



Research Article

Rise of Online Stream Media Platforms and Their Influence on Viewership of Nollywood Films among Undergraduates in Anambra State

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About Article

Article History

Submission: December 10, 2025

Acceptance: January 15, 2026

Publication: January 28, 2026

Keywords:

Online Stream Media Platforms, Viewership, Nollywood Films, Undergraduates, Anambra State

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ABSTRACT

The rise of online streaming platforms has significantly reshaped media consumption, particularly for Nollywood films. As platforms such as Netflix, YouTube, and iROKOTv grow in popularity, viewership of Nigerian films has shifted from traditional media outlets to digital platforms, especially among university students. This study examined the influence of online streaming platforms on the viewership of Nollywood films among undergraduates in Anambra State, Nigeria. It utilised the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) as its theoretical framework, which emphasises the active role of audiences in selecting media that fulfil their needs and desires. A survey design was employed, with a sample of 400 respondents drawn from three universities in Anambra State: Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), and Tansian University. The study found that Netflix and YouTube were the most frequently used platforms for streaming Nollywood films, with high-frequency consumption. Respondents indicated a preference for streaming because of the flexibility of on-demand access, a wider selection of films, and higher-quality viewing experiences. Additionally, the international reach of streaming platforms positively influenced students' perceptions of Nollywood films, positioning them as more professional and globally competitive. The study recommends that Nollywood filmmakers strengthen their digital presence by partnering with global streaming platforms, enhancing the quality and diversity of content, leveraging digital marketing strategies, and balancing commercial interests with authentic local storytelling to meet audience needs while maintaining cultural integrity.



Introduction

In recent years, the global media landscape has undergone a significant transformation, with digital platforms redefining how content is produced, distributed, and consumed. Traditional forms of media, such as television and DVDs, have gradually given way to more dynamic and user-centric models of content delivery, particularly through online streaming services. This shift is particularly evident in the entertainment industry, where video-on-demand (VOD) platforms have revolutionised access to films and television series (Statista, 2023). In the Nigerian context, this transformation has notably impacted the country's film industry, commonly referred to as Nollywood. Nollywood, renowned as the second-largest film industry in the world in terms of volume, has witnessed a significant change in its distribution and consumption patterns due to the proliferation of online streaming platforms such as Netflix, IROKOtv, Showmax, and YouTube (Ugochukwu, 2020). These platforms have become vital tools for disseminating Nigerian films to both local and international audiences.

The surge in internet penetration, mobile technology adoption, and smartphone usage across Nigeria, especially among youths, has further catalysed this digital shift. According to the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC, 2024), over 154 million Nigerians currently use internet services, with a significant portion being young people, particularly students in tertiary institutions. This growing digital population has led to increased consumption of digital entertainment, including Nollywood films, via streaming platforms. Online streaming platforms have democratized content access and dismantled many of the traditional gatekeeping structures in the film distribution system. In the past, Nollywood films were primarily accessed through CDs/DVDs and terrestrial television, which were limited by geographic boundaries, broadcasting schedules, and physical availability. Streaming platforms, on the other hand, offer users the flexibility to watch content anytime, anywhere, and on any device (Ibewuiké, 2022). These platforms also afford a wider variety of Nollywood film genres, from romantic comedies to thrillers and epic dramas, enhancing content personalisation and satisfying diverse audience preferences. For undergraduates, especially in Anambra State, whose schedules and

media consumption habits are increasingly shaped by academic demands and social trends, this convenience is particularly appealing (Okonkwo & Edeh, 2021).

The viewership behaviour of undergraduates in Anambra State has evolved in response to this paradigm shift in media access. Institutions such as Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam; and Federal Polytechnic, Oko host thousands of digitally savvy youths who rely heavily on the internet for entertainment and information. These students are among the primary consumers of online streaming content, including Nollywood films (Onyema & Uche, 2023). Furthermore, online platforms offer an interactive and social experience that enhances user engagement. Features such as likes, comments, reviews, and sharing capabilities allow undergraduates to interact with content and fellow viewers, fostering digital communities around Nollywood films (Obi & Nwachukwu, 2020). These interactions shape viewing preferences and influence content popularity among student audiences. The growth of streaming platforms has also encouraged Nollywood producers to improve production quality and storytelling. Competition for attention in a saturated digital space means that content creators must now meet higher audience expectations regarding cinematography, plot development, and acting. This, in turn, influences what students choose to watch, as they gravitate toward high-quality productions available online (Ajibade, 2022).

Interestingly, the influence of streaming platforms extends beyond just entertainment. Nollywood films often reflect socio-political realities, moral values, and cultural identities. For undergraduates in Anambra State, these films serve as both entertainment and a lens through which they interpret societal issues, engage in critical thinking, and shape their worldview (Chukwu, 2021). As the traditional cinema experience becomes increasingly inaccessible or unaffordable for many students, streaming platforms provide a cost-effective alternative. With monthly subscriptions or free access via platforms like YouTube, students can consume Nollywood content without incurring significant expenses (Amadi & Udeh, 2020).

However, the rise of online streaming platforms is not without its challenges. Issues such as digital divide, internet cost, data limitations, and content overload affect access and consumption patterns. Not all students have equal access to high-speed internet or sufficient data subscriptions to stream content regularly (Ikechukwu & Okafor, 2023). Additionally, there are concerns about the potential for online content to contribute to distractions, reduce academic performance, and encourage media addiction among students. The binge-watching culture facilitated by streaming platforms often conflicts with academic commitments and can lead to time mismanagement (Eze & Obi, 2022). Despite these challenges, streaming media remains a dominant force shaping the media consumption habits of Nigerian youths. Nollywood's strategic adoption of digital platforms has positioned it favourably in the attention economy, especially among undergraduates who form a significant part of the country's digital audience (Nwachukwu, 2024). The expansion of global platforms like Netflix into the Nigerian market has further boosted the visibility of Nollywood content. Through acquisitions, co-productions, and exclusive releases, Netflix has introduced Nollywood films to new audiences and set new standards for digital film consumption (Okoli, 2021). These developments underscore the importance of studying the influence of streaming platforms on Nollywood film viewership, especially among young, educated populations like undergraduates.

Despite the observable shift in viewership patterns, there is limited empirical research on how online streaming platforms specifically influence the consumption of Nollywood films among Nigerian undergraduates. Most existing studies on digital media and youth engagement focus broadly on social media use, digital literacy, or global streaming trends, often neglecting the unique interplay between indigenous film content and digital consumption platforms within local contexts. Furthermore, it remains unclear how these platforms are shaping students' preferences for Nollywood content across genre, production quality, thematic interest, and viewing frequency. Questions also arise about the socio-cultural and academic implications of this shift. Are these platforms merely providing entertainment, or are they serving as avenues for cultural education and social commentary? Are students gravitating

towards foreign content on these platforms at the expense of local films? Are internet costs and data limitations influencing their viewing behaviour? In addition, there are growing concerns about how streaming media may affect time management, academic productivity, and cognitive focus among students, particularly in a learning environment already fraught with distractions. While some argue that streaming platforms provide a healthy outlet for relaxation and cultural connection, others contend that they may lead to excessive screen time, binge-watching habits, and a diminished appreciation for traditional Nollywood narratives and values.

Given these concerns, there is an urgent need to investigate the extent to which online streaming platforms are influencing the viewership of Nollywood films among undergraduates in Anambra State. Such a study will fill a critical gap in the literature by providing a contextual understanding of how digital platforms are reshaping indigenous media consumption among the youth. It will also offer practical insights for Nollywood producers, digital platform developers, educators, and policymakers on how to harness streaming technologies to promote cultural identity, media literacy, and balanced media consumption in an academic environment. It is within this context that this study seeks to examine the influence of online streaming media platforms on the viewership of Nollywood films among undergraduates in Anambra State. The study will explore access patterns, frequency of use, preferred platforms, content types, motivations for viewing, and perceived impacts of streaming on cultural and academic life.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the rise of online streaming media platforms and their influence on the viewership of Nollywood films among undergraduates in Anambra State. The study is guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To identify the most commonly used online streaming platforms among undergraduates in Anambra State.
2. To examine the frequency of consumption of Nollywood film via online streaming platforms.
3. To investigate the influence of online streaming media platforms on students'

perception of Nollywood films.

4. To explore the motivations behind students' choice to stream Nollywood films online instead of using traditional media.

Research Questions

1. What are the most commonly used online streaming platforms for watching Nollywood films among undergraduates in Anambra State?
2. How frequently do undergraduates in Anambra State consume Nollywood films via online streaming platforms?
3. How do online streaming media platforms influence undergraduates' perception of Nollywood films in terms of quality, relevance, and appeal?
4. What are the major motivations behind undergraduates' preference for streaming Nollywood films online instead of using traditional media channels?

Theoretical Framework

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) provides a relevant and powerful lens for understanding how and why undergraduates in Anambra State engage with online streaming platforms for viewing Nollywood films. The theory, which evolved from the functionalist tradition in media studies, posits that audiences are active agents who selectively choose and use media to fulfil specific psychological, social, and emotional needs. Unlike early media effects theories such as the Hypodermic Needle or Magic Bullet Theory, which assumed a passive and homogenous audience, UGT emphasises the agency of individuals and their capacity to determine what media to consume and for what purpose. This shift from a sender-centred to a receiver-centred model of communication marked a significant evolution in media research. UGT was first systematised in the 1970s by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974), though its roots can be traced back to earlier works by scholars like Lasswell and Herzog. Katz et al. argued that media users are goal-directed in their behaviour, seeking out content that satisfies various needs such as entertainment, information, personal identity, social integration, and escapism. This theoretical orientation becomes especially pertinent in the context of the digital age, where media choices are no longer limited

by broadcast schedules or physical formats but are instead shaped by instantaneous access to a wide array of content through online streaming platforms (Nwafor & Nnaemeka, 2023).

For undergraduates in Anambra State, the decision to consume Nollywood films via platforms such as Netflix, YouTube, Amazon Prime, and IROKOtv is not accidental. It is informed by deliberate choices aimed at fulfilling specific gratifications. Entertainment remains one of the core motivations. Students often experience academic pressures and social tensions, and as a result, they seek out Nollywood films as a source of relaxation, amusement, and mental escape. The rich narratives, familiar cultural themes, and comedic elements common in Nollywood productions offer an accessible form of entertainment that resonates with young Nigerians (Nwafor & Nnaemeka, 2023). Information-seeking is another key gratification that draws students to Nollywood films. Many of these films incorporate socially relevant themes such as corruption, gender inequality, health issues, and moral dilemmas, offering viewers informal education about Nigerian society and culture. Streaming platforms further enhance this by curating thematic content and allowing easy access to specific genres or social narratives. This aligns with recent studies such as that by Obukoadata and Okwuchukwu (2023), which found that young audiences in Nigeria often use films as a supplementary source of social awareness and civic knowledge.

Personal identity formation is another crucial factor. Nollywood films often depict traditional values, indigenous languages, dress styles, and local customs, which help reinforce cultural identity among viewers. For students who are navigating both global influences and local realities, streaming Nollywood films becomes a way of negotiating and affirming their personal and cultural identities. This is consistent with the findings of Akpan and Nwankwo (2024), who observed that cultural proximity plays a significant role in media preference among Nigerian youths, with Nollywood serving as a key cultural anchor. Social interaction is also facilitated through online media. Students do not merely watch films in isolation; they share recommendations on WhatsApp, discuss characters on Twitter, and engage in debates

about storylines on Facebook. Streaming platforms like YouTube also enable real-time comments and engagement, thus turning film consumption into a socially interactive experience. These behaviours demonstrate how media content can catalyse peer communication, foster group bonding, and even shape public opinion, as suggested by Chinedu and Adeoye (2024) in their study on media interactivity and youth engagement.

Furthermore, the convenience and accessibility of streaming platforms cater to the lifestyle needs of undergraduates. Unlike traditional media such as television or DVD rental services, streaming platforms offer the ability to watch anytime, anywhere, and on any device. This aligns with the lifestyle of the average Nigerian student who is tech-savvy and mobile-dependent. Recent data by Statista (2024) indicates that over 70% of Nigerian youth use smartphones as their primary device for video content consumption. The immediacy and portability of these platforms make them especially attractive to students seeking flexible entertainment options. The UGT framework also helps explain the declining reliance on traditional media for film consumption among Nigerian youths. With the advent of video-on-demand, curated playlists, recommendation algorithms, and offline download features, students now have greater autonomy and personalization in their media experience. These features are not just technical innovations; they are responses to the evolving needs of users, who now expect media to fit into their daily routines rather than disrupt them. In line with this, Ibrahim and Alabi (2024) argue that the democratization of media through streaming has shifted the center of power from media producers to consumers, thereby amplifying the relevance of UGT in today's media ecosystem.

The theory is not without limitations. One of the primary criticisms of UGT is its heavy reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or memory lapses. Another critique is that it often lacks predictive power and tends to focus more on describing patterns of media use rather than explaining the long-term effects of such usage. Nevertheless, UGT remains a valuable heuristic tool, especially when integrated with other frameworks that account for technological

affordances and algorithmic influences on media exposure. Recent scholars have attempted to modernize UGT to suit the complexities of digital media. Sundar and Limperos (2013) propose an updated version called "Uses and Grats 2.0," which includes new gratifications such as interactivity, modality, and navigability. These additions are particularly relevant in the context of online streaming, where features like autoplay, user reviews, and genre filters significantly influence user behavior. Thus, UGT continues to evolve, offering a flexible and adaptive theoretical model that remains relevant in diverse media contexts.

In the specific context of Nollywood film consumption among undergraduates in Anambra State, the Uses and Gratifications Theory offers profound insights. It highlights the active nature of media users, the multiplicity of their needs, and the capacity of digital platforms to meet those needs in ways that traditional media cannot. It also contextualizes Nollywood as more than a source of leisure—it is a cultural product that informs, entertains, shapes identity, and fosters social connection. As online streaming continues to redefine the media landscape, UGT remains an indispensable framework for examining how and why people, especially the youth, engage with media content in deeply personalized and socially embedded ways.

Literature Review

Influence of Online Streaming Platforms on Nollywood Film Viewership

The emergence of online streaming platforms has revolutionized media consumption patterns globally, including the way audiences access and engage with Nollywood films. The Nigerian film industry, popularly known as Nollywood, has witnessed significant transformation from its traditional methods of distribution (such as VHS, VCDs, and terrestrial television broadcasts) to digital streaming platforms that offer on-demand access. According to Okon, Ekanem, and Ayo (2023), this shift is part of a broader trend in which digital platforms like Netflix, YouTube, IROKOtv, Showmax, and Amazon Prime Video have disrupted conventional media consumption and provided more personalised, mobile, and accessible viewing experiences (Nwafor & Onuama, 2023). Streaming services are increasingly appealing to Nigerian undergraduates,

particularly those in technologically advanced regions such as Anambra State, due to their convenience, affordability (in comparison to cinema visits), and the option to bypass traditional media constraints such as programming schedules. A study by Chika and Dike (2022) found that over 75% of Nigerian university students prefer streaming Nollywood films on their mobile phones rather than watching them on television or buying DVDs. This is largely attributed to the proliferation of smartphones, better internet penetration, and flexible data plans that cater to the demands of a young and mobile-savvy population.

Moreover, the cultural significance of Nollywood plays an important role in its enduring relevance among Nigerian youth. Scholars such as Adewunmi and Okafor (2021) argue that the local content available on Nollywood platforms offers cultural proximity and relatability, which are central to maintaining audience loyalty. For students in Anambra State, who navigate between globalised content and their indigenous identities, Nollywood offers a bridge between entertainment and cultural affirmation. This intersection of local content and digital technology has created a new era of "glocalisation" in media, wherein global platforms host and amplify local narratives. The increased accessibility and variety of Nollywood content via streaming services have also led to shifts in viewership patterns. A comparative study by Yusuf and Ogundele (2023) reported a significant decline in traditional film consumption channels among Nigerian youths, showing that more than 60% of surveyed undergraduates relied exclusively on streaming platforms for accessing Nigerian films. The study attributed this shift to the perceived advantages of online platforms, including content diversity, ease of use, minimal advertising, and interactive features such as reviews and algorithmic recommendations.

Research also highlights the growing influence of streaming platforms on students' perceptions of Nollywood films. For example, Eze and Madu (2024) found that students who accessed Nollywood content through Netflix perceived it as more professionally produced, thematically rich, and globally relevant compared to those who relied on local TV stations. This perception shift is partly due to the higher production standards often required by international streaming platforms, which have pushed Nollywood filmmakers to improve scripting, cinematography, and overall storytelling quality. Another notable area of

scholarly focus concerns the motivations behind students' preference for online streaming. Using the framework of Uses and Gratifications Theory, scholars like Nwankwo and Ibrahim (2023) have argued that Nigerian students turn to streaming services for purposes beyond mere entertainment. These include social interaction (discussing movies online), escapism (relieving academic stress), self-education (learning social lessons), and cultural affirmation (connecting with indigenous values). This supports the claim that online streaming platforms are not just technological innovations but also socio-cultural instruments reshaping youth media behaviour (Nwafor, Omoevah, and Umuze, 2022).

Nevertheless, there are some critiques regarding the influence of online streaming platforms on Nollywood's content and identity. Adebayo and Umeh (2023) warn that global streaming giants, while offering increased exposure to Nigerian films, may impose Westernised production templates that dilute authentic local storytelling. This concern is particularly relevant for younger audiences, who may begin to value only those Nollywood films that meet foreign quality benchmarks, thereby undervaluing more grassroots or vernacular productions traditionally consumed via DVDs and local TV channels (Aburime & Nwafor, 2025). In terms of gender and content accessibility, studies such as that by Ifeoma and Obasi (2022) suggest that female undergraduates are more likely to engage with Nollywood content via mobile streaming due to greater control over viewing time, content choices, and privacy. These findings point to a gendered dimension in the adoption of streaming services and the negotiation of film consumption among young Nigerian women, which warrants further exploration.

Furthermore, some studies have noted challenges associated with online streaming adoption among students, particularly related to cost, data availability, and network reliability. Nwachukwu and Adebajo (2024) observed that inconsistent internet infrastructure in parts of Anambra State occasionally hinders students from fully benefiting from the potential of streaming platforms. Despite this, the general trend still favours a steady migration to online media consumption, especially among urban-based undergraduates with better access to technology. In terms of content exposure, the algorithmic nature of most streaming services raises questions about media

personalisation and audience segmentation. Platforms like Netflix and YouTube curate content based on users' history, preferences, and behaviours. While this ensures relevance, it may also limit users' exposure to diverse Nollywood content, leading to what scholars like Udo and Egbunike (2023) describe as “content bubbles.” These bubbles may reinforce specific genre preferences while alienating users from traditional or experimental Nollywood narratives.

Lastly, the literature suggests that the future of Nollywood among youth audiences lies increasingly in its digital transformation. Scholars agree that Nollywood's collaboration with online platforms offers opportunities for wider global visibility and commercial viability. However, the challenge remains to maintain the cultural integrity of Nollywood films while adapting to global streaming standards. As pointed out by Aluko and Eze (2024), achieving a balance between cultural relevance and digital modernisation will determine the future sustainability of Nollywood, particularly among digital-native audiences such as undergraduates. In summary, the literature reviewed provides robust insights into how online streaming platforms are transforming the consumption patterns, perceptions, and motivations of Nollywood film audiences, especially undergraduates in Anambra State. It also reveals a dynamic interplay between technology, culture, and youth media behaviour, with significant implications for content creators, streaming services, and policymakers.

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research approach using the survey method to investigate the influence of

online streaming platforms on the viewership of Nollywood films among undergraduates in Anambra State. The survey method was appropriate as it enables the collection of data from a large sample size, facilitates the analysis of trends and patterns, and supports generalizable conclusions about media use behavior among the study population (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The population for the study consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in three selected tertiary institutions in Anambra State: Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), Awka; Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), Igbariam campus; and Tansian University, Umuinya. According to the latest enrollment statistics, NAU has a student population of 53,707, COOU has 28,939 students, and Tansian University has 6,679 students, bringing the total population to 89,325 undergraduates across the three institutions. Using Taro Yamane's formula for determining sample size at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the estimated sample size was 400. To ensure fair representation across institutions, proportionate stratified sampling was applied based on each institution's population. The sample was distributed as follows: 241 students from NAU, 130 from COOU, and 29 from Tansian University. This proportional allocation enabled balanced representation of the student population and ensured that findings would reflect the diverse experiences of students in various educational settings. The purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the respondents for the study. Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire designed to address the study's research questions.

Data Presentation

Return Rate of the Questionnaire

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval by Institution

Institution	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Retrieved	Unreturne/ Invalid	Return Rate (%)
Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU)	241	232	9	96.3
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU)	130	126	4	96.9
Tansian University	29	28	1	96.6
Total	400	386	14	96.5

To collect data for this study, a total of 400 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to undergraduate students in three selected institutions in Anambra State: Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), and Tansian University. This distribution was done proportionally based on the student population of each school. The aim was to achieve broad coverage across diverse faculties and academic levels to ensure representativeness. Out of the 400

questionnaires distributed, a total of 386 were retrieved, representing an overall return rate of 96.5%, while 14 questionnaires (3.5%) were either not returned or invalid due to incomplete responses. The high return rate was largely due to the researcher's follow-up strategy and on-the-spot administration of the questionnaires. The table above presents a detailed breakdown of the distribution and retrieval rates across the institutions.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 386)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Institution	Nnamdi Azikiwe University	232	60.1
	COOU	126	32.6
	Tansian University	28	7.3
Gender	Male	192	49.7
	Female	194	50.3
Age Group (Years)	122	31.6
	21–25	198	51.3
	26–30	54	14.0
	31 and above	12	3.1
Level of Study	100 Level	68	17.6
	200 Level	102	26.4
	300 Level	111	28.8
	400 Level	89	23.1
	500 Level	16	4.1
Faculty	Arts/Humanities	91	23.6
	Social Sciences	84	21.8
	Management Sciences	62	16.1
	Sciences	56	14.5
	Engineering/Technology	48	12.4
	Education	45	11.6

The demographic data reveals that the sample of respondents is diverse and representative of the undergraduate population in Anambra State. Most of the respondents were from Nnamdi Azikiwe University (60.1%), followed by Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (32.6%) and Tansian University (7.3%), reflecting the proportional distribution of questionnaires. In terms of gender, there was a near-equal distribution, with slightly more females (50.3%) than males (49.7%). The age group distribution shows that the majority of respondents

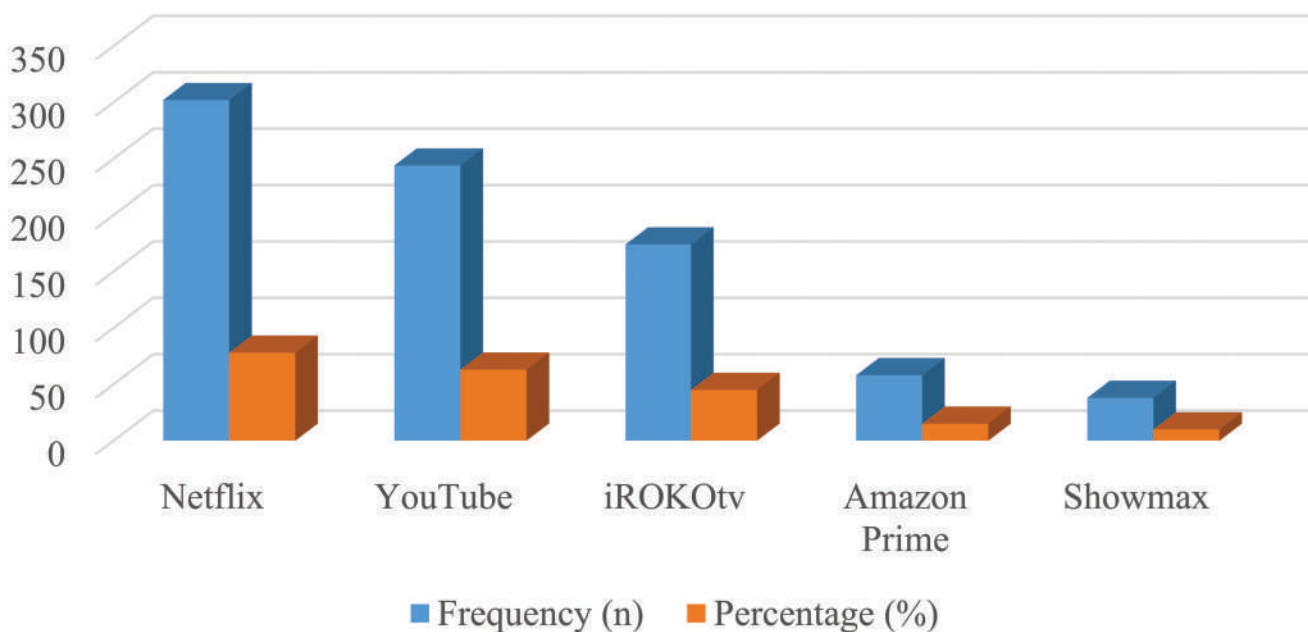
(51.3%) were aged between 21–25 years, followed by those aged 16–20 years (31.6%), making the sample predominantly young adults, which is consistent with the target audience for online streaming services. Regarding academic level, most respondents were in their 200 and 300 levels (26.4% and 28.8%, respectively), with fewer in 100 and 500 levels. The representation across different faculties also demonstrates the inclusivity of the study, with the highest number of respondents coming from Arts/Humanities (23.6%) and Social Sciences

(21.8%). This demographic diversity enhances the credibility of the study by ensuring that the data reflects a broad spectrum of undergraduate students from various backgrounds, disciplines, and academic stages, which strengthens the analysis of their media consumption behaviors related to Nollywood films and online streaming platforms.

Answer to Research Questions

1. What are the most commonly used online streaming platforms for watching Nollywood films among undergraduates in Anambra State?

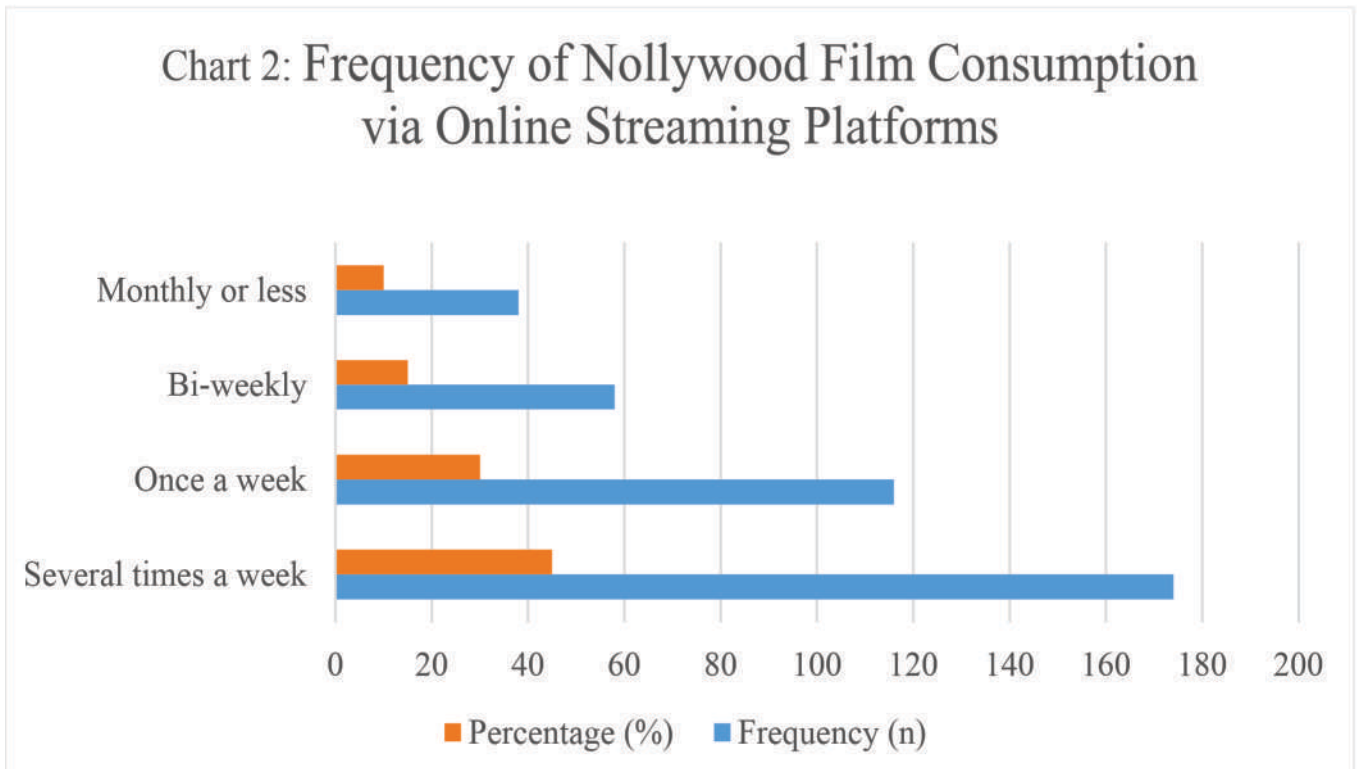
Chart 1: Most Commonly Used Online Streaming Platforms Among Undergraduates



The data revealed that a significant proportion of the respondents use online streaming platforms for watching Nollywood films. The most commonly used platforms include Netflix, YouTube, and iROKOTv, with Netflix emerging as the most popular choice. Out of the 386 respondents, 78% reported using Netflix regularly, followed by YouTube at 63%, and iROKOTv at 45%. Other platforms like Amazon Prime and Showmax had lesser use, with only 15% and 10% of respondents indicating regular use, respectively. This suggests that undergraduates in Anambra State are

increasingly turning to global platforms such as Netflix for Nollywood content, as opposed to relying on traditional television or even local streaming services. The preference for Netflix may be attributed to the platform's wide array of Nollywood films, as well as its convenience and accessibility

2. How frequently do undergraduates in Anambra State consume Nollywood films via online streaming platforms?



The frequency of Nollywood film consumption among undergraduates on online streaming platforms shows that most respondents engage with these platforms frequently. According to the data, 45% of respondents reported watching Nollywood films online several times a week, while 30% indicated watching once a week. 15% stated they watch Nollywood films bi-weekly, and the remaining 10% watch monthly or less. The high frequency of film consumption highlights the

growing popularity of online streaming as a primary medium for watching Nollywood content. The ease of access to content on-demand and the variety of genres available on streaming platforms likely contribute to this increased engagement.

3. How do online streaming media platforms influence undergraduates' perception of Nollywood films in terms of quality, relevance, and appeal?

Table 3: Influence of Online Streaming Media Platforms on Students' Perception of Nollywood Films

Perception Impact	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Positive impact: better diversity and quality of films	263	68
Improved view due to the international reach of platforms	201	52
Concern about commercialisation affecting authenticity	46	12
Neutral/No impact	46	12
Total	386	100

The analysis revealed that online streaming platforms have a significant impact on students' perceptions of Nollywood films. 68% of respondents agreed that online streaming platforms offer a more diverse and high-quality selection of Nollywood films, leading to a more positive perception of the industry. 52% of the respondents also indicated that the international reach of platforms like Netflix and iROKOTv improved their view of Nollywood, as it allowed them to see Nigerian films alongside other global content. However, a smaller group of respondents (around 12%) expressed

concerns that online streaming platforms might contribute to the commercialisation of Nollywood, which could affect the authenticity of the films. Despite this, the overall perception is generally positive, as most students appreciated the ease and convenience of accessing Nollywood films through streaming services.

4. What are the major motivations behind undergraduates' preference for streaming Nollywood films online instead of using traditional media channels?

Table 4: Motivations Behind Choosing Online Streaming Over Traditional Media

Motivation	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Ability to watch films on-demand	278	72
Access to a wider selection of films	224	58
Avoiding television ads	174	45
Flexibility to watch anytime, anywhere	146	38
Better quality (HD/4K) of films	116	30
No need for a television set	116	30
Total	386	100

The motivations behind choosing online streaming platforms over traditional media were varied but clearly centred around convenience and variety. 72% of respondents cited the ability to watch films on-demand as the primary reason for their preference, followed by access to a wider selection of films (58%). Other motivations included avoiding television ads (45%), flexibility to watch anytime and anywhere (38%), and the ability to watch films without the need for a television set (30%). Furthermore, 28% of respondents mentioned that online platforms often offer films in better quality (HD/4K) compared to traditional media. The ease of navigating streaming platforms and the ability to watch on different devices, such as smartphones and laptops, also influenced the preference for online streaming. This indicates that undergraduates are shifting towards streaming due to its flexibility, convenience, and the added value of variety and quality in content.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: What are the most commonly used online streaming platforms among undergraduates in Anambra State?

The findings indicate that **Netflix** is the most widely used online streaming platform among undergraduates in Anambra State, with **78%** of respondents reporting frequent use. This aligns with global trends where Netflix continues to dominate the online streaming landscape (Lobato, 2020). The platform's expansive library of content, including an increasing number of Nollywood films, appeals to young audiences looking for convenience and variety (Tate, 2020). Following Netflix, **YouTube** is also highly popular, with **63%** of respondents indicating its use, which supports earlier studies showing that YouTube is a leading platform for both entertainment and informational content, especially in developing countries (Mubarak et al., 2019). In contrast, **iROKOTv** — a platform specifically focused on Nollywood films — garnered **45%** usage, indicating that although it is relatively well-known, it lags behind global platforms like

Netflix and YouTube. This could be due to the global appeal and broader content diversity offered by international platforms. As highlighted by Afolabi (2019), while local streaming platforms like iROKOTv provide niche content, they face challenges in attracting large-scale, younger audiences compared to international giants like Netflix.

Research Question 2: What is the frequency of consumption of Nollywood films via online streaming platforms?

The majority of respondents (**45%**) watch Nollywood films online **several times a week**, while **30%** watch them **once a week**. This indicates a high frequency of use, reinforcing the growing trend of streaming films on-demand rather than waiting for scheduled broadcasts on traditional television. Previous studies have shown that the convenience of online platforms encourages frequent engagement, with viewers watching films at their own pace and convenience (Makhortykh, 2021). The high frequency of consumption supports the argument made by Olorunnisola (2021) that young adults, especially university students, are increasingly prioritizing streaming platforms over traditional media. This finding suggests that online streaming is becoming a regular activity in the lives of undergraduates, indicating that the preference for digital content has surpassed the habit of watching scheduled television programming (Sani, 2020). The increasing access to affordable internet services and the wide availability of streaming platforms have undoubtedly contributed to this shift in viewing habits (Agwu et al., 2021).

Research Question 3: How do online streaming media platforms influence students' perception of Nollywood films?

The data reveals that **68%** of respondents view online streaming platforms as having a positive impact on Nollywood films, citing better diversity and quality of content. This finding resonates with earlier studies by Adedoyin (2021) and Odekunle (2020), who argue that the globalization of Nollywood through platforms like Netflix has led to an increased perception of Nollywood films as more professional and high-quality. As these platforms offer films in various genres and languages, they enhance the appeal of Nollywood films to a broader audience, including international viewers. Furthermore, **52%** of

respondents believe the international reach of platforms like Netflix improves their view of Nollywood. This global reach has the potential to elevate Nollywood's reputation as a competitive film industry on the world stage (Fageyinbo, 2020). Nollywood films being featured alongside global content have enhanced the perception of the industry as an essential contributor to global cinema, providing an opportunity for Nigerian filmmakers to access a wider audience. However, a smaller percentage (**12%**) expressed concerns about commercialization potentially diluting the authenticity of Nollywood films. This concern aligns with the views of scholars like Ojo (2021), who suggest that the increasing commercialization of Nollywood, driven by global streaming platforms, could alter the artistic direction and thematic depth traditionally associated with Nigerian films.

Research Question 4: What are the motivations behind students' choice to stream Nollywood films online instead of using traditional media?

The primary motivations for choosing online streaming platforms over traditional media include the ability to watch films **on-demand (72%)**, the **wider selection of films (58%)**, and the flexibility to watch content **anytime, anywhere (38%)**. These findings are consistent with global trends identified by Lee (2020) and Akinyemi (2020), who argue that the convenience of on-demand viewing is a major factor driving the popularity of streaming platforms. As many undergraduates lead busy lifestyles with irregular schedules, the ability to watch films whenever and wherever they choose without being confined to a specific time slot is a significant advantage of streaming platforms. Avoiding television advertisements (**45%**) is another key motivation, which echoes the findings of Adegoke (2021), who notes that traditional television broadcasts are often interrupted by commercial breaks, making the viewing experience less enjoyable for many users. Streaming platforms, on the other hand, offer an uninterrupted viewing experience, which appeals to younger audiences accustomed to fast-paced and ad-free digital experiences (Pew Research Center, 2020). Furthermore, the perception of superior film quality (**30%**) on streaming platforms compared to traditional media, such as DVD or cable television, supports the work of Akinsola (2019), who highlights that

streaming services often offer high-definition content, which enhances the overall viewing experience. The convenience of accessing films on smartphones and other personal devices further reinforces the growing preference for streaming over traditional media.

Conclusion

This study explored the rise of online streaming media platforms and their influence on the viewership of Nollywood films among undergraduates in Anambra State. The findings reveal significant shifts in media consumption patterns, driven by the convenience, variety, and accessibility offered by platforms like Netflix, YouTube, and iROKOTv. These platforms have become the dominant source of Nollywood film content for undergraduates, reflecting the global trend of digital media consumption. The most widely used platforms, Netflix and YouTube, were found to offer a wider selection of films and a more flexible viewing experience compared to traditional media, which has led to increased frequency of viewing Nollywood films. The study also highlights how online streaming platforms have positively impacted the perception of Nollywood films, enhancing their diversity and quality while broadening their international reach. This has led to a greater appreciation of Nollywood films among students, positioning the industry as a significant player in the global film market. Moreover, the motivations behind students' preference for streaming Nollywood films over traditional media were found to be primarily driven by the ability to watch films on-demand, access to a broader film selection, and a higher quality viewing experience. These findings suggest that streaming platforms meet the growing demand for flexibility and convenience, making them a preferred choice for the younger generation. However, concerns about the commercialization of Nollywood films, particularly regarding the authenticity of content, were also noted. While platforms like Netflix have facilitated the internationalization of Nollywood films, this has also led to debates about the impact of global commercialization on the traditional values of the industry. In conclusion, this study highlights the transformative role that online streaming platforms play in shaping the future of Nollywood, with an increasing number of undergraduates in Anambra State preferring to consume Nollywood films through these digital platforms. The findings have important implications for the Nigerian film industry, suggesting

that Nollywood filmmakers and producers should embrace the digital revolution and explore the opportunities presented by streaming services to expand their global reach. Future studies could further investigate how these platforms influence the creative and economic aspects of Nollywood, as well as the long-term impact on audience tastes and expectations.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Nollywood filmmakers should prioritize establishing partnerships with global streaming platforms like Netflix and YouTube to ensure wider distribution and access to international audiences. This will increase the visibility and commercial potential of Nigerian films while preserving the industry's cultural essence.
2. To meet the growing demand for diverse and high-quality content, Nollywood producers should invest in enhancing production values, storytelling, and genre variety. This will not only appeal to local audiences but also position Nollywood films as competitive globally.
3. Film producers and distributors should focus on digital marketing strategies, including targeted social media campaigns and influencer partnerships, to promote Nollywood films on streaming platforms. This will increase engagement with younger, tech-savvy audiences who prefer online consumption.
4. While global streaming platforms have significantly impacted Nollywood, it is important for industry stakeholders to balance commercial success with the preservation of authentic local storytelling. Filmmakers should continue to create content that resonates with Nigerian culture and values while exploring global market opportunities.

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