

CULTURAL HYBRIDITY IN NOLLYWOOD: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN INFLUENCES IN THE FILM *ÀDÌRÈ*

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores cultural hybridity in Nollywood through a critical analysis of foreign influences in the film *Àdìrè*. *Àdìrè*, a 2023 Nollywood production, intertwines traditional Yoruba culture with global elements, offering insights into the evolving cultural landscape shaped by globalization. Employing quantitative content analysis, the study examines foreign cultural elements such as language, fashion, and behaviour, alongside their indigenous counterparts. Findings reveal that foreign cultural elements dominate the film, with Western-style dressing and the use of English language accounting for 49.3% and 35.4% of the content, respectively. Conversely, indigenous elements, including Yoruba language and traditional aesthetics, constitute only 22.5% of the overall portrayal, signaling a gradual erosion of cultural identity. The analysis highlights the complex interplay of globalization, where foreign influences enhance Nollywood's global appeal while diluting its cultural authenticity. This study underscores Nollywood's role as both a mirror of society and a medium for cultural negotiation, urging filmmakers to prioritize balanced representation. By preserving indigenous elements while navigating global trends, Nollywood can maintain its identity and foster cultural resilience in an increasingly interconnected world. The paper concludes with recommendations for ethical storytelling and regulatory oversight to ensure a sustainable cultural narrative in Nollywood productions.

Keywords: *Foreign Cultural Elements, Àdìrè, Globalization, Cultural Globalization, Hybridization*

INTRODUCTION

The movie industry plays a significant role in society as it serves as one of the major media that promote and stabilise our culture and traditions. The industry has a massive influence on the development of nations both financially and socially. A nation's cultural heritage is its history and legacy. It's the values and artefacts passed down through generations. They are vital for cultural longevity. These values include arts, customs, festivals, sacred sites, and clothing. They also include eating habits, architecture, and spiritual and political structures (Dairo 2021).

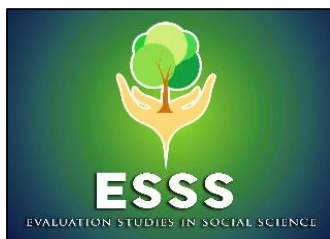
However, globalisation has caused the global landscape to blend. Movies have helped spread cultural values beyond borders.

Most nations have English as their official language. Indigenous African languages are now endangered and facing extinction (Dairo 2021). Yoruba and Igbo, for example, are losing ground. They are now the only elective courses in Nigeria's secondary school curricula (Dairo 2021). Most corporate institutions have adopted a Westernised dress code for employees (Dairo 2021). Suits and gowns have been embraced despite the humid weather in the nation, even though traditional dress forms are still present during events like wedding ceremonies in Nigeria.

Several aspects of Nigerian culture, especially its social institutions, are clearly in danger of disappearing as industrialisation and globalisation continue to seep into cultures and communities, aided by movies streamed through digital technology. Foreign cultural emulation may erode our cultural values. We should accept and celebrate our own histories (Dairo 2021). The inherent risks are lethal to a society's ability to maintain its cultural identity since a lack of cultural values will ultimately lead to the disappearance of that society and the erosion of its values. Cultural values are a key factor that sets apart countries, communities, and societies. Since movies mirror society, they raise questions about their influence, and the debate on it seems endless. The movie industry as a key medium that supports our culture and traditions has a significant impact on a country's moral and financial development. The Yorùbá movie, for instance, entertains and informs. It educates and enlightens, too. Modern films from major international studios have impacted Yorùbá culture and heritage. This is a serious concern as people's interest in Nigeria's cultural heritage and traditions is dwindling daily (Abe 2020).

Ogbe et al. (2020) submit that every movie has cultural products, messages, attributes, and traits. The West and Asia's developed movie industries have spread their way of life to the world. Nigeria is diverse in culture. So, Nollywood movies are a fast way to present our legacy. They show every Nigerian the values and cultures of different Nigerian societies. Nollywood producers are now exploring socio-cultural themes in their movies. They aim to promote Nigeria's rich culture and limit the impact of globalised media on our society and national unity.

Dairo (2021) says in his paper, *The Role of Indigenous Films in Preserving Nigerian Culture*, that we can preserve historical and cultural artefacts and use them for teaching by archiving them through audio-visual media like film. To ensure the sustainability and preservation of our culture, the Nigerian film industry is essential in terms of exportation; it has explored the influence of foreign cultures on Nollywood movies, the preservation of Nigeria's culture, and the purveyor of Nigeria's image and socio-cultural development, highlighting the incorporation of Western themes, styles, and production techniques. However, there is a gap in understanding the specific elements of foreign cultures most commonly portrayed in Nollywood films. Also, their impact on the industry's global appeal is unknown. This research aims to identify and analyse the key foreign cultural elements present in Nollywood movies, using *Àdìrẹ* as a study. *Àdìrẹ* is a 2023 comedy-drama movie that tells the story of a sex worker-turned-entrepreneur who moves to a small town and launches her own lingerie business, made from her signature *Àdìrẹ* material, which is a Yoruba traditional tie-dye fabric.



Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

- i. identify the frequency of elements of foreign culture depicted in *Àdìrẹ*;
- ii. examine the direction of the portrayal of Nigerian culture in *Àdìrẹ*;
- iii. compare the representation of foreign and Nigerian indigenous cultural elements in *Àdìrẹ*.

Research Questions

The study was driven by the following guiding questions:

- i. What is the frequency of foreign cultural elements depicted in *Àdìrẹ* film?
- ii. How is Nigerian cultural elements portrayed in the film *Àdìrẹ*?
- iii. What is the comparison between the representation of foreign cultural elements and Nigerian indigenous cultural elements in *Àdìrẹ*?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interplay of Foreign Culture in Nollywood Movies

Nigerian home videos, widely known as Nollywood movies, serve as a potent cultural medium, reflecting societal values and addressing social, economic, and political issues. Beyond entertainment, Nollywood films embody cultural hybridity, merging traditional African values with global influences (Onuzulike, 2009; Onyenankeya, Onyenankeya & Osunkunle, 2017; Endong, 2023). However, the infusion of foreign cultural elements into Nollywood narratives has sparked debates about its influence on societal values and identity (Onuzulike (2009; Effiong & Iseyen, 2017).

Globalization has profoundly influenced Nollywood, facilitating cultural exchange but also fostering dependency on Western paradigms. According to Onuzulike (2009), the integration of Western cultural elements into Nigerian video films symbolizes both cultural and technological hybridity. For example, Nollywood borrows cinematic techniques from Western traditions while maintaining local storytelling through African idioms, proverbs, and artifacts (Bello and Adesemoye, 2012; Endong, 2023). However, this hybridity raises concerns about the dilution of indigenous cultural values (Onuzulike, 2009).

Nollywood, like other global film industries, mirrors the pervasive impact of foreign media on youth behavior and societal norms. Zakzouk et al. (2023) observed that Hollywood's depiction of freedom, individuality, and modern lifestyles often becomes aspirational for younger audiences, who adopt these behaviours without critical evaluation (Onyenankeya, Onyenankeya & Osunkunle, 2017; Zakzouk, Perumal & Wafa, 2023). Similarly, Nollywood films sometimes glamorize behaviours such as smoking, drinking, and sexual promiscuity, which contradict traditional Nigerian values (Endong, 2023; Imhanobe, 2022). The portrayal

of such acts in Nollywood movies demonstrates this conflict, where foreign lifestyles intersect with local narratives (Onuzulike, 2009).

Religion remains a significant motif in Nollywood, often shaping narratives and character development. It is common for Nollywood films to explore the tension between indigenous and foreign religious practices. Such portrayal often represents the influence of foreign religions, mainly Christianity and Islam reflecting a legacy of (re-)colonialism on Nigerian society (Owolabi, Akashoro & Umudu, 2014). While such depictions sometimes highlight moral redemption, they also underscore the nuanced relationship between foreign and traditional spirituality (Onyenakeya, Onyenakeya & Osunkunle, 2017; Endong, 2023). Nollywood serves as a critical platform for identity negotiation, reflecting and reshaping perceptions of Nigerian and African identities. Despite its cultural hybridity, the industry retains a strong focus on local narratives, showcasing indigenous lifestyles, traditions, and challenges (Onuzulike, 2009; Endong, 2023). However, critics argue that the increasing Westernization of Nollywood films threatens the preservation of Nigeria's rich cultural heritage (Onuzulike, 2009).

Following this, Owolabi et al. (2014) contend that continued focus on foreign cultural elements may erode Nigeria's indigenous values. This dependency is evident in the adoption of Western dress codes, language, and social behaviours by Arabian and Nigerian youth, as portrayed in many Nollywood productions they have watched as they perceive such as sign of modernity and civilization (Onyenakeya, Onyenakeya & Osunkunle; 2017; Onuzulike, 2009; Zakzouk et al., 2023). Unhealthy behaviours such as drunkenness, smoking, partying, rape and sexual promiscuity have ravaged among the youth due to free and liberal display in movies (Gautam, 2017; Bekalu & Viswanath, 2018; Ailsa (2012). In the process of mirroring the society, Nollywood producers present these unhealthy behaviours in desirable manners without recourse to their moral and public health implications, including untimely death (Sarah, 2019; Wells, 2019; Yadav, 2020; Rao, Panda, Gupta, Ambekar, Gupta, Agrawal, 2020; Rao, Panda, Gupta, Ambekar, Gupta, Agrawal, 2020; Big-Alabo, 2023). Stakeholders advocate for a more balanced representation that emphasizes cultural pride and resilience. Nollywood has been criticized for its focus on sensational themes, such as ritualism, violence, and materialism, often reflecting societal issues but also perpetuating stereotypes (Onyenakeya, Onyenakeya & Osunkunle, 2017; Onuzulike, 2009). Studies, such as those by Imhanobe (2022), suggest that these portrayals are not fabrications but mirror existing societal realities. The industry is encouraged to de-emphasize the glamorization of such themes, opting instead for narratives that promote moral and cultural values (Onyenakeya, Onyenakeya & Osunkunle, 2017; Onuzulike, 2009).

Nollywood's portrayal of foreign culture reflects a complex interplay of global influences and local realities. While it has succeeded in projecting Nigerian stories to a global audience, its adoption of foreign cultural elements necessitates a critical approach to ensure that indigenous values are not overshadowed. Future studies should focus on strategies for preserving cultural identity within the globalized framework of Nollywood.

Portrayal of Indigenous Culture in Nollywood Movies

Despite nearly 100 years of colonisation-induced modernity, the Yoruba culture remains a reservoir of traditions, norms, values, and social philosophy that regulate social relations and activities according to indigenous value systems (Ayokunle et al., 2019). A prominent component of Yoruba popular culture, spread through proverbs and songs, as well as ordinary, taken-for-granted interactions, emphasises the worth of children (Ayokunle et al., 2019). Children hold a key place among the Yoruba. Children are vital to societal continuity, but they must be adequately socialised and psychologically and economically prepared to operate appropriately in society (Ayokunle et al., 2019).

To ensure that a child is raised to be responsible, the Yoruba indigenous value system requires that the immediate family context, led by parents or guardians, sufficiently socialises children in indigenous norms and values because modern education differs from normative education. The characters of Simi, Pastor, Mide and Mrs Sade, Simi's only daughter in the movie *Àdìrẹ*, were portrayed to have deviated from her parents' home training by getting herself pregnant after losing virginity which is a core African value, thereby embarrassing her parents by such uncultured acts. Abeni, Simi's friend and a church worker, also got pregnant also, at the point of giving birth, died due to internal bleeding. All these were a forecast of parental training. Parents are typically expected to prioritise their children's birth, good health, welfare, and success, although the children are seen as most valued in the parents' later years. Parents who are unable to enrol their children in school due to financial constraints choose to place them in foster care with relatives and other willing guardians, with the assumption that such children will assist with housework while the guardians assume their educational duties. A child who takes on the burden of promoting the family lineage in modern times must be socialised effectively and internalise social principles; otherwise, they will become irresponsible, remain economically dependent as adults, and possibly become an outcast (Ayokunle et al., 2019).

Different cultural groups think, feel, and behave differently. There are no scientific standards for determining whether one group is essentially superior or inferior to another. Culture is defined as the people's traditions, which are passed down from generation to generation. This differs globally according to the group in terms of eating habits, food type, language, music, attire, and so on (Adepeju & Oyebola 2013). According to Umar (2022), language is the most important aspect in distinguishing one culture from another, as well as the most important component of cultural identity. For example, in Nigerian institutions, Hausa and Yoruba have unique language identities, cultures, and social lives. According to Umar (2022), language is both a means of communication and a cultural transmitter. When Britain took control as the colonial power in Nigeria, English became the language used to govern the new country. Thus, English became the administrative language (Umar, 2022). In the movie *Àdìrẹ*, English was the predominant language, whereas the settings and plot revolved around Yoruba. In Kenya, English became more than just a language; it became the dominant language, and all others were forced to surrender to it. According to Adepeju and Oyebola (2013), the Yorubas are well-known for their dress. Clothing materials are traditionally made from processed cotton by traditional weavers. The Yoruba wear a vast variety of attire. The

basic is the Aso-Oke, which comes in a variety of colours and patterns. Some common styles are Alaari—a rich red Aso-Oke—and Sanyan, a brown and usually light brown Aso-Oke, Ètu—a dark blue Aso-Oke, Ofi—pure white yarned cloths used as cover cloth—can be sewn and worn. Aran—a velvet clothing material sewn into Dansiki and Kẹmbe, worn by the rich, Adirẹ-cloth with various patterns and designs, dyed in indigo ink (Èlu).

In Hausa culture, there are restrictions regarding what people can and cannot wear. The men are easy to distinguish because they wear elaborate attire, such as the big, flowing dress known as Babban Riga. Usually, there are intricately embroidered motifs around the neck. Men wear colourful caps called hula with embroidery on them (Umar, 2022), while women may be identified by their wraps, which are called "Zani" and are made of a colourful cloth called "atamfa." They also wear a hijab, which includes a matching blouse, head tie, and shawl. They enjoy wearing jewellery and other lovely items (Umar, 2022).

Yoruba clothes are gender sensitive. Men wear Kẹmbe, Dandogo, Dansiki, Agbada, Buba, Sokoto, and matching headgear like AbetiAja, dog ear-shaped cap, and fila-etu. Women wear Iro (wrapper) and Buba (top), with matching headgear (gele) (Adepeju and Oyebola, 2013).

In comparison to other areas of the body, the head is the most prominent, as is the hair that covers it. The culture and tradition of hairstyles are based on the spiritual and biological roles of the individual head (Adepeju and Oyebola, 2013). Yorùbá people's identity is defined by their hairstyle and facial marks, sometimes known as the tribal mark (Abe, 2020). Hairdos or styles have historically and continue to have a variety of purposes among Yorubas, including medium of communication, mark of initiation, state of mind, religious beliefs, and women's marital and social standing in society. For example, a hairstyle that starts from the forehead and continues at the back of the neck indicates that the carrier is married. Yoruba women traditionally used braiding and tying to enhance their hair (Adepeju and Oyebola, 2013).

The Yoruba religion is a fusion of indigenous beliefs, myths and legends, proverbs, and songs, all affected by the cultural and social circumstances of western Africa (Remi, 2021). According to Adepeju and Oyebola (2013), the Yoruba faith, also known as Aborisha, Orishafifa, or simply (and incorrectly) Ifa, is widely regarded as one of the primary components of the syncretic pool known as African traditional religions. Olodumare, the Supreme God, appointed Ọbatala as the arch-divinity to build solid land from primordial water and populate it with humans. The Yoruba religion incorporates the concept of "Ashe," a powerful life force possessed by both people and supernatural creatures; "Ashe" is the energy found in all natural things. The Yoruba orishas, like the Catholic saints, serve as intermediaries between humans and the supreme creator, as well as the rest of the supernatural world. Yoruba religious rituals have a social function by promoting cultural values and preserving the rich legacy of the people who practice them. (Remi, 2021).

Music and dance have always played a significant role in Yoruba culture, both in Nigeria and in the diaspora. Yoruba music and dance are employed for a variety of situations, including religious festivals, royal celebrations, and amusement (Adepeju and Oyebola, 2013). Yoruba traditional music honours Yoruba deities. Drums and singing are the primary components of Yoruba music. Metal bells and wind instruments are commonly used. Yoruba is a tonal language. To understand speech correctly, words must be delivered in the appropriate tone

(pitch). There are three main tones: high, medium, and low. Juju is dance music performed by huge bands centred on guitars and drums. Singing is an important aspect of Juju music, and it is influenced by Yoruba poetry, proverbs, praise songs, and the musical quality of the language. (Adepeju, Oyebola, 2013).

Yoruba people place a high value on greetings; there are appropriate greetings for every occasion, season, job, and event. Anyone who does not welcome others with civility is deemed uncultured and uncivilized. Daily common greetings such as Ekaaro - (Good morning), Ekaa san - (Good afternoon), and Ekaale - (Good evening). Greeting is a key aspect of Yorùbá culture and tradition. Yorùbá people valued greetings for all occasions, seasons, jobs, and events. In other words, each occasion or event is associated with a unique welcome. Yorùbás feel that someone who lacks greeting manners is deemed uncultured and uncivilised (Abe, 2020).

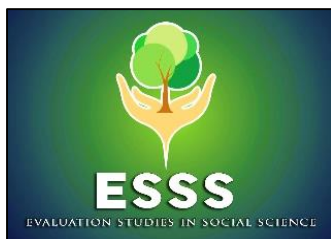
Theoretical Review: Cultural Imperialism Theory

The cultural imperialism theory is often attributed to Herbert Schiller, who established the framework for the theory in his 1969 book "Mass Communications and American Empire" by exploring the role of mass media in advancing American cultural values and interests on a global scale. Schiller's work focused on the power dynamics inherent in the global communication system, as well as the influence of Western media on shaping perceptions and values in other regions of the world (García & Birkinbine, 2019). The theory suggests that dominant cultures, often Western or American, exert influence over other cultures through media products, including movies. One of the theory's main strengths is its emphasis on power dynamics in dominant and subordinate cultures. It illuminates how wealthy nations employ media and cultural products to exert influence over weaker nations, showing unequal power dynamics on a global scale (Lwahas & Matyek, 2024). Lwahas & Matyek (2024) applied this theory to analyse the level of Western media influence or Americanization on the movie culture in Nigeria. Their study explains how Western media, particularly American films, have historically dominated the Nigerian cinema landscape, impacting audience tastes and industry practices. The theory in this study would help us to understand how Nigerian filmmakers navigate the influx of Western media content and its influence on what they produce for their audience. The theory would be relevant in order to understand how the Nollywood movie industry infuses or gatekeeps foreign culture in movies.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs quantitative content analysis to investigate the elements of foreign culture present in the Nollywood movie *Àdìrẹ*. Quantitative content analysis is a systematic and objective method for quantifying the presence of specific elements within a media text. To ensure a comprehensive and accurate analysis, *Àdìrẹ* was viewed multiple times, with each viewing focusing on different aspects such as language, dressing, and hairdo/style. The repetitive viewing process allowed for a thorough identification and documentation of foreign cultural elements, ensuring that no significant instances were overlooked. A detailed coding



scheme was developed, categorizing foreign cultural elements into clear, specific categories: instances of foreign language use (primarily English), occurrences of Western-style dressing, and depictions of Western-influenced hairdos and styles.

Sample

Many films are produced weekly grossing into hundreds annually by the Nigerian film industry. About 50 films are churned out on a weekly basis while a total of 1088 were classified by The National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) for 2024 according to the record of this Nigerian film regulatory body (Daily Trust, n.d.; Premium Times, 2025). This study employs purposive sampling to select an audiovisual production to be content analysed based on the criteria of title, background, ideology, popularity and virality that addresses indigenous cultural representations. This approach allows for a thorough examination of foreign cultural components within the setting of a single Nollywood movie. Therefore, the Nollywood movie *Àdìrẹ* was purposively selected for this research. The movie title *Àdìrẹ* (Tie & dye) suggests that it should depict indigenous culture more than foreign because it is rich in indigenous cultural elements. The title of the movie is in Yoruba language meaning tie and dye, the traditional fabric dyeing and pattern designing techniques of the Yorubas in Southwest Nigeria. *Àdìrẹ*, directed by Adeoluwa Owu, was premiered on November 3, 2023 in cinemas and in January 2024, within three months was on Netflix with best performance in second position of the list of Nigerian movies on the platform early in the year before pitching in 4th place later in the year. Again, the lead actress Kehinde Bankole won the Best Lead Actress Award at the 10th edition of the Africa Magic Viewers Choice Awards (AMVCA) 2024 for her role in the movie an award in the movie. (Adio, 2023, Ade-Martins, 2024, Ajose, 2024)

Data Analysis

This study adopted the quantitative content analysis and utilized a coding sheet to collect the data on the elements of culture which include language, dressing and fashion, adornments, religion, sexuality, entertainment, alcohol use, and other *minor categories* (*Bars/clubs, dress making and fundraising outreach*) as displayed in the content categories in the tables which were analyzed in frequency and percentages. This study employed the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyze the data collected through content analysis. This yielded tables of frequencies and percentages that were later presented for data analysis and discussion of findings.

RESULTS

This section contains the data analysis leading to the findings of the study. The data is presented in tables, followed by a textual explanation of the table from which the findings are logically inferred. This is arranged in a particular sectional order in line with the objectives and research questions of the study carved into conceptual constructs. The first sets of data focus on a critical analysis of foreign cultural elements in *Àdìrẹ* based on the focus of the first research question.

Hence, in answering our first driving question for this study, the foreign cultural elements in *Àdìrẹ* were categorized into 15 as shown in Table 1 below generated from our content analysis of the film under study.

Table 1
Elements of Foreign Culture in Àdìrẹ

Content Categories	Foreign Element/Culture	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Language	1,115	35.4
Dressing & Fashion	1554	49.3
Sexuality	115	3.7
Smoking	10	0.32
Entertainment Dancing	35	1.1
Money Display	3	0.1
Religion	9	0.3
Alcohol use	9	0.3
Bar/Club	4	0.13
Dress Making	4	0.13
Mourning	1	0.03
Adornments	284	9
Fundraising Outreach	1	0.03
Beating of Women	3	0.1
Gunshots/Violence	3	0.1
Total	3150	100

The Nollywood movie, *Àdìrẹ*, demonstrates a considerable presence of foreign cultural elements across various aspects of its content. These content categories include language, dressing and fashion, Sexual promiscuity, smoking, entertainment and dancing, adornments, religion and other cultural elements such as alcohol use, bars/clubs, gunshots, etc. Table 1 above shows distribution across content categories based on their frequency and relative percentages, while the following analysis explores their implications for the film's cultural authenticity and broader societal impact. For instance, the dominant foreign influence in dressing and fashion, as depicted in the movie (49.3%), points to the pervasive impact of Western styles in Nigerian society. While this may enhance the visual appeal for international audiences and the opportunity to compare western attires with Nigerian indigenous fabrics and styles, it is capable of diluting the representation of traditional Yoruba attire central to the film's thematic core as reflected in the title, *Àdìrẹ*, meaning Tie and Dye in the Yoruba textile industry, an industry already attracting global market since decades. It is, therefore shocking that a movie named after a widely known Yoruba fabric type and style would then give almost 50% prominence to foreign cultural elements represented by dressing. Following fashion in predominance of foreign cultural elements is language which is another significant cultural

product globally. With a rate of 35.4%, foreign linguistic elements represent the the second most significant aspects of foreign cultural influence in *Àdìrẹ*. This suggests a blending or replacement of indigenous languages with foreign ones, primarily English. This may reflect the globalized nature of Nollywood, where English is often used to broaden the audience base. However, it could also indicate a gradual erosion of indigenous languages and cultural identity, a reflection of which is already predominant among the young generation in Nigeria where many children and young adults could not speak their mother tongue at all or struggle to speak it like non-natives.

However, foreign adornments such as jewellery and makeup has somewhat low representation, covering just 9% of foreign elements in the movie. This may be considered as favouring Nigerian indigenous culture. But when compared with indigenous adornments identified in the movie, it was apparent that foreign ornamental representation is even higher. Again, this may fortify the preponderance of Western fashion trends overshadowing traditional Yoruba adornments. This reinforces the influence of global fashion industries on Nollywood. It also has economic implications on our nation by encouraging import and pulling down local industry in that sector.

Similarly, the depiction of sexual promiscuity aligns with global media trends, possibly aiming for modernity and relatability. However, it raises questions about the balance between portraying contemporary realities and maintaining culturally sensitive storytelling. The rate of sexually explicit scenes in the movie (3.7%), appearing relatively low, though, ranges from exposure of cleavages and female erogenous zones to open romance and actual sex. This is antithetic to the cultural orientation of the Yorubas, a community in which all these are perceived promiscuous and taboo in the presence of and among children and adolescents who are the highest viewers of movies in the country. Additionally, smoking as a foreign element, though minimal (0.32%), reflects the normalization of habits often associated with Western lifestyles. Its low frequency suggests an attempt to limit glamorization but acknowledges its influence on the viewing audience no matter how minimal. This is similar to the incorporation of foreign dance styles 35 times in the movie, highlights the globalization of entertainment. This may enhance the film's appeal to younger audiences while simultaneously overshadowing and relegating indigenous dance forms to the background. The limited depiction of foreign religious practices indicates a cautious approach in portraying spiritual elements. This may stem from the sensitive nature of religion in Nigerian society. However, these nine occasions of depiction of Christianity represent 100% of religious portrayal in film emanating from a multi-religious setting such as the western region of Nigeria. It can be perceived as a form of imbalance as not even a scene of indigenous religious practice was depicted in the movie.

Other cultural elements depicted in the studied movie include alcohol use, bars/clubs and gunshots. These elements, though minimal, showcase modern, urban lifestyles influenced by foreign cultures. Their presence may serve to add realism but risks promoting undesirable behaviours, especially among the viewing youth. These undesirable behaviours, depicted 33 times in the movie, include violence emanating from drunkenness, gun attacks, physical combats, abduction, rape, clubbing, arson, etc. without any legal implication on the perpetrator. This may encourage juvenile delinquencies, crimes, discord and disorder in the society.

In summary, the overall rate and dominance of foreign cultural elements in *Àdìrẹ* (49.3% in fashion, 35.4% in language) highlight the influence of globalization on Nollywood. While these elements may increase the movie's global marketability, they raise concerns about the dilution of indigenous cultural heritage. The film reflects the tension between preserving traditional Nigerian identity and appealing to modern, international audiences. Striking a balance between these competing demands is crucial to maintaining Nollywood's cultural authenticity while fostering its growth in the global entertainment industry.

The second objective and research question of the study focus on a critical analysis of Nigerian cultural elements in *Àdìrẹ*. This was intended to reflect the battle between indigenous heritage and modernity as represented in indigenous home videos. Our analysis shows that the film, *Àdìrẹ*, provides a nuanced exploration of Nigerian cultural elements, oscillating between a celebration of tradition and a critique of contemporary influences. Through an empirical examination of its thematic portrayal, the film reflects a dynamic interplay between indigenous identity and the pressures of globalization. Our analysis unpacks the content categories in the line of frequency, percentages, and directions, drawing deeper inferences about the representation of Nigerian culture in *Àdìrẹ* as shown in table 2 below.

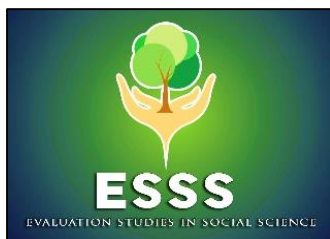
Table 2
Portrayal of Nigerian Culture in Àdìrẹ

Content Categories	Indigenous Cultural Elements		Direction
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Language	207	23	Positive
Dressing & Fashion	641	70	Negative
Sexual Promiscuity	13	1.4	Positive
Smoking	1	0.1	Negative
Entertainment	21	2.3	Positive
Money Display	2	0.2	Negative
Religion	0	0	Neutral
Alcohol	2	0.2	Negative
Use/Drunkenness			
Bar/Club	0	0	Neutral
Dress Making	0	0	Neutral
Mourning	1	0.1	Positive
Adornments	23	2.5	Positive
Fundraising Outreach	0	0	Neutral
Beating of Women	1	0.1	Negative
Gunshots/Violence	2	0.2	Negative
Total	914	100	

Table 2 reveals a complex landscape of cultural representation in the movie, *Àdìrẹ*, where various elements of Nigerian culture forming the content categories of our analysis, are portrayed with distinct positive and negative connotations. The frequent depiction (23%) of indigenous language (particularly Yoruba) in *Àdìrẹ*, a film that is predominantly dialogued in English, underscores its pivotal role as a vessel of cultural preservation. By prioritizing local dialects, the film reaffirms the connection between language and identity. This choice resonates with the authenticity of Nigerian life, where language serves as both a tool for communication and a marker of cultural pride. The positive portrayal of indigenous suggests the film's commitment to safeguarding linguistic heritage, a necessary countermeasure against the homogenizing forces of globalization, although, it is surprising that even in the local setting of the film, English language dominates the lines. In the film, dressing and fashion dominate the film's portrayal, making up a staggering 70% of its indigenous thematic focus, being a central theme of the movie. However, the negative direction highlights a tension between traditional attire and contemporary influences. This portrayal likely critiques the growing prevalence of Western-inspired dressing styles, which often undermine the symbolism and dignity of traditional Nigerian clothing. By foregrounding this theme, *Àdìrẹ* addresses the broader issue of cultural erosion, challenging audiences to reflect on how fashion choices shape and reflect identity. This is particularly apparent in the use of *Àdìrẹ* (tie & die), an indigenous fabric, to sew foreign styles and attire.

Though a minor theme in terms of frequency (1.4%), the positive portrayal of sexual promiscuity introduces a provocative layer to the film's narrative. This depiction may be interpreted as a reflection of shifting moral landscapes within Nigerian society, influenced by external cultural norms. Alternatively, it could serve as a critique, using the "positive" portrayal to underscore how modernity normalizes behaviours traditionally deemed inappropriate. The inclusion of this element invites critical discourse on the interplay between cultural transformation and moral evolution. The possibility of glamourisation of sexually explicit content leading to arousal of promiscuity among the young viewers is perhaps obvious here. In spite of the scantiness of indigenous entertainment forms in *Àdìrẹ* (2.3%), the film's focus on entertainment portrays it as a vital element of Nigerian culture, emphasizing communal bonding and emotional expression. Through depictions of music, dance, and festivities, *Àdìrẹ* celebrates the vibrancy of Nigerian life. This positive representation aligns with the cultural significance of entertainment, highlighting its role in sustaining traditions and fostering communal unity and harmony, while also supporting interpersonal bonding.

The emphasis on adornments reinforces their significance in Nigerian culture as symbols of beauty, status, and identity. The positive direction suggests that the film values traditional aesthetics, using adornments to showcase the richness of Nigerian heritage. This theme complements the broader narrative of cultural preservation, reminding viewers of the importance of visual symbols in storytelling. This semiotic cultural element, though with insignificant rate (2.5%) in the movie, positively promotes indigenous culture to the audience. Some cultural elements, though minor in rate of depiction- smoking (0.1%), alcohol use (0.2%), gunshots/violence (0.2%), and beating of women (0.1%) carry negative connotations, highlighting societal issues. They portray behaviours that conflict with traditional values,



aligning with societal disapproval. These cultural elements, as portrayed in the movie, spotlight critical social problems, underscoring the need for dialogue and reform. These portrayals serve as cautionary elements, reflecting the darker aspects of societal realities without glorification. But the absence of themes on indigenous religion, fundraising models and dress making represents missed opportunities to delve into areas integral to Nigerian life. Religion, in particular, is deeply embedded in the nation's cultural fabric, and its omission could indicate a deliberate narrative choice or an oversight in representing a holistic cultural landscape.

Overall, the thematic analysis of *Àdìrẹ* reveals an underlying narrative tension: the negotiation between preserving indigenous identity and adapting to modernity. The film critiques cultural dilution, particularly through fashion and behaviour, while simultaneously celebrating enduring traditions like language and adornments. This duality mirrors the broader struggles of postcolonial societies navigating globalization. Through its portrayal of Nigerian cultural elements, *Àdìrẹ* acts as both a mirror and a critique of societal dynamics. The film challenges audiences to consider the consequences of cultural erosion while celebrating the resilience of traditions. Its thematic choices encourage a dialogue on identity, morality, and the future of Nigerian culture. As globalization continues to shape societal norms, *Àdìrẹ* reminds viewers of the importance of intentional cultural preservation, urging them to embrace heritage without compromising progress.

In order to balance the cultural portrayal in the movie between foreign and indigenous, the last research question addressed a comparative analysis of foreign and Nigerian indigenous cultural representation in *Àdìrẹ*. Data depict that the Nollywood film, *Àdìrẹ* presents a complex interplay of foreign and indigenous cultural elements, showcasing a strong inclination towards foreign influence. This analysis examines the extent of these depictions across various content categories based on a quantitative and explorative content analysis adopted in this study, offering insights into their implications for cultural representation, especially in Nigerian movies. See table 3 below.

Table 3

Comparison of Foreign and Indigenous Cultural Elements in the Film Àdìrẹ

Content Categories	Frequency		Percentage (%)	
	Foreign	Indigenous	Foreign	Indigenous
Language	1,115	207	84	16
Dressing & Fashion	1554	641	71	29
Sexual Promiscuity	115	13	90	10
Smoking	10	1	91	9
Entertainment	35	21	62.5	37.5
Money Display	3	2	60	40
Religion	9	0	100	0
Alcohol use	9	2	82	18
Bar/Club	4	0	100	0
Dress Making	4	0	100	0
Mourning	1	1	50	50
Adornments	284	23	92.5	7.5
Fundraising Outreach	1	0	100	0
Beating of Women	3	1	75	25
Gunshots/Violence	3	2	60	40
Total	3150	914	77.5	22.5

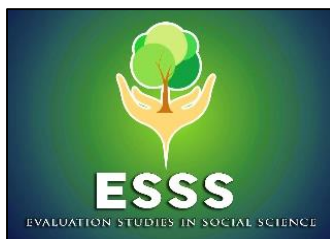
As shown in Table 3, the overwhelming dominance of foreign language (84%) reflects Nollywood's global orientation. This compromises the promotion of indigenous languages, thereby eroding their critical role as conveyors of cultural heritage and identity. This is unconnected to the extinction of indigenous languages among the young generations in Nigeria most of whom are more comfortable with English language as a medium of communication at the expense of their mother tongues. While the roles of schools cannot be ruled out in this context, *Àdìrẹ* is an indication of the roles of Nollywood in the obnoxious war against indigenous languages in Nigeria. Our analysis shows that foreign fashion trends dominate the appearance of characters across scene in the movie (71%), indicating the globalized nature of Nollywood. Although indigenous attire retains a notable presence with 29% representation, its reduced visibility risks overshadowing traditional dress forms central to Yoruba culture, thereby speedily annihilating the concepts of identity and moral values associated with Yoruba indigenous attire. While movies mirror the society, it is also a truism that the media shape opinions, perceptions and behaviours as the audience model the characters in media contents they consume. The portrayal of sexuality heavily reflects foreign norms, emphasizing liberal perspectives uncommon in traditional Nigerian society. This trend may influence shifting pristine societal values with the risks of alienating conservative audiences who are usually custodians of societal norms, beliefs and values. It is particularly unexpected that a movie whose title indicates a unique cultural product such as *Àdìrẹ* will compromise the cultural values of the society that produces it, objectifying *Àdìrẹ* for foreign cultural products.

It was discovered that smoking, a habit associated with Western lifestyles, is rarely depicted as an acceptable indigenous practice among the Yorubas. Its inclusion, especially in contexts of glamour, suggests an alignment with global cinematic depictions of urban or rebellious characters. In addition to this, its portrayal seems glamorous even as home and global laws gradually discourage tobacco and hard drugs. To the Yorubas, smokers suffer moral perception and are never considered as upright personalities in the society because of the psychiatric and other health issues associated with smoking. In the movie, foreign entertainment forms (62.5%) overshadow indigenous entertainment genres (37.5%), such as traditional music and dance, which play a vital role in preserving cultural identity. This imbalance highlights the increasing influence of globalized media causing cultural imperialism and moral degradation in the society. The memorability of music and other entertainment forms suggests that foreign cultural products carried by foreign music have subtle power of subconscious retention and adoption among the viewing audience, mainly youths. Then, the future of Nigerian culture is bleak in that scenario.

Our analysis reveals that the dominance of foreign adornments (92.5%) reflects the penetration of global fashion and beauty standards. This diminishes the visibility of traditional Yoruba adornments, counting as low as 7.5%, which hold significant cultural and symbolic meaning. Adornments are symbolic cultural products serving as body media for cultural promotion. With Nollywood promoting foreign adornments in large scale, the possibility of cultural imperialism and extinction is high as can be observed in the 21st century Nigerian society.

Despite being a Nigerian movie, the absence of indigenous religious practices points to a potential loss of spiritual and cultural traditions in the film *Àdìrẹ*. This trend aligns with the widespread adoption of foreign religions in Nigerian urban centres. In addition, the religious imbalance in a movie ostentatiously entitled along indigenous culture becomes more apparent when only Christianity represents the total religious portrayal, with nine occurrences, in a film that is not philosophically evangelical. Content categories like bars/clubs, dress making, and fundraising outreach, foreign cultural elements are exclusively represented by foreign cultural elements as if there is nothing to symbolise them in Nigerian indigenous culture. This reflects the pervasive influence of Western urban lifestyles, often at the expense of showcasing indigenous alternatives.

Several general insights were then inferred from our content analysis data. The first among them is Dominance of Foreign Elements in the content of the film. For instance, foreign cultural elements account for 77.5% of total depictions, compared to only 22.5% for indigenous elements. This disparity underscores Nollywood's strong orientation towards global standards and trends. Second is Cultural Hybridity and Erosion which is clearly highlighted in the data obtained from content analysis of the film, with an evident blending of foreign and indigenous cultures. However, the underrepresentation of indigenous elements suggests a gradual erosion of traditional values and practices with assumable implications on the acceptable moral fabrics of the society. The third one is Global vs. Local Appeal which reflects the prioritization of foreign elements to enhance the film's global appeal but risks alienating local audiences who



value cultural authenticity. This tension reflects broader challenges faced by Nollywood in balancing commercial viability with cultural preservation.

The analysis reveals a significant disparity in the representation of foreign and indigenous cultural elements in *Àdìrẹ*. While this reflects the globalization of Nollywood, it raises concerns about the marginalization of indigenous culture. Moving forward, Nollywood filmmakers must strive for a more balanced representation to preserve Nigeria's rich cultural heritage while maintaining global relevance.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Frequency of Foreign Cultural Elements Depicted in Àdìrẹ

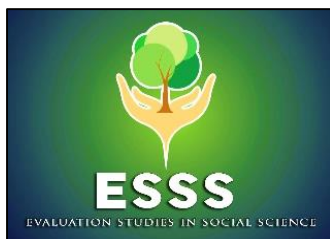
The content analysis revealed a significant presence of foreign cultural elements in the film *Àdìrẹ*, underscoring the pervasive influence of globalization on Nollywood productions. Foreign dressing and fashion was dominant in portrayal, followed by language. These findings reflect Nollywood's alignment with Western standards, aiming to appeal to global audiences. However, they highlight the erosion of indigenous cultural identity as Western sartorial choices overshadow traditional Yoruba attire, despite the centrality of *Àdìrẹ* (a Yoruba textile) in the film's narrative. This trend aligns with Onuzulike (2009) and Bello & Adesemoye (2012), who assert that Nollywood mirrors global cinematic practices but often at the expense of local culture. The minimal representation of smoking and alcohol use suggests an awareness of their potential societal impact but still reflects a normalization of foreign habits.

Direction of the Portrayal of Nigerian Culture in Àdìrẹ

Indigenous cultural elements in *Àdìrẹ* were depicted with mixed connotations. Positive portrayals were observed in language and adornments, affirming the cultural richness of Nigeria. For example, the use of Yoruba in select dialogues connects audiences to their roots, reinforcing cultural identity. Conversely, traditional dressing and fashion, despite accounting for a third of the indigenous content, were depicted negatively. Westernized adaptations of *Àdìrẹ* fabric reflect a hybrid cultural narrative but also raise concerns about the dilution of authentic Yoruba aesthetics. Sexual promiscuity, albeit minimally represented was surprisingly portrayed positively. This aligns with Endong (2023) and Zakzouk et al. (2023), who argue that Nollywood glamorizes foreign liberal values, influencing shifts in societal norms among younger audiences.

Comparative Representation of Foreign and Nigerian Indigenous Cultural Elements

The analysis revealed that foreign cultural elements constituted the dominant portion of the total cultural representation in *Àdìrẹ*, compared to indigenous elements. This stark disparity reflects Nollywood's prioritization of foreign appeal over local authenticity. Foreign languages, predominantly English, vastly overshadowed Yoruba language. This imbalance undermines efforts to preserve indigenous languages, echoing Owolabi et al. (2014), who highlighted the adverse effects of linguistic imperialism. Also, western fashion's dominance portrayal signals

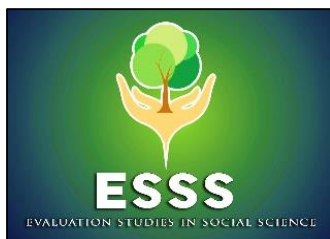


cultural imperialism, as discussed by García & Birkinbine (2018). The indigenous *Àdìrẹ* fabric was limited to less symbolic contexts, reflecting a gradual loss of cultural significance. In addition to the foregoing, the absence of indigenous spiritual practices, despite the representation of Christianity in the movie, underscores Nollywood's inclination toward foreign religious narratives, as noted by Effiong & Iseyen (2017). This imbalance perpetuates the marginalization of traditional spirituality. The findings verify Onuzulike (2009), Effiong and Iseyen (2017), and Idogho (2022), who argue that Nollywood embodies cultural hybridity but often at the expense of indigenous traditions. While globalization has facilitated cultural exchange, it has also led to dependency on Western paradigms, risking cultural erosion. The dominance of foreign content in *Àdìrẹ* exemplifies this tension, where Nollywood's pursuit of global relevance compromises its role as a custodian of Nigerian heritage.

CONCLUSION

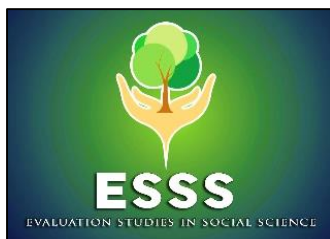
The findings from this study not only highlight the complex interplay between foreign and indigenous cultures in Nollywood but also reinforce the theoretical frameworks of cultural imperialism and framing theory. By showcasing the positive aspects of Nigerian culture while critiquing foreign influences, Nollywood films like *Àdìrẹ* contribute to a richer understanding of cultural identity and resilience in a globalized world.

To address the cultural imbalance observed in Nollywood movies like *Àdìrẹ*, it is recommended that filmmakers consciously mitigate cultural erosion. Hence, Nollywood must prioritize balanced representation, showcasing indigenous elements authentically while integrating foreign influences strategically. They must prevent glamorization of foreign lifestyles, necessitating ethical storytelling to prevent the normalization of undesirable behaviours, as suggested by Bekalu & Viswanath (2018). While striking a balance between cultural authenticity and global marketability is critical, incorporating local idioms, proverbs, and aesthetics could enhance Nollywood's cultural depth while maintaining international appeal. Additionally, the film censorship boards in Nigeria should critically examine Nollywood movies to ensure they have higher indigenous elements. By fostering a more balanced representation of cultural elements, Nollywood will not only preserve its rich cultural heritage but also offer a more diverse and authentic cinematic experience to both local and international audiences.

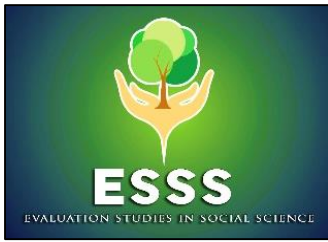


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