy and liberal disposition as an appropriate character of a royal towards the subjects – thus negating dictatorship as a form of legitimate power. A particular dialogue between King Ojadike and his son, Prince Obiora, shows this counter-absolutism narrative. It goes this way:

- King Ojadike:** *Take a look at all these lands and scenery; tomorrow you will become the king and everything will be under you.*
- Prince Obiora:** *Do you mean I will rule them?*
- King Ojadike:** *No, you will lead them.*
- Prince Obiora:** *What is the difference, father?*
- King Ojadike:** *If you rule them, you will be far from them and they cannot get to you. But when you lead them, you are teaching them by example. You become their servant.*
- Prince Obiora:** *Servant?*
- King Ojadike:** *Yes.*
- Prince Obiora:** *But father, I thought as a king, they will be the ones to serve me....*
- King Ojadike:** *Not when you want to be a good king.*

The contradiction is evident in the fact that while Ojadike warns his son that the more acceptable action is to “lead” the people as against to “rule” them, he is repeatedly greeted by Osondu as “The king who *rule* over us”. And his overall conduct as a king denotes more of a “ruler” than a “leader”.

In *Egg of Life*, the king addresses Prince Ikem and his new bride Amarachi; “I want both of you to guarantee that the wishes of the people you rule will always be your command.” This admonition does not seem to be in synchrony with the actual pattern of exercise of power by the king as manifested in his unilateral, instant and drastic decisions that portray him more like a dictator than a democrat.

Similarly, in *Ojadike*, dictatorship becomes portrayed as a negative character in Prince Egwu, the usurper of the throne. He is a complete oppressor, serially executing anyone that dares challenge him, introduces forced labour, forced marriage, slavery and banishment. “Nobody challenges Egwu,” he is fond of saying as he insists on neutralising any opponent, real or imagined. By characterising him as displaying an extreme, if not pathological, form of dictatorship, the film is able to position him as an opposite of his brother, Ojadike, the legitimate occupier of the throne whom he killed to take over. Thus, such extreme dictatorship becomes a notorious attribute distinguishing a legitimate king from an illegitimate one. This narrative is also visible in the encounter between Obiora and his two musician friends when one of them, in regard to the former’s impetuous and aggressive disposition, says “he must learn kingly manners.” “Kingly manners” in this context refers to the exact opposite of the behaviour he is exhibiting. Ironically, such behaviour has earlier been legitimised in his father Ojadike, whose aggressive and combative disposition is portrayed as a befitting quality of a king who is expected to be a man of valour and strength.

Thus, on the whole, the discourse of power in the representation of royalty in the films under study revealed differentiations in the nature of power attributed to royals in films set in pre-colonial times and those set in the post-colonial time. While the films set in pre-colonial times tended to represent the royals as legitimately exercising dictatorial powers, those set in the post-colonial times tend to portray them as being more tempered in their exercise of power. However, there seems to be contradictory narrative in the films set in pre-colonial times as dictatorship is at the same time equally delegitimised as unbefitting of the monarchy; though dictatorship is clearly foregrounded while democratic disposition is backgrounded. Similarly, the power of royals in the films set in pre-colonial times stems from their physical strength, valour and unemotional disposition; traits that cast monarchy in a masculinised mould.

4.2.2.2. Discourse of Class and Privilege

The discourse of royal class and privilege is realised in the films through portrayal of the royals as some form of special breed among other humans. This attribute tends to be privileged over every other attribute that culturally earns one respect and privilege, such as age. Thus, in *Ojadike*, the elderly Osondu has to defer to the child Prince Obiora, addressing him as “Your Highness”. The little prince, in turn, will not hesitate to shout down on the old man who appears to be of higher age than his father; “stop complaining!” he sharply rebukes Osondu when the latter is expressing his discomfort at the little prince’s strong-headedness. On another occasion,

the prince commands Osondu to climb a tree and pluck a fruit for him. All this shows privileging of royalty over age and seniority; a royal's class and privilege transcend whatever advantage age can confer. Arguably, this is even more instructive in an Igbo setting where age is so much upheld as a determinant of respect and privilege (Nnadi, 2008; Anumba, 2017).

The privileging of royalty over age continued in the other films. In *King of Kings*, the young Okadigbo retains his right to be honoured and obeyed by the chiefs including the Onowu irrespective of the big age gap between him and them. In *Royal Favour*, Prince Nosike's age is not a barrier to the influence he exercises as seen in the way he confronts Chief Ilodibe when his marriage with the former's daughter starts going sour. The same obtains with Princess Olaedo in *Royal Tears* where the princess always enjoys her royal privilege apparently without any encumbrance for reasons of age.

In *Ojadike*, the king warns his disrespectful and overambitious brother Egwu that the only thing stopping him from pronouncing a death penalty on him is the fact that he possesses "royal privilege" as a prince. In other words, being born a royal confers on one something that makes their life more precious than that of any other person. In another instance, the king severely warns Osondu in whose charge he is leaving his son while departing for battle: "If anything happens to my son, your head will go off." This reinforces the narrative of the inviolability of the life of a royal. This is even more emphatically expressed in the scene where Osondu is dissuading Obiora from risking his life by wandering on the hills – "you know you are a prince," he continues to warn. Hence, his life is sacred, not just for being a human, but further for being a royal. In *Egg of Life*, the life of the prince is almost like the life of the entire community; "You carry the burden of Efuru; you are the link between yesterday and today....," the priestess tells the seven maidens selected to go and get the egg of life which is the only way the prince can live.

The discourse of royal class and privilege continues to be realised in the films through carefully carving out for the royals a social space that is exclusive and inviolable; any unworthy mortal must not intrude into this space. "Don't you see I am talking to my son", Osondu gets a rebuke from King Ojadike for wanting to give an urgent message to the king while the two royals are having their chats; he is invading the royal space. In *Royal Tears* and *Royal Favour*, this discourse is so emphatically entrenched in the narrative of royal matrimony around which the plots of the two films are woven. In the former, a commoner like Kasie is considered too lowly

to be married to Princess Olaedo, while in the latter, Chinenyenwa is equally seen as too much a commoner to enjoy the space of the royal matrimony by being wedded to Prince Nosike. In contrast, Cassidy, the son of the rich and illustrious Senator Nwabueze is portrayed as the worthy groom for Olaedo, while Jane, the daughter of Chief Ilodibe, the wealthiest man of the town, is considered the suitable bride for Prince Nosike. Instructively, at the time when Nosike's family is non-royal – before the kingship unexpectedly falls on his father – nothing is considered abnormal about his love affair with Chinenyenwa. It is the conferment of royalty on the family that suddenly brings about the antagonism, particularly from the queen, towards the impending marriage between the duo, with the queen constantly reminding Nosike; “you are now a prince and you should know your class.” In a particular scene where the queen finds Nosike and Chinenyenwa together in the sitting room, she addresses Nosike sternly: “You dare not allow her bring you down to her level... This *thing* beside you ... This *thing* does not respect royalty. Do not allow her to bring you down to her level.” The pronoun “thing” as employed by the queen in reference to Chinenyenwa aims to emphasize her non-status in the presence of royals. In other words, by being close to the prince, she is merely intruding into the reserved space of royalty. In *Royal Tears*, Cassidy is seen referring to Kasie as suitable to be “an ordinary hospital cleaner” and so should not dream of marriage with a royal like Olaedo. Olaedo's father, the king, equally refers to Kasie's “unrefined manners” as “incompatible with the glory of this family's royalty.” The king regularly continues to use expressions like “*Ugwu eze ga-adiriri eze*” (“the king's honour is due to him”) to emphasize the dignity of the royal family which for him means that non-royals like Kasie should have no place in the palace by way of getting married to the princess. This disdain and marginalization of the lowly by the mighty constitutes the central theme of the film.

This discourse is equally realized in *Egg of Life* where the promise made by the king to make a royal bride of any person that succeeds in bringing the “egg of life” is projected as an irresistible offer. There is no question of asking such a person whether she would love to marry the prince. Marrying the prince should be the dream of any young woman. This promise is unilateral (made by the king alone) with no consideration of the preferences of the would-be beneficiary. It would have been a different thing if the ladies being sent out to hunt for this inaccessible mysterious object had volunteered themselves for the unenviable task and that the offer had been made before this time, such that any such volunteer can be considered to have accepted the offer. But contrarily, the task is imposed and the offer also apparently imposed. And not unexpectedly, the fulfilment of the pledge also turns out unilateral; the marriage between the prince and Amarachi

is unilaterally pronounced by the king; no question of asking for the consent of the bride-to-be; she ought to see being admitted into the royal space, via the instrumentality of matrimony, as a priceless privilege that cannot be rejected.

The discourse of an inviolable royal space also unfolds in the narrative of family succession in *Ojadike*. Royalty is projected as a thing of blood; royal succession is inherited and not acquired; thus, a succeeding king must be of the royal blood as his predecessor. Thus, King Ojadike is so much obsessed with having his son, Obiora, as his successor, once saying that “this boy is the only royal blood that can succeed me when I join my ancestors.” In *Egg of Life*, the king continues to agonise over the possibility of losing his son which will mean the end of the royal throne of Efuru kingdom; no one will be worthy of ascending the throne upon such an unfortunate end of the royal succession line. The special place of the royal blood is equally foregrounded when the king reminds his wife whose friend has just been banished for calling the prince *ogbanje* that he, the king, should feel the pain of an insult directed to a royal relative more than she should feel the pain of a punishment meted to a “mere” friend; “The ties of royalty is stronger than the ties of friendship... That woman insulted not just myself but also the throne. Nobody has the right to insult this throne,” the king howls.

This sentiment of the special status of royal blood re-echoes in the birth narrative of crown princes in the two films. The glamour associated with these births shows that they are no ordinary birth. “Your highness, a great thing has happened,” Osondu breezes in to announce the news to the king. It is celebration all the way henceforth. In *Egg of Life*, the birth of Prince Ikemefuna is no less glamorous. The message is delivered to the king and the atmosphere instantly assumes great solemnity with music and rituals. “Call all the wine tappers to bring their wines to the palace”, the king calls out as celebration mood seizes the whole place.

Furthermore, in a bid to distinguish the royals from the pack, wealth is portrayed as one of the attributes that makes a royal. However, in the films set in the pre-colonial times, this is only implied, as wealth is only silently enacted in the discourse of royal class/privilege. In *Egg of Life*, for instance, the only allusion to wealth as a feature of the royal family is when the king promises to give great wealth to whoever that succeeds in bringing back the egg of life. Contrarily, wealth as a royal attribute is so much foregrounded in the films set in the contemporary time. Cassidy and Jane are portrayed as coming from very rich families; an important credential that qualifies them for royal marriage in *Royal Tears* and *Royal Favour*

respectively. In contrast, the queen repeatedly refers to the “wretched” Chinenyenwa as unworthy of getting married to Prince Nosike.

In *King of Kings*, *Royal Tears* and *Royal Favour*, the palace houses are magnificent pieces of modern architecture. The royals in the three films ride in exquisite cars, often in a convoy; clutching expensive gadgets like smartphones and iPad, and with their houses lavishly furnished— all symbols of affluence. This contrasts with the portrayal of royals in the films set in the pre-colonial times – *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life* – where the palaces are simple compounds with small huts and no fences. Instructively, in *Royal Favour*, the family of Chief Onyenna suddenly moves from being poor to a position of wealth as soon as royalty is thrust upon it by a mere decision of Ndi Oji Ani (decision makers). This instant transformation creates a discontinuity in narrative as no account of the source of this wealth is given; perhaps Chief Onyenna is portrayed rich because a king ought to be rich!

The association of Igbo monarchy with wealth, according to Alozie (2013), is a recent phenomenon founded on capitalism and increasing worship of wealth in our contemporary society. The author argues that government’s meddling in the traditional monarchical institution has brought about politicisation of what is otherwise an apolitical entity. “Traditional rulers now run after government contracts and all sorts of largesse. They are now bribed and can be manipulated for selfish political purposes by politicians. Money now rules them” (Alozie, 2013, p.21). He regrets what he terms “devaluation” of Igbo monarchy and chieftaincy institution in general. “Title holders were traditionally known to be men of unimpeachable integrity and incorruptible truth sayers; but today they have turned to moneybags” (Alozie, 2013, p.23). If these assertions are anything to go by, then it may be suggested that the filmmakers were merely attempting to reflect real changes in society by the way wealth is foregrounded as a quality of royal class in the films set in post-colonial times and the reverse is the case in the films set in the pre-colonial era. The quantitative data appear to reflect this pattern as Table 4.8 shows that wealth was less emphasised as a royal attribute than in the films released between 1996 and 2003 (which include *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life*) than it was in those released thereafter which are mostly set in the post-colonial period.

Another observable pattern in the discourse of royal class and privilege is a seeming western bias in the costuming of the royals in the films set in the post-colonial era. In the films set in pre-colonial times, the royal costumes are entirely of native flavour. For instance, in *Egg of Life*, the

maidens wear simply woven hair as against the artificial hair found with the palace maidens in the films set in the contemporary time. The attire of the queen is a piece of cloth tied round the body from the chest region and with local beads hanging down her neck. Also, the palace guards tie cloths around their waists, leaving their upper body bare. In *Ojadike*, the pattern is strikingly the same.

Contrarily, in *Royal Tears*, Princess Olaedo invariably wears artificial hair (wig or weavon). This contrasts with the hair costuming of the palace maidens who only wear the traditional beads around their traditionally woven natural hair. So, the artificial hair – a western fashion – becomes the distinguishing element between the royal (Princess Olaedo) and her non-royal maidens. In other words, this juxtaposition of traditionally woven hair and foreign artificial hair is deployed for asserting the royalty of the princess. In *Royal Favour*, this dichotomy of traditional hair style versus western artificial hair is also visible. Nosike's mother, while she is a non-royal, wears a traditionally woven hair and uses scarf; but as soon as royalty comes to their family, all that changes, as she thenceforth dons artificial hair that is elaborate in style. But unlike in *Royal Tears*, the palace maidens equally wear artificial hair, though theirs comes with much less sophistication than that of the queen as seen in its shortness and less elaborate style. Jane's hair is conspicuously artificial with much flamboyance in length and styling. She also dresses in western style and applies elaborate western make-up – qualities that underline her classiness and royal merit. "Chief Ilodibe came with her *exquisitely beautiful* daughter", said the visibly impressed queen to Nosike as she aims to connect the two towards an ultimate matrimonial union. Instructively, such "exquisite beauty" would not apply to Chinenyenwa, her rival in the imminent royal marriage, whose traditional hairstyle and less sophisticated dressing (in the western sense) contrast with Jane's classy and royalty-befitting style. In *Royal Tears* also, the style of Princess Olaedo's blouses, skirts and gowns as well as elaborate make-ups strike the chord of western concept of beauty which is differentiated from those of her most immediate supporting characters – the maidens. Cassidy Nwabueze – the young man depicted as befitting of royal marriage to Olaedo – is equally costumed in a typical western fashion involving shirt and suit, face cap, eye glasses, elaborate necklaces and ear rings. All these are deployed to underline his class, his royalty-compliant status, as against Kasie's costuming that does not embody such western sophistication. Interestingly, this seeming bias extends even to a highly informal, highly private domain of the palace life, the bedroom setting, where the queen mother, while going to bed, dons a western nightgown with her artificial hair remaining visible just as the palace maidens in contrast don traditional attire.

In *Royal Favour*, an important point in this narrative is Chinenyenwa's decision, as prompted by her friend Afoma, to go for a fitting gown, high-heel shoes, artificial hair and make-up so as to make her acceptable to the queen. As she dons these western costumes, Afoma says in approval of her new look:

Now the queen will know that you are more *befitting* to her son... It is called *packaging*... Nosike loves you, but his status has changed now. He is now exposed to a lot of *classy* women, and you need to be *classy* in order not to be edged out (emphasis supplied).

As observable from the above statement, the attributions “packaging” and “classy” are used in the sense of being western in one's dressing style. Chinenyenwa is now viewed as assuming a new class befitting of royalty, purely by virtue of beautifying herself in the western sense. Interestingly, scholars have noted the bias for long hair in the western idea of beauty, such that images of beauty as portrayed in entertainment media and advertising tend to associate beauty with long hair; an idea that has gained root globally and has tremendously served the profit interest of firms producing and exporting artificial hair particularly to Africa (Kuffour, Dartey, Owusu & Dabouh, 2014). Beauty, generally, is viewed as socially constructed with the media playing an important role in popularizing stereotyped ideas of beauty – slimness, lightness of skin, blueness of eye and relaxed and long hair – all western ideas of feminine beauty (Leong, 2006).

This westernisation is also found in meals and other edibles served in the palace in *Royal Tears*, *Royal Favour* and *King of Kings*. Meals are served in stainless plates and complemented with foreign drinks served in glasses. Eating is done using a complete set of cutlery involving fork, knife and spoon. Hence, infusing of western dietary setting and rituals in a traditional royal home becomes a tool for validating royal class. In *Royal Tears*, upon the visit of Cassidy to Olaedo, he is served a western wine. However, the next scene contrasts sharply with this as Kasie's mother serves him a simple dish and water without the complements of exquisite plates, dining table and wines. Hence, dining props and dining rituals rooted in the western culture become the creative element adopted by the filmmaker to achieve a dichotomy of royalty and non-royalty as demanded by such a film. A similar pattern is seen in *Royal Tears* where the palace meal time and setting embody such emphatic western taste that contrasts with what obtains in non-royal homes like that of Kasie. Thus, table manners are constructed in the western sense of sitting at a dining and eating using a fork and a knife. Doing otherwise will apparently

amount to going contrary to one's royal dignity. In *Royal Favour*, the king sees his son, Nosike, sitting and eating on the floor with Chinenyenwa and emotionally exclaims; "You shouldn't be doing that, you are now royalty". Arguably, sitting on the floor to eat is more a local Igbo practice than use of dining table, an adopted western practice. However, this practice is here portrayed as incompatible with royalty. More so, its condemnation by no other person but Nosike's father – portrayed as more liberal and less inclined to class-based discrimination than his wife – may be quite instructive. Noteworthy is that the king is neither hostile to Chinenyenwa nor opposed to her marrying the prince.

In the discourse of class in the films under study, the narrative of mannerism comes very visible. Mannerism here refers to the socially accepted standard of decorum required of individuals in conducting themselves before others. It encompasses one's manner of walking, talking, eating etc.; in fact one's overall manner of self-presentation. Like with table manners as illustrated above, one sees in the films some pro-western cultural bias in the several scenes where good mannerism is associated with being western-like. For instance, persons who speak fluent English and with imitation of foreign accent are portrayed as good mannered i.e. civilised. In *Royal Favour*, the "good" mannered Jane is contrasted with the "bad" mannered Chinenyenwa partly (but importantly) through their sharply differing English speaking accent. Chinenyenwa's native accent in English speaking contrasts sharply with that of Jane whose imitation of western accent counts as one of the qualities that make her classy and befitting of royal of marriage. Also, Jane, as contrasted with Chinenyenwa, speaks unfailingly in the English language. Contrarily, Chinenyenwa's free use of Igbo language is easily observable. In a scene shortly after Nosike became a prince, she compliments him thus; "*Imachaala nma*" ("You now look very handsome"). Thus, speaking English language becomes a distinguishing element between one who is befitting of a royal marriage and one who is not. In *Royal Tears*, Cassidy, the senator's son who returned from the United States has, as one of his distinguishing features, a manner of English speaking that imitates American accent; one of the qualities that defines his class, thus qualifying him to be a royal bridegroom. This is unlike Kasie his rival who speaks with no such foreign accent. Cassidy repeatedly employs expressions like "God damn", "men", "what the hell?" etc – which are all colloquial phrases associated with America. Incidentally, this differentiation in manner of speech becomes an important means of the class juxtaposition that makes Cassidy the more qualified for royal marriage.

All this reveals what seems like a mismatched association between speaking English and conducting one's speech in a cultured manner. Such association is basically incorrect as both cultured and uncultured speaking can occur in any language.

Instructively, the tendency to associate European languages with high class has been noted as one enduring scar of colonialism on the body of today's African values. In this regard, Chukwujekwu (2004) observes that use of foreign language has become among Africans a symbol of status. This, according to him, is given that their colonial experience has induced in them an attitude of near disdain for their native languages. With precise reference to English language and Igbo language, he writes:

The way Igbo language is losing its status as part of our cultural experience has become alarming. Many Igbo people choose to speak in English language even while talking to a fellow Igbo as a way of showing off their status. Worse still, many parents of Igbo origin now choose to speak English to their children, carefully protecting them from getting "contaminated" with the Igbo language. This state of affairs implies that as time goes on, Igbo people will be increasingly alienated from their language, and more people will find it infra dig to use the language. This is one of the most unfortunate legacies of colonialism (Chukwujekwu, 2004, p.11).

Chukwujekwu further notes that this language alienation extends its effect to the name preference by Igbo people as people increasingly prefer to be known and addressed with foreign names, as they tend to see native names as inferior. Interestingly, both *Royal Favour* and *Royal Tears* make strikingly similar juxtapositions of foreign and native names – Chinenyenwa versus Jane and Kasie versus Cassidy. As seen in the films, the two bearers of the native names are characterised as commoners who fall short of the elegance befitting of a royalty. Contrarily, the two bearers of the foreign names are characterized in the opposite mould. Thus, all perceived elements of class – wealth, elegant fashion, "good" speech and "good" mannerism – are made to converge in the characters bearing foreign names, while the opposite obtains with their counterparts bearing native names. Thus, language by way of native-foreign name dichotomy becomes a tool for highlighting royalty.

The Western bias in class definition also extends to work and vocation. In a scene in *Royal Favour*, even Prince Nosike, who is being portrayed as lacking any royalty-inspired pomposity and disdain for Chinenyenwa and has unwaveringly loved and respected her, has to join in

censuring her “unrefined” lifestyle. “Get a job. This is too dirty for Prince Nosike’s fiancée,” he tells Chinenyenwa, referring to her small fish farming when he finds her feeding the fish. Evidently, he prefers to have his fiancée, a graduate, find a white collar job rather than doing such “inelegant” job not befitting of a would-be royal. In our society, white collar job is identified with western culture and values given that it was the colonialists that first introduced it in the country by way of civil service, thus creating an elite class that disdained their fellow citizens who were not privileged to get the white man’s job – *olu oyibo* (Igbokwe 2011). Chinenyenwa, at a point in the film, apparently succumbs to the status classification being made on her – “I am dirty. I am uncultured. I am classless,” he says while speaking to Afoma, her friend and confidant. With the help of Afoma, she is beginning to work towards belonging to the “classy” breed.

It may be pertinent to observe here that the general tendency to construct good mannerism or acceptable conduct using western templates is an ingrained attitude among Africans. Ndudi (2003) observes that when one, for instance, fails to observe the English courtesy of “ladies first”, he is likely to be seen as uncultured; a judgment that is obviously wrong given its incompatibility with the African patriarchal values which, rightly or wrongly, expect a man to always have priority over a woman in almost all aspects of social privilege.

In their narrative of class and privilege, some of the films under study echo the familiar glamorization of foreign countries as the promised land of socio-economic and cultural success. Thus, migration to foreign countries (*obodo oyibo* in popular Igbo parlance) is thus treated as a testimonial of class. In *Royal Tears*, Cassidy’s returnee status is a strong component of his class which inspires his being preferred as a royal bridegroom. In *King of Kings*, the two rival princes are returnees from foreign countries, a status that contributes visibly in affirming their class. However, contrary to the popular perception that associates overseas migration with socio-economic success, Enaikele and Olutayo (2011) observe that this sentiment is unfounded as it contradicts the reality that many persons have travelled abroad and never found it easy over there; in fact, many got stranded or returned worse off than they left. This glamorization of migration has been identified as the root cause of human trafficking in the country as ambitious young people continuously fall prey to the baiting of traffickers who masquerade as genuine helpers (Enaikele & Olutayo, 2011). This has seen thousands of men, women and children in Nigeria “recruited and transported to destinations in North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia, where they are held captive in the commercial sex industry or forced labour” (United

States Department of State, 2017, p.2). Thus, a popular – but perhaps unfounded narrative with roots in cultural imperialism – is deployed to realize the royal class in the films set in the post-colonial time.

Generally, the pattern in the discourse of royal class and privilege suggests that the filmmakers view the Igbo royalty culture as dynamic and evolving with the pre-colonial and post-colonial worldview exerting their influence on this evolution. Therefore, the elements that conferred royal class and privilege in the pre-colonial times ought to give way for the intervening elements derived from colonialism to fill the space. This, arguably, leaves room for controversy over the possible cultural imperialism implications of this pattern of representation.

4.2.2.3. Discourse of Divine Legitimation

In representing the royals, the films under study reveal a discourse of divine legitimisation; a narrative that tends to infuse divine imprimatur into royalty, as royals are portrayed as gaining their power, authority and privilege as a matter of a divine act. This discourse is much more foregrounded in the films set in the pre-colonial times. In *Ojadike*, the legitimacy of the king is portrayed as rooted in the will and favour of divine beings. “No one becomes the king unless the gods approve of it; no one takes the throne of Umuoba upon himself if the gods have not permitted so,” one of the guards has challenged Egwu who has usurped the throne. Hence, Egwu’s kingship lacks legitimacy merely because his accession to the throne is contrary to the will of the gods. In the same vein, the king is portrayed as being under the protection of the gods; “My king Ojadike, the gods are always with you, they made you the king, so they always protect you,” Osondu speaks to the king.

In *Egg of Life*, the gods have a hand in the birth of Ikemefuna, hence they are praised for the birth. “The birth of royalty is always heralded by the gods, for a lion begets a lion,” the priestess speaks upon the birth of Ikemefuna. The successful salvaging of the life of the prince through bringing of the egg of life is portrayed as an act of the gods who would not allow their own to perish. “The prince is of Efuru, ordained for the throne by Efuru. Efuru has rescued him,” the priestess declares upon successful return of Amarachi with the egg of life. In other words, Prince Ikemefuna’s life is of special importance to Efuru, the goddess, who has now ensured his safety from untimely death. The discourse of divine legitimisation is also articulated in one of the series of dialogues between the king and Ikemefuna where the king says:

One day you will sit on that throne as the Igwe. That throne you are looking at is sacred, and anybody that sits on it is also sacred. From the moment you were born you were blessed of the gods; they invested you with their authority. You symbolise the gods. If anybody utters any bad word about the throne, it is an affront to the gods, and the offender is liable to death penalty.

There is thus a discourse of sacredness around the royals. The implication of this will be clear when attention is paid to Emile Durkheim's theory of religion where he postulates that religion is realised in a community only with a distinction made between the sacred and the profane; certain things must be distinguished as sacred while others must be classified as ordinary for there to be any basis for religious observances. Thus, those phenomena – beings, objects, names etc – classified as sacred become the “totems” i.e. sacred entities which are elevated above the community and revered as gods, holy places, holy animals, holy names etc (Durkheim, 1995). In the films under review, the throne and the occupier with his relatives (the royals), having been classified as totems, become elevated above the community, and thus are to be revered – “You symbolise the gods. If anybody utters any bad word about the throne, it is an affront to the gods, and the offender is liable to death penalty” – so said the king to Ikemefuna.

Thus, the throne becomes a part of the religious world of the community; a theocratic monarchy. The royals become some sort of priests holding a divine mandate. Thus, the quantitative data in Table 4.4 show that the royals were portrayed as playing spiritual roles more in the films released between 1996 and 2004 (where most of the films set in pre-colonial times fall into) than those released in the later years. Hence, the absence of such spiritual role in the characterization of the royals in this latter group of films may have been inspired by what Afigbo (1986) describes as the near disappearance of the spiritual functions of the Igbo royals in the face of Christianisation that diminished the influence of the traditional religious heritage.

Interestingly, both *Ojadike* and the king in *Egg of Life*, whose thrones embody a discourse of divine legitimisation, emerge as dictatorial monarchs. The English philosopher, Bertrand Russell, argues that such theocratic monarchies in the Medieval Europe were autocratic as divine legitimisation became a justification for dictatorship – the king's powers cannot be circumscribed or questioned because they are given by God (Russell, 1946). Such were the Christian monarchies of England, Spain, France, Belgium and Islamic Emirates of the countries of the Arabian Peninsula (Hunt, 1963).

In the films set in the post-colonial time, where, as earlier noted, the discourse of divine legitimisation is not foregrounded, this discourse, nevertheless, is at times not totally absent. In *King of Kings*, some part of the soundtrack is revealing in this regard: “Man proposes, God disposes.” This portion of the music plays at the background of the scene where the queen is encouraging Prince Okadigbo to go on and fight for a throne that does not belong to him. The soundtrack thus highlights the evil and sheer folly of scheming to take over the kingship contrary to God’s will. In other words, it is he whom God destines that will become the king no matter the extent of human machination. Another portion of the soundtrack reads; “Come rain, come shine what will be, will be. Do not conclude for what will be, will be. *Ihe Chukwu kwuru ga-eme.*” Stated differently, the will of God is inviolable as far as the throne of Okofia Kingdom is concerned. And as would be expected, the climax of the film is reached in the impostor Okadigbo being displaced by Joshua, the man long destined for kingship, apparently by God’s will. Interestingly, in the two films featuring impostor kings – *King of Kings* and *Ojadike* – the impostors, Okadigbo and Egwu, respectively, are associated with “un-kingly” conducts; they are bad kings.

While the people’s decision in *Royal Favour* to move from hereditary monarchy to a more democratic arrangement by way of rotational monarchy may be seen as a challenge to divine legitimisation, the film does not entirely debunk the divine dimension to royalty. There is an underlying bias for divine legitimisation in expressions like “*Chi na-eme eze*” (God makes the king), “*Onye chi mere eze*” (“whom God made a king”), and “*Ugwu si na chi*” (“honour is from God”) – all in reference to the king. Incidentally, today, the old divine air around monarchies is yet to be totally uprooted by modernity and the attendant secularisation. In England, for instance, the national anthem “God save the queen (or the king)” is still a surviving element of that famous theocratic monarchy that held sway in the medieval times, while the elaborate religious ceremony that marks the coronation of a monarch in the Westminster Abbey is another legacy of that phase (Hunt, 1963).

4.2.2.4. Discourse of Gender Power Relations

The discourse of gender power relations in the films under study reveals a dichotomy along the lines of the settings of the films. While the films set in pre-colonial times portray a monarchy that is gendered almost entirely towards masculinity, those set in the post-colonial period infuse some femininity in the gender set-up of the royal power. In *Royal Favour* and *King of Kings*, the

queens exercise some visible degree of influence, while in *Royal Tears*, the only female royal, Princess Olaedo, is projected as the most important character.

Contrarily, in *Egg of Life* and *Ojadike*, the queen is hardly visible as most actions revolve around the three male royals of King Ojadike, Prince Obiora and Prince Egwu. In fact, there appears to be little distinction in status between Queen Akunne and the maidens in the palace. The king unhesitatingly banishes the friend of the queen with the queen having no negotiating power in that moment of dictatorial finality. In contrast, the friend of the princess in *Royal Tears* appears to enjoy much more protection as the queen proves twice that she is able to shield her friend from her father's occasional hostility. Furthermore, the queen shows the capacity to disagree and argue with her husband regarding the choice of Prince Nosike's bride. This would have been unthinkable in *Egg of Life* and *Ojadike* where even the child princes appear to earn the respect of the kings more than their mothers can earn. The women are constantly subjects of scolding by the kings who rule the home with an inviolable authority. "Get out of my presence, woman," the king howls at Queen Akunne when the latter provokes him with the suggestion that Ikemefuna is frail. Similarly, the princess in *Royal Tears* equally disagrees with the father from time to time, with the climax coming when she totally defies the king to marry Kasie, effectively dispensing with her father's blessings. Incidentally, in *Egg of Life* and *Ojadike*, the kings have no daughters, paving the way for complete masculinisation of the royal offspring.

But instructively, the power and influence exercised by female royals in the films set in the post-colonial era are largely of domestic, supportive and unofficial nature. In *Royal Favour*, the queen's influence is realised only in her bargaining power in determining the choice of a bride for her son. In *King of Kings*, the queen and the princess are influential only in the supportive sense; they are not visible in the arena of the power play that dominates the drama; they only operate backstage nudging Prince Okadigbo, the man in the frontline, to fight for the throne. So, these supportive female royals remain largely invisible in the heart of the political intrigues. Remarkably, the queen, who is Okadigbo's mother, and the princess (his wife) feature entirely only in scenes shot in the palace, their home, thus underscoring their positioning as characters that should not be seen or heard in the public domain. The power expressed by Princess Olaedo, the only female royal in *Royal Tears*, is only in the context of forcing through a decision as to whom to marry, though not without some unpleasant consequences. Yet, this power belongs to the private domain. This reflects the predominant pattern in literature which shows that women

are represented in Nigerian films largely in roles that entails powerlessness (Osunkeye, 2014; Adekeye, 2010; Omenugha, 2010; Okunna, 2003).

Very noteworthy is the pattern wherein female royals are portrayed as possessing undesirable characters. This pattern, which runs through the development of the plots of *Royal Favour* and *King of Kings*, sees these feminine royal figures represented as treacherous, wicked and intolerant. They are the moral villains who negate the moral nobility that ought to characterise the royal space. In *Royal Favour*, the queen is the prejudiced fellow, whose lucky sudden rise to royalty has made her arrogant and intolerant of a low class person like Chinenyenwa. “This wretched and dirty thing will never marry my son, the prince of Urukpeleke,” she says in her characteristic way. In *King of Kings*, the queen and princess are the behind-the-scene abettors of the scheming by Prince Okadigbo to appropriate the throne that does not belong to him. The queen is the originator of this plot, counselling her son to “take this advantage now and become the king.” The two women are united in nudging the ambitious prince on. The foregoing reflects the position in film literature showing such constant negative portrayal of women (Osunkeye, 2014; Adekeye, 2010; Omenugha, 2010; Okunna, 2003).

In view of the foregoing analysis, it may be admitted that the filmmakers, in their portrayal of gender power relations in the context of Igbo monarchy, are responding to the changes in real life social structure. The dichotomy between films set in pre-colonial and those set in post-colonial times appears to have been inspired by the corresponding real-life dichotomy between the state of gender relations in Igbo communities in these two eras. Anyanwu (2011) admits that the state of gender power negotiations has changed a lot between these two epochs in the history of Igbo people. She contends that women have successfully conquered many of their traditional obstacles to more ably assert themselves, not only at home but also in the larger society.

Nevertheless, it is also the truth that Igbo royalty in real life is a largely masculinised institution. It is dominated by a male monarch – the king – who rules in concert with his entirely male cabinet. Even though some communities have started introducing few women into their royal cabinet, generally, male dominance is the norm. Further, the position of the king’s wife, *lolo*, is more of a domestic helper and of little or no political significance, which mirrors the familiar scenario seen among political office holders (especially governors and the president) whose wives, first ladies, are mere appendages to their husbands and wield no real or independent political power (Adedeji, 2015; Anyanwu, 2011). Instructively, the title *lolo* is not reserved for a

king's wife but generally borne by wives of chieftaincy title holders. Incidentally, the position of a queen – in the sense of a female monarch – seems generally absent in Igbo cosmology. What is usually translated as queen – *eze nwanyi* – refers more to a priestess (usually of water spirit connection) than a monarch. Currently, there is no recognised female monarch in Igbo land (Anumba, 2017). It may hence be stated that the filmmakers were guided by this cultural worldview in their gender construction of Igbo monarchy.

4.3. Key Informant Interview (KII)

The key informant interview (KII) involved six respondents i.e. two film producers – Ernest Obi and Stan K. Amadi; two film directors – Clemson Cornel Nnonyelu and Wendy Imaseun; and two scriptwriters – Peace Egwu and Omeh Johnson. However, as often seen with the Nollywood, these individuals are not always restricted to the roles reflected here; the directors also get involved with production and scriptwriting, while scriptwriters also may get involved with production and directing and so on. Answers from the key informants were read through critically by the researcher to isolate some emerging themes relevant to the study as follows: motives for making Igbo monarchy films, characterisation of Igbo monarchy, source of idea of Igbo monarchy.

4.3.1. Motives for Making Igbo Monarchy Films

Monarchy films have become so ubiquitous in the Nigerian movie industry (Osondu, 2016), so the filmmakers were made to address the question of what motivates them to produce such genre. Their answers pointed to cultural protectionism as one of the motivating factors; they felt the urge to project their cultural heritage as Igbos and which they believed royalty is part of. Clemson Nnonyelu, a director, stated:

From my own understanding, Igbo monarchy is a culture we need to exhibit especially to bring out our value... As you know, charity begins from your home, so you start from your home to bring out the realities of our values and culture. There are some norms we need to bring out to let people know who we are and what we do...What we have as the Igbo people inspires me as a movie director. I just want to let it be known that the Igbo race is unique.

Peace Egwu, a scriptwriter, made a similar submission:

... if you look at our culture presently, you will know that the Igbo man is losing it. He is fast becoming extinct because of our civilization, the coming of the white man, the influence... We do not want our culture to die because any community or people without a culture do not exist. So there is every need to allow the royalty reoccur in our movies so that those who do not know about the Igbo people will come to know... So, we try to showcase, the rich culture of the Igbo people in these royalty movies and tell the whole world who we are, what we stand for, our culture, language, food, marriage, circumcision, festivals, religious activities and we cannot tell these stories in isolation of the ruler of the community we are trying to reflect in a narration.

Omeh Johnson, a scriptwriter, observed:

The theme of royalty occurs so much in our Nollywood movies because the Igbo is a dead enclave, forgive me, because we do not have any other extended community, society or family in any other part of the world. So we try to keep our tradition and culture alive because it is fast fading due to culture imperialism, the western people coming with their ways of life. Some of us are even shy to speak or teach our children how to speak Igbo language. To keep Igbo culture alive we have to incorporate those Igbo themes which the Igbo royalty is one of them. We try to play and replicate those culture and traditions which include, our religion, our masquerades, our food, our burial ceremony, entertainment, coronation, in fact, the totality of our ways of life, in our movies to show that an Igbo man has been in existence even before the coming of the white people...

On his part, Wendy Imasuen, a director, reasoned that the royal position in Igbo land is too significant to be left out while setting film in Igbo culture. He said:

Royalty is a normal setting in any movie that has the Igbo background, there are some hidden narratives that we need to bring out about the Igbo people, and you cannot just do that in isolation from the ruler of a society you are trying to present to the audience...If you are starting a story about the Igbo community, Igwe should be your number one, the ruler, our guide. The Igwe should be there, you cannot kick out the relevance of the Igbo monarchy from your narration. For example, when a particular law is violated, the Igwe gives the sanction that the offender be excommunicated or banished from the community.

Stan Amadi, a producer, similarly described the ubiquity of Igbo monarchy films as a product of cultural protectionism. According to him, “it is an effort to correct the blackmail that *Igbo enwero eze* (the Igbos do not have kings). It is a strong effort to give strong representation in order to kill a lie.” Even though he was of the opinion that Igbos originally had no monarchs, he believed that this is no longer the case given the fact that culture is dynamic.

However, the interviewees also pointed to economic motive as an important factor propelling the continuous release of Igbo monarchy films in the industry. Clemson Nnonyelu opined that this genre has been an economic success and will continue to be for as long as can be imagined. In his words, “such films will flourish because there is a big market for Igbo royal movies. When we do more research and come up with more historic and convincing stories, Igbo royal movies will fly high.”

Wendy Imaseun agreed with this position. He observed that a lot more of such commercially promising stories about Igbo people exist and which Nollywood is yet to tap into. “Igboland has a lot of stories and we have not been able to tell it all... Nollywood is beginning to mature and Igbo royal movies striving. The market is there for them. It will strive and get better,” he said.

Ernest Obi, a producer, in the same vein, concurred that what is presented as royal films in Nollywood helps in boosting sales. According to him, “it works for marketers” irrespective of the fact that “historically we are telling the wrong story to the people” given that royalty is not traditionally a part of Igbo culture.

Stan Amadi agreed with the assertion that a strong motive behind the rising profile of Igbo royal films in Nollywood is commercial in nature. His words:

The recurring theme of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood movies is a part of the holistic package because without it, it will be parochial. It will be so narrow that it loses a kind of appeal within some market or area of consumption. I also think it is a point of sales in marketing the movies because the splendour of the Igbo monarchy projected in the movie is a form of sales enhancement. It is of immense business and economic appeal. If the packaging is not holistic and it does not have the richness it ought to have, it affects the film economically.

Thus, sales and profit become an important motivation determining what is released for public consumption. This, to any extent, may align with the arguments of the Frankfurt School that economic logic is the major determinant of content and aesthetics in popular culture (Adorno, 1999). Literature suggests that media focus on royals, particularly in the context of the British monarchy, has been an important strategy of increasing audience patronage and maximising profit for media establishments (Baldin, 2002).

4.3.2. Characterisation of Igbo Monarchy

The interviewees were made to address the question what constituted Igbo monarchy to them; what characteristics ideally make a royal in their making of such films? One theme that continued to emerge in this respect is strength of character; a royal, particularly the king, must be characterized in such a way that he appears strong, tough and formidable. Physical features and mien are important elements here. Clemson Nnonyelu, for instance, stated:

As a movie director, (I ensure that) Igwe should be a justified character, like a judge; and if I am guiding a cast on how to act like an Igwe, I consider the charisma, aura that an Igwe needs to have especially in relation to other characters in the story. It should be someone who has the embodiment of power, command, authority, so that when one sees him in the movie, without a second thought, he would know that this is the Igwe. The costume and the way you place him will tell everyone that this is the Igwe.

For him, wealth and education is secondary as the most important thing is the outward look of the king. Thus, though a king may be learned or not learned, rich or poor, the most important thing is that “when I direct a movie, I want the Igwe to be bold, confident; then in costuming, Igwe should always look good and not awkward. In my work, I try to portray the Igwe to look better and can be easily identified as Igwe.” Hence, a monarch must always be distinguishable in his appearance because he is special.

However, confidence, boldness and charisma as part of characterisation of royals in films are not restricted to just kings. This also concerns other categories of royals, particularly princes and princesses. This is clear from the responses of the other interviewees. Omeh Johnson, for example, informed that while writing his scripts, he made sure that anybody that is characterised as a royal has “some special attributes that will distinguish him or her from the pack. This is

simply because a royal is special and so should appear special.” Thus, the air of stardom usually built around royals in the media (Baldin, 2002) may have equally be realised in Nollywood.

From the submissions of the respondents, it is easily deducible that the king is usually the subject of emphasis whenever strength is invoked as an attribute of a royal. Peace Egwu explained that this is so because “Igwe is a serious hierarchy that Igbo people should obey. Igwe is someone we should look up to; he is like a ruler, a governor in the Igbo society. He is well known and respected; in fact, Igwe makes decisions and always aware of the new laws of the land.” Thus, a king ought to be portrayed in the image of a strong, confident and tough guy as seen in earlier analysed films like *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life* – a discourse that is rooted in masculinity. The foregoing tends to align with the quantitative data in Table 4.9 which shows that courage and bravery are among the qualities attributed to royals in the films under study as well as the data in Table 4.10 which indicate that generally, royals were portrayed as dominantly of a strong character.

However, for the female royals, it would appear beauty and elegant features are more foregrounded in their characterization in films. Wendy Imasuen admitted that this is the case: “a princess should be beautiful and well cared for. As a director, I make sure I realise this quality while interpreting the script.” A comparison of the presentation of kings and princes on one side and queens and princesses on the other in the films earlier reviewed tends to reveal this trend. Thus, gender bias which reflects some of the dominant discourses of gender in society appears to influence characterization of royals in these films.

4.3.3. Source of Idea of Igbo Monarchy

The key informants pointed to their personal observation of everyday cultural practices as an important source of the idea which they reproduce in Igbo monarchy films. In other words, the idea of what they represent as Igbo royalty is drawn from what they have personally observed from their Igbo environment. In the words of Omeh Johnson:

When you talk about source, as an Igbo man our culture, tradition and way of life are with us. I do not need anyone to teach me that when I wake up in the morning I greet my elders. I do not need anyone to teach me that I have to do some chores at home. I have seen an Igwe and I know he is a powerful man. When we do things in the village, they use *ogene* (metal gong) to call us out through the town crier. So, as you are watching, you are observing. You do not need anyone to sit you down and teach

you. We have natural intelligence; as those things were happening we were observing. We have our elders to consult when we do not understand things.

Peace Egwu observed that the Igbo culture as observable by anyone is her source of idea of royalty as a scriptwriter. She affirmed that one's cultural root should ideally be his/her source of cultural knowledge. "You must have a background, you must have a root. So where you are coming from is what you want to showcase. This is where we are and that is what we want to showcase, and that is what inspires us," she contended. Thus, the idea of royalty as found in the films becomes a product of informal learning or socialisation in Igbo culture.

Another source pointed out by the respondents is Igbo written and oral literature. This refers to Igbo folktales, poems, songs and proverbs whether transmitted orally or written down. Wendy Imasuen spoke on this:

So for the Igbo culture, the theme has become so relevant ... it started with *Things Fall Apart* written by Chinua Achebe. I think we have a lot of stories; traditional stories from the Igbo side, which when told in movies are interesting. I think the Igbo has a lot of war stories because the Igbo really fought wars and their monarchy system was not here in time; what they had were clan leaders and they had conflicts over land and basically that is what you see in the epic royal movies.

Cornel Nnonyelu similarly submitted:

Also, there are these folklores and folk stories about our culture; these things build things into our mindset especially if you grew up in the village. And by the time you know it, they are things you put together as an adult and make your stories from. For instance, there are some movies (I did *Akwaugo* and *Ugegbe Oyibo*) in which I tailored it to those stories I was told so many years ago as a child. I bring them out and make them as an Igbo film.

Nonetheless, Ernest Obi and Stan Amadi argued that the ultimate source of royalty idea represented in films set in Igbo culture is other cultures outside Igbo land, as Igbos originally did not have monarchy. Obi contended that "historically, monarchy never actually existed (in Igbo land) ... because every freeborn felt he has a right over his immediate family so ... we could have clan leaders but not kings." This view in part aligns with the position in literature that most part of Igbo land originally had no king prior to European contact (Afigbo 1986). He described his attitude to Igbo royalty films as a producer:

... I want to do anything that has to do with the monarchy, the Igbo line, I am always very careful; I try to be close to historical truth as much as possible. So I might come down maybe to early 1920s when royalty existed. My mum is from Nnewi, Otolu Nnewi, she used to be the oldest daughter of Igwe Orizu, so there is royalty there and since 19 something there has been royalty there. So I key into that to be able to tell my story. But to go beyond that like 1900 or 1800, no, I do not do that. I tell the story like the way it should be told.

Stan Amadi, on his part, while agreeing that monarchy is largely a later development in Igbo land, argued that since culture is dynamic and not static, royalty as borrowed by Igbos from other cultures has come to be a legitimate part of the people's culture. He observed that though kings *ab initio* largely did not exist in Igbo land in the same way they existed in the Benin and Oyo empires as well as the Sokoto Caliphate, globalization has brought about a change to this culture:

We will not deny the fact that globalization has impacted on the Igbos and culture is not cast on stone. People decide that this is our way of life in the first instance for certain reasons. The same people decide to adjust. So to some extent, the royalty depicted in Nollywood movies reflect the real way of life of the Igbo people.

The foregoing view does not necessarily contradict the view that filmmakers gain their idea from their observation of their environment and through oral and written literature. It rather insists that wherever this idea is gotten from, it must have originated from other cultures ultimately. In other words, observable contemporary Igbo practices as well as oral and written literature cannot be the original sources. If this view is upheld, then what goes on in the Igbo monarchy films is cultural hybridisation. Cultural hybridisation explains the process whereby elements of one culture mix with those of others whether in practice or in representation in art forms such as literature, film etc to generate a supposedly new cultural experience (Kraidy, 2002; Idogho, 2015). Generally, the reality of cultural hybridisation in Nollywood films has been widely admitted in scholarship (Agba, 2014; Idogho, 2015; Omijie, 2015).

The key informants claimed that in leveraging these sources of idea of Igbo royalty, they engage in research. According to Wendy Imaseun, this research is key in his role as a director. "When I direct a movie, I do research, consult books, the Internet and ask a lot of questions to guide me through the production." Similarly, Peace Egwu stated; "We grow, we want to know more, we

ask questions, and we want to teach the younger ones how it was done in the ancient days. This is what actually informs our going deeper and digging deeper to bring out those things of the ancient times.” Stan Amadi described such research as indispensable, advising that filmmakers should prioritise it in their attempt to portray aspects of Igbo culture including royalty.

4.4. Analysis of Research Questions

The first research question sought to ascertain how Nollywood films have constructed Igbo monarchy in terms of its place in the cultural setup of the race. To answer this question, attention was paid to the three sets of data generated in the study. First of all, responses from the KII indicate that most of the respondents viewed monarchy as an important element in Igbo communities; necessary for social organization and leadership (only one of the respondents seemed to have a different view). Similarly, the CDA analysis reveals that in representing Igbo monarchy, the films foregrounded leadership roles and abilities on the part of the royals by way of exercise of power, authority and influence. Further, the quantitative data in Table 4.4 indicate that royals were dominantly portrayed in political roles across the years studied, suggesting that these royals (particularly kings) were leaders over their community. Equally, religious role was foregrounded as part of the responsibilities of the monarchs in the films set in the pre-colonial era. Consequently, it may be stated in answer to the first research question that Nollywood films have constructed Igbo monarchy as an important aspect of Igbo cultural setup as royals are portrayed as playing vital leadership role – political and religious – in their respective communities.

The second research question sought to find out the qualities portrayed of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films over the period. The quantitative data in Table 4.9 show that the films under study portrayed courage/bravery and wisdom as dominant attributes of royal persons. Table 4.10 indicates that they were generally portrayed as being of a strong character. Dignity of conduct was also shown to be significant as an attribute of the royals (Table 4.8). The KII data indicate that the royals in films set in the pre-colonial times were portrayed more in terms of physical power, valour and dictatorial dispositions than those of them in the films set in the post-colonial times; thus, monarchy was masculinised more in the former than in the latter. However, wealth (capitalism) and modernization in the western sense was given much more emphasis as an attribute of royals in the films set in the post-colonial period. But the films set in the pre-colonial era built some spiritual aura around the royals by projecting them as divinely special breeds. Therefore, it may be stated in answer to the second research question that the qualities portrayed of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films include physical power, valour, divine connection,

wisdom, and wealth. And while films set in the pre-colonial times emphasized physical power, valour, masculinity and divine connection, those set in the post-colonial era emphasized wealth, class and modernization constructed on western templates.

The third research question sought to determine the evolving themes in Nollywood Igbo monarchy films over the decades studied. The CDA analysis shows that the first two films (in the order of release) – *Ojadike* and *Egg of Life* – had their themes based on power, war and valour. However, there is the additional theme of intrigue in *Egg of Life* as realized in the *ogbanje* phenomenon and the adventures of the seven virgins. In the films that came later – *Royal Tears*, *King of Kings* and *Royal Favour*, the emerging themes were love, marriage, wealth and class conflict. However, power play and succession were themes that featured across all the films, though power play was absent only in *Egg of Life*. The quantitative data in Table 4.3 also show that there was preponderance of war/strife/conflict/struggle and intrigue themes in the films released in the earlier years (particularly from 1996 to 2003) while the later years saw dominance of films centred on the themes of love/romance and crime. Consequently, it may be stated in answer to the third research question that the emerging themes in Nollywood Igbo monarchy films were war, valour and intrigue (for films released from 1996 to 2003) and love, marriage, wealth and class conflict (for films released from 2004 to 2015). Nonetheless, the themes of power play and succession featured prominently across the entire 20 years studied.

The fourth research question sought to determine factors that have shaped portrayal of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood. Key informant interview responses pointed to cultural protectionism (concern about the conservation of one's culture) and sales considerations as the major contributory factors in the growing presence of films portraying Igbo monarchy in Nollywood. All of the respondents, in one way or the other, noted that inclusion of monarchy and all the elements associated with royalty tends to add glamour to films, hence boosting sales. Therefore, it may be stated in answer to the fourth research question that factors that have shaped portrayal of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood mainly include cultural pride and commercial considerations.

The fifth research question sought to examine the sources of ideas of Nollywood film producers on their construction of Igbo monarchy. Responses from the key informants indicate that they seem to have acquired their idea of what they represent as Igbo monarchy through their personal observation of what they believe to be Igbo culture in their environment. Secondly, they have also gained this idea through information contained in Igbo oral and written literature.

Nonetheless, these ideas (as obtained from these two sources) appear to have also been influenced by non-Igbo cultures. Consequently, it may be stated in answer to the fifth research question that the sources of ideas of Nollywood film producers on their construction of Igbo monarchy mainly include personal observation of Igbo cultural realities and Igbo oral and written literature. However, the ideas as contained in these sources may have been equally influenced by ideas of monarchy from other cultures that Igbos have come in contact with.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

The study examined the representation of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films over the two decades of 1996 to 2015. The study formulated five objectives i.e. (i) to ascertain how Nollywood films have constructed Igbo monarchy in terms of its place in the cultural setup of the race; (ii) identify qualities portrayed of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films over the period; (iii) determine the evolving themes in Nollywood Igbo monarchy films over the decades; (iv) determine factors that have shaped portrayal of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood; and (v) examine the sources of ideas of Nollywood film producers on their construction of Igbo monarchy. Situated within the framework of representation theory, the study adopted quantitative and qualitative content analysis (critical discourse analysis, CDA) as the design. Key Informant Interview (KII) was also integrated as a further method of data collection. Study population was all the Igbo monarchy films released between 1996 and 2015. A sample of 20 films was randomly selected across the study period. Data collection instruments were coding sheet and KII guide. Data analysis was both quantitative (for quantitative content analysis) and qualitative (for CDA and KII).

Findings showed that Nollywood films have constructed Igbo monarchy as an important aspect of Igbo cultural setup as royals are portrayed as playing vital leadership role – political and religious – in their respective communities. Qualities portrayed of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films include physical power, valour, divine connection, wisdom, and wealth. And while films set in the pre-colonial times emphasized physical power, valour, masculinity and divine connection, those set in the post-colonial era emphasized wealth, class and modernization constructed on western templates. Data further showed that the emerging themes in Nollywood Igbo monarchy films were war, valour and intrigue (for films released from 1996 to 2003) and love, marriage, wealth and class conflict (for films released from 2004 to 2015). Nonetheless, the themes of power play and succession featured prominently across the entire 20 years studied. Factors that have shaped portrayal of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood mainly included cultural pride and commercial considerations, while the sources of ideas of Nollywood film producers on their construction of Igbo monarchy mainly included personal observation of Igbo cultural realities and Igbo oral and written literature. However, the ideas as contained in these sources

may have been equally influenced by ideas of monarchy from other cultures that Igbos have come in contact with.

5.2. Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that representation of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films strikes the chord of some dominant discourses of power, class and gender in Nigeria. The monarchs of the pre-colonial era were portrayed as very powerful and dictatorial while their counterparts of the post-colonial era were portrayed as possessing less power and subject to the authority of the government. Similarly, royal class was constructed based on movies obtained in the two aforementioned eras, while gender as related to monarchy was constructed following the same pattern. Hence, the idea of monarchy as found in the films could be said to be a function of ideas borrowed from the environment of the filmmakers. This corresponds with the admission of the filmmakers that they have gained their idea through personal observation of the trends in Igbo land and encounter with Igbo literature – oral and written.

The foregoing implies that in representing Igbo monarchy, the filmmakers cannot be isolated as independent actors, but should be considered as part of a network of actors and variables that influence meaning in society, such as socially held beliefs about monarchy, cultural biases of the film producers and commercial imperatives of the film industry. Incidentally, all these contributory factors were revealed in the course of the key informant interview (KII). This conclusion aligns with the representation theory which conceives media text as a product of culture itself; as a reflection of biases, interests and other factors in society (Hall, 1997; Lewis, 2005; Machin & Mayr, 2012). This study has thus validated the position of this theory in the precise area of representation of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher came up with the following recommendations:

1. There is need to encourage production of films that faithfully promote indigenous culture as it relates to monarchy. This could be done by way of instituting high profile awards to reward filmmakers that have distinguished themselves in this respect. Such awards would potentially enhance growth in the quantity and quality of such films produced in the country.
2. Filmmakers should endeavour to engage the audience with their works by making the works more critical part of their lives. Filmmakers should go beyond thinking what

momentarily satisfies the audience but start figuring out how their audience use their work to get knowledge, and with that comes the shift from a passive one way relationship from a maker who just wants to make money to a fan who just want a momentary escape to an active participatory relationship between an instigator and the community they are part of. If filmmakers know how people find and react to their works, they can unleash their power of creativity to fully engage them.

3. The National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) should work harder in enforcing their objective aimed at identifying various gaps in professionalism of the Nigerian movie industry from scriptwriting to production. The gap of poor quality production needs to be bridged and there is need to protect the Nigerian society, particularly the under aged, from contents that do not represent the true culture of whom we are or the idea that particular class of people must be wealthy or act in a particular manner may give room to avoidable pressure.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Studies

The following suggestions were made for future studies on the subject of this study:

- i. Replicative studies should be carried out on films in Hausa, Yoruba and other indigenous languages in order to compare the representation of monarchy in Igbo films with what obtains in these other films. Such studies will offer a broader insight into the phenomenon under study as it manifests in Nollywood.
- ii. Future studies should update the period of study to the present year. This is to be able to ascertain whether there have been changes in pattern in the period between 2015 and now regarding representation of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood films.
- iii. There may be need for an audience study to ascertain viewers' perception of representation of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood. The final effect of communication is srealized in the audience primarily; therefore, a study to probe the audience's impression and judgment of portrayal of Igbo royalty in Nigerian films is critical for a better understanding.

5.5. Limitations of the Study

This research was not without limitations. The research was limited to just the 20 years under study and 20 movies involved. This necessitated the recommendation for further studies in other cultural contexts and later years. Also, there was an apparent dearth of literature on similar tenor with the focus of this study - representations of Igbo monarchy in Nollywood movies. This made the researcher to rely mainly on studies related to representations in film generally and the mass media coverage of monarchy.

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APPENDIX I CODING SCHEME

I. Period

- 1996 to 1999 – 1
- 2000 to 2003 – 2
- 2004 to 2007 – 3
- 2008 to 2011 – 4
- 2012 to 2015 – 5

II. Major character

- A King – 1
- A Queen – 2
- A Prince – 3
- A Princess – 4
- Others – 5

III. Setting

- Ancient – 1
- Contemporary – 2
- Mixed - 3

IV. Dominant Theme

- War/Strife/Conflict/Struggle – 1
- Love – 2
- Intrigue – 3
- Crime – 4
- Others – 5

V. Role(s) Attributed To A Royal (in each scene)

- Domestic role – 1
- Political role – 2
- Economic role – 3
- Spiritual role – 4
- Others – 5
- Mixed – 6

VI. Power Exercised By A Royal Personality (in each scene)

- Dictatorial – 1
- Moderated – 2
- Liberal – 3

VII. Attitude of a Royal Towards Subjects (in each scene)

- Benevolent – 1
- Wicked – 2
- Indifferent – 3

VIII. Conduct of a Royal Towards a Non-Royal (in each scene)

- Respectful – 1
- Disdainful – 2
- Neither – 3

IX. Royal Attribute(s) Emphasised (in each scene)

- Power – 1
- Wealth – 2
- Dignity of Conduct – 3
- Others – 4
- None – 5

X. Charismatic Traits Attributed To A Royal (in each scene)

- Courage/Bravery – 1
- Wisdom – 2
- Discipline – 3
- Talent – 4
- Mixed – 5
- Others – 6
- None – 7

XI. Character Portrayed of A Royal (in each scene)

- Strength – 1
- Weakness – 2
- None – 3

APPENDIX III
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

<p>My name is Adanma Obiora. I am a doctoral student of the Department of Mass Communication, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. I am currently carrying out a research on Evolution of Representations of Igbo Monarchy in Nollywood Films (1996 – 2015) and you have been selected as one of my respondents. Please kindly assist my effort by sparing some time to participate in this interview session. All answers supplied are strictly for academic purpose and utmost confidentiality is assured.</p> <p>Thanks in anticipation.</p> <p>Researcher</p>	
S/N	QUESTIONS
1.	<p>What is your impression of monarchy as an aspect of the Igbo culture; what does it mean to you?</p> <p>Probe for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Whether the respondent views monarchy as an aspect of Igbo reality</i> ➤ <i>The role the respondent views monarchy as playing in Igbo culture</i> ➤ <i>The features which they attribute to monarchy in Igbo culture; prestige, power, honour, glamour etc</i> ➤ <i>How desirable or undesirable they view monarchy in Igbo culture</i>
2.	<p>Why do you find Igbo monarchy a relevant theme to be reflected in your work as a producer/director/scriptwriter?</p> <p>Probe for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Why the respondent opts for Igbo monarchy in selecting themes for their work</i> ➤ <i>The motivations for this; artistic, political, cultural, economic etc</i>
3.	<p>What is the source of your idea of Igbo monarchy which you reflect in your works?</p> <p>Probe for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>How the respondent comes about their idea of Igbo monarchy which they reflect in their works; experience, research, popular culture etc</i>

	<p>➤ <i>Whether and why the respondent trusts the sources of this idea as a reliable</i></p>
4.	<p>How would you assess the representation of Igbo monarchy in films you have been involved in personally in terms of how much it has reflected the real experience of the people?</p> <p>Probe for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>The extent the respondent sees the representation as reflecting the people's experience</i> ➤ <i>The extent he/she sees it as derogating from the people's experience</i> ➤ <i>The aspects of the representation viewed as reflecting or derogating from the experience of the people; costume, role, powers, privileges etc</i>
5.	<p>Beyond the films you have been personally involved in, how would you assess the representation of Igbo monarchy in Nigerian films generally in terms of how much it has reflected the real experience of the people?</p> <p>Probe for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>The extent the respondent sees the representation as reflecting the people's experience</i> ➤ <i>The extent he/she sees it as derogating from the people's experience</i> ➤ <i>The aspects of the representation viewed as reflecting or derogating from the experience of the people; costume, role, powers, privileges etc</i>

APPENDIX IV
LIST OF THE 207 IGBO ROYAL FILMS

SN	Title of Film	Year of Release
1.	Ojadike	1996
2.	Reign Of The Wicked	1996
3.	The Marking Of The Battle Of Musanga	1996
4.	Ugomma	1996
5.	Dikeogo The Warrior	1997
6.	Dry Leaves	1997
7.	Palace	1997
8.	The African Slave	1997
9.	The Missing Princess	1997
10.	Zeruwa	1997
11.	Adure	1998
12.	Arrows of God	1998
13.	Aru (Sacrilege)	1998
14.	Full Moon	1998
15.	Oracle	1998
16.	Princess	1998
17.	Agbogidi	1999
18.	Amadioha	1999
19.	Arusi-Iyi	1999
20.	Earthquake	1999
21.	Ekulu	1999
22.	Exiles	1999
23.	Igodo	1999
24.	Ikenga	1999
25.	Izaga	1999
26.	Lost Kingdom	1999
27.	Nwu The Circle Of Terror	1999
28.	Odum	1999
29.	Oganigwe	1999
30.	Ogbondu	1999
31.	Okanga	1999
32.	Okosisi	1999
33.	Okwute	1999
34.	Onwa	1999
35.	Slave	1999
36.	Ulaga	1999
37.	Akum	2000
38.	Evil Forest	2000
39.	Igede	2000
40.	Ijele	2000
41.	Ikoru	2000
42.	Naked gods	2000
43.	Ngene	2000
44.	Red Machet	2000

45.	Royal Wedding	2000
46.	The Missing Machet	2000
47.	Battle For The Princess	2001
48.	Evil Pots	2001
49.	Evil seed	2001
50.	My Throne	2001
51.	Royal Scandal	2001
52.	Sacrifice	2001
53.	Sacrilege	2001
54.	The Princess Must Dance	2001
55.	Agbomma	2002
56.	Akataka	2002
57.	Atinga	2002
58.	Ebube	2002
59.	Ekwedike	2002
60.	Golden mask	2002
61.	Great ancestors	2002
62.	Last ofalla	2002
63.	Obodo bu Igwe	2002
64.	Ofor na ugu	2002
65.	Ogene	2002
66.	Ogiri	2002
67.	Okochi	2002
68.	The return of the prince	2002
69.	The king maker	2002
70.	Edebiri	2003
71.	Egg of Life	2003
72.	Iroko	2003
73.	King of the Forest	2003
74.	King's Pride	2003
75.	Lost Glory	2003
76.	Nmasinachi	2003
77.	Nze and Ozo	2003
78.	Ogadagidi	2003
79.	Queen Sheba	2003
80.	Rising Sun	2003
81.	Traditional Marriage	2003
82.	Village Crisis	2003
83.	A throne at stake	2004
84.	Azima	2004
85.	Cold war	2004
86.	Coronation	2004
87.	Disgrace of the gods	2004
88.	Falling apart	2004
89.	Golden eggs	2004
90.	Her majesty	2004
91.	Heritage	2004
92.	His majesty	2004

93.	Kingdom on fire	2004
94.	Power tussle	2004
95.	Princess of wealth	2004
96.	Queen	2004
97.	Royal family	2004
98.	Rythm of the gods	2004
99.	The king and i	2004
100.	The prince	2004
101.	The wounded land	2004
102.	Worlds apart	2004
103.	Bandit Queen	2005
104.	Claws of the Lion	2005
105.	Golden moon	2005
106.	Heavy war	2005
107.	Immortal slave	2005
108.	Missionaries	2005
109.	Ola: The Morning Sun	2005
110.	Prince of doom	2005
111.	Royal battle	2005
112.	Royal package	2005
113.	Saving the crown	2005
114.	The prince and princess	2005
115.	The staff of odo	2005
116.	The ultimate hero	2005
117.	The warrior	2005
118.	Tufia kwa	2005
119.	Unbreakable tradition	2005
120.	African heroes	2006
121.	Dance in the forest	2006
122.	Divided kingdom	2006
123.	Sacred tradition	2006
124.	Silence of the gods	2006
125.	The humble lion	2006
126.	Warrior's Heart	2006
127.	Battle of the Gods	2007
128.	King of My Village	2007
129.	Royal Destiny	2007
130.	Royal Tears	2007
131.	Total War	2007
132.	Traditional Prime Minister	2007
133.	Kings of Kings	2008
134.	Prince Of My Land	2008
135.	Royal Grand Mother	2008
136.	Royal Reward	2008
137.	Royal Rumble	2008
138.	The Empress	2008
139.	The Princess of my Life	2008
140.	Beautiful King	2009

141.	Desperate Prince	2009
142.	Prince of Peace	2009
143.	Prince Of The Niger	2009
144.	Revenge of the Gods	2009
145.	Royal Madness	2009
146.	Royal Wives	2009
147.	The King is Mine	2009
148.	The Kings Blood	2009
149.	My Princess	2010
150.	Palace Of Justice	2010
151.	Palace Slave	2010
152.	Royal Decision	2010
153.	Royal Disappointment	2010
154.	Royal Kidnap	2010
155.	Royal Pain	2010
156.	Throne Of Blood	2010
157.	Anointed Prince	2011
158.	Crowned Princess	2011
159.	King Makers	2011
160.	King Solomons Code	2012
161.	Royal Rites	2012
162.	The Great Servant	2012
163.	The Kingdom	2012
164.	Body of the King	2013
165.	Cry of a maiden	2013
166.	Dangerous Journey	2013
167.	Diamond Kingdom	2013
168.	Ghost In The Palace	2013
169.	Heartless Soul	2013
170.	Journey of the King	2013
171.	King's Offer	2013
172.	Kingdom Desperados	2013
173.	Kingdom Of Beauty	2013
174.	Lion Of The Kingdom	2013
175.	Nneka My Princess	2013
176.	Painful Kingdom	2013
177.	Reign of Terror	2013
178.	Rejected Sacrifice	2013
179.	Royal Assignment	2013
180.	Royal Supremacy	2013
181.	Soul Of A King	2013
182.	The Fall Of Kings	2013
183.	The Ghost & The Princess	2013
184.	The Lost Prince	2013
185.	Throne Of Glory	2013
186.	When King Dies	2013
187.	African Bride	2014
188.	Maiden of Destruction	2014

189.	Native Warrior	2014
190.	Royal Joy	2014
191.	Royal Wives	2014
192.	The Palace	2014
193.	The Sacred Skull	2014
194.	Together Apart	2014
195.	Village War	2014
196.	African Tradition	2015
197.	Ezekwesili	2015
198.	Lust of a King	2015
199.	Palace of Contention	2015
200.	Princess and the Taxi Man	2015
201.	Royal Adventure	2015
202.	Royal Favour	2015
203.	Royal Panic	2015
204.	Seed of the Land	2015
205.	The Chosen Tribe	2015
206.	The Igbo Origin	2015
207.	Uloaku	2015

Source: NFVCB 2016