

Vol. 2, No. 1 | June 2020

Transmedia Storytelling: New Prospects for Addressing Postpartum Depression on Nigerian Screens

AJALA Bukola Christiana

Doctoral Candidate, Department of Communication and Language Art, University of Ibadan
Erasmus Research Fellow Birmingham City University, United Kingdom.

Abstract

Transmedia storytelling has been instrumental in the massive audience followership of shows like *Lord of the Rings* (2001) and *Sophia's Diary* (2008). Its potentials to promote audience engagement that will break the culture of silence with such serious issues as postpartum depression (PPD) should be explored. Given the popularity of film in the context of study, it is fitting to explore its ability to address such sensitive issues, even in novel ways. This article employs the new media theory as a theoretical framework, and it explores the possibilities that media convergence presents to create new realities, by promoting attitudinal and behavioural changes. This is case study of the *Little Drops of Happy* (2017) a video film on (PPD) examined the opportunities for screenings and other forms of audience engagement – including promotional events. It assessed the range of media employed in this regard and feedback generated. It is apparent from this that the principles of transmedia storytelling were not fully embraced in promoting knowledge on postpartum depression. Though the potential for transmedia storytelling exists, it was stymied in this context, possibly for fear of losing control of storyline and intellectual property rights. Yet African filmmakers are encouraged to explore the use of this technique further, considering its promise to foster deep engagement with audiences and facilitate effective communication on a wide range of health and social issues.

© 2020 Communication Cultures in Africa

DOI:

Introduction

Postpartum depression (PPD, or postnatal depression PND) as with other forms of depression is a public health burden. In developing countries, the condition may be unknown and its symptoms often overlooked by sufferers and their families. Clinically, PPD is classified as a mental health condition commonly exhibited as baby blues or postnatal psychosis. Baby blues is a mild form and more prevalent, but postnatal psychosis is more serious and can predispose sufferers to suicide or even serial killing. This paper is concerned with both elements, the way these maternal health conditions are addressed within specific media in an African context. The intention is to consider how postpartum depression whether in its mild or more serious forms can be readily recognized.

Communal living has long been a feature of traditional African societies. Consequently, upon the delivery of their children, women received social support from interpersonal networks. The nature of such social support ranged from practical acts like childminding which allows the mothers take short naps, cooking, running errands to simpler acts of kindness such as merely being present to enrich the atmosphere of support—offering a listening ear and giving advice, suggesting remedies to reassure young mothers. With modernization came the gradual erosion of those family structures. Evolving in place of the collectivist cultures known in Africa are structures tending towards individualism. This was more evident in the ever expanding urban centres yet such attitudes may have been much more widely prevalent (Idang 2015). It can be argued that consequent to these changing social structures is a decline in maternal mental health.

Medical research into Postnatal Depression in Africa and Asia gives some insight into the situation (Parsons, Young, Rochat, Kringelbach and Stein 2012). Their results serve as a point of departure for this study, mindful of the disparity in patterns of prevalence across the continent and in other low and middle income economies. Whereas Uganda and Zambia are classified amongst those with lowest occurrence (0–12.9%), Malawi, Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe are amongst those with the highest prevalence (30–50%). Prevalence rate of PND in South Africa was reported as being within the 20–29.9 percent, whilst Nigeria's is between 13–19.9 percent. The incidence of postpartum depression in high-income economies may be less significant compared to its prevalence in these countries. Thus, it is evident that a number of expectant mothers across the African continent are predisposed to depression. This is due to hormonal imbalance which tends to accompany pregnancy. When not effectively managed, depression in pregnancy could extend to the postpartum period. Many symptomatic patients have been known to exhibit signs of depression during pregnancy. This includes crying bouts, unnecessary anxiety, and a loss of appetite.

Socio-economic indices such as unstable income, violent partner, absence of support networks, poor educational background or single parenthood also serve as a catalyst to postnatal depression.

Part of the fundamental objectives of the mass media in any society is to inform, educate, sensitize, and entertain the populace. Traditional mass media include television, radio, and the print medium. Film as a variant of the media was initially a narrowcast medium until the influx of (digital) television and social media broadened its audience base. Prior to the widescale adoption of film, the audio-visual medium in Nigeria was the popular theatrical groups such as those formed by Nigeria's renowned dramatists late Hubert Ogunde (10 July 1916–4 April 1990) and Duro Ladipo (18 December 1931–11 March 1978). These troupes travelled the length of the country to present stage plays; much later they evolved their craft to productions on celluloid films. The late Ogunde in fact, was a pioneer in modern folk theatre in Nigerian with his 'Alarinjo' theatrical company. During that period in history, plots were woven around socio-cultural values, political ills, religion, rituals, societal issues/ills, and mythology. These are consistent with the social responsibility duties of the media. Some of the popular films produced by Ogunde include "Aiye" trilogy (1979, 1981 and 1982) and Moses Olaiya's "Orun mooru" in 1982 (Idachaba 2018, Esan in Hubner 2011).

Nigerian movie industry has evolved gradually over time with recent development in media technology. There have also been changes in the television industry, introduction of home videos and social media. All these helped to establish the movie industry in Nigeria. These developments also made the burgeoning industry more attractive to young and promising artists. As a matter of fact, the Nigerian movie industry popularly referred to as Nollywood is rated by some as the third in the world ranking after the Bollywood of India and Hollywood (Madichie 2010; Nwachukwu 2012). By contrast, others like McPhillips (2016) argue that the Nigerian film industry ranks as second largest producer in the world in terms of volume; it produces about 2,500 films annually on a low-cost budget.

Problem Statement

Basically, the media praxis of agenda setting is not restricted to socio-cultural, economic, political, or religious spheres of life yet research points to a preponderance of media reportage in certain areas to the exclusion of others. One of the explanations for this trend is that journalists are inept in their grasp and reporting of the technicalities involved in scientific and health issues. Another factor is the sensationalism in media content and its attendant inaccurate reportage. This study thus goes beyond traditional journalism as a form for creating awareness. It seeks to

explore how transmedia storytelling was adopted in *Little Drops of Happy* (2017), a movie on postpartum depression. It seeks to investigate how film (and television programming) can be harnessed as an alternative form that can effectively address issues of postpartum depression. This is based on evidence of such prospects.

Film has been used to sensitize and educate the populace on relevant public health issues especially in high-income economies. For instance, in the United Kingdom, an annual event (Global Health Film Festival) is organized for this purpose. Yet the need for this is higher elsewhere; there is higher prevalence rate of postpartum depression in societies where women experience greater socio and economic adversity. Film is a popular medium in Nigeria. Considering the dwindling economic fortunes in Nigeria, its impact on physical and mental health, it becomes imperative to examine how the Nigerian movie industry can support the enlightenment of its populace — how symptoms and treatment of postnatal depression can be made known. Unlike initiatives which adopt a more generic view of film and portrayal of health issues, this study is unique in that it relates to film and postpartum depression more specifically.

Notwithstanding this phenomenal growth, criticism trail movies produced in this movie industry. One of such is that the movies could offer storylines that are more relevant, which give due consideration to contemporary issues as socially responsible media should do. An issue that could be taken up is the matter of maternal mental health. How best can this be addressed in society. In a recent survey of both Yoruba and English home videos produced in Nigeria only a negligible proportion of the plots focused on health-related behaviours (Alawode, Atofojomo and Fatonji 2015). These researchers found through the content analysis of films, that only few obvious reproductive health-related issues such as HIV/AIDS and family planning were projected. Such abysmal performance in the movie industry may be linked to intense commercialization of the industry. This observation calls for improvements in the level of professionalism in storytelling in movies. To this end, this paper will consider a storytelling technique.

The concept of Transmedia Storytelling

Transmedia storytelling is a dramatic technique commonly employed in fictional dramas to tell different aspects of a story across multiple media platforms in such a way as to allow for story expansion and audience engagement (McAdams 2016). Media convergence which facilitates flow of audiences across media platforms created the opportunities for transmedia storytelling. So did the changes in the mediascape. Television, radio, and newspapers, referred to as mass media attracted mass audiences. In contemporary practice and with deregulation of broadcasting, media consumers are now more fragmented and active, not homogenous and passive

in nature as mass media audiences were assumed to be. With increased adoption of new media technologies, such audience fragmentation place new imperatives on film and television producers to devise innovative strategies to remain in business (Smith 2009). With media convergence, the emergence of technologically savvy youths and their evident skills and preferences, there is now more to consider when determining the forms and scope of TV and film programming. For instance, opportunities for audience participation has increased and audience members can participate in new ways on television game shows like *MTN Project Fame* (2008) and *Idol West Africa* (2008). Consumers are no longer passive receivers of such game shows. They are invited to join in determining who will emerge winners. Radio audience phone-in programmes allows for listener participation. Beyond these forms of interactivity, audience participation is enabled through active contribution via social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter when stations have established accounts on such sites. Such flows of audiences across media platforms exemplify a dimension of media convergence which is facilitated by the deliberate action of media producers. Transmedia storytelling is another of such innovative practices.

The technique of transmedia storytelling so far seems to have been restricted to major productions such as Marvel Studio's fictional stories *Matrix* (1999); *Star Wars* series (1977–2015) and more recently (BBC) British Broadcasting Corporation's rebranded *Doctor Who*. Although *Doctor Who* made its debut in 1964 and went off the airwaves in 1989, in 2006 the BBC released episodic versions of the show *mobisodes* (otherwise referred to as *Tardisodes*) accessed via devices like personal computers and mobile phones. The distinguishing feature of transmedia storytelling is its ability to stimulate audience engagement, sending them hunting across different media platforms for dimensions of an episode of their favourite show. The strategy involves presenting aspects of the story for instance introducing characters and updates online possibly through video games or comic strips. Thus, viewers' appetite is whetted. It is expected that they derive pleasure as they hunt and piece the different aspects of the story together, as one would with a crossword puzzle.

The adoption of transmedia storytelling by movie producers elsewhere (in Nigeria for example) has other potential benefits. The strategy has social and economic implications. For starters, it could help curtail the incidence of movie pirates in the long run. It can be assumed that not many of these opportunists (also known locally as "Alaba merchants") will be attracted to movies which are constructed so laboriously; movies whose plots are released intermittently. The practice may generate new cultures of collaboration in writing thus generating employment opportunities. Yet beyond these are the opportunities to address more diverse issues through existing stories. Since this technique exploits the convergence of old and

new media as a tool for audience engagement and creating suspense, scholars are paying attention to discover novel applications of transmedia storytelling. Its adaptability to factual stories like news reporting is one to be explored. Health messages could also benefit from this. It must be said though, transmedia storytelling is not synonymous to multimedia storytelling. The latter merely focuses on telling the same story on different media platforms unlike transmedia storytelling which evokes the enigmatic code through discrete narrative elements found in distinct platforms. By doing this, the audiences are engaged more. In view of this the study addresses the research question: How was transmedia storytelling employed in the story *Little Drops of Happy*?

Potentials for Creating New Realities in the Nigerian Film Industry

The Nigerian film industry has evolved gradually overtime from the period of the celluloid to its current digitised state which contributes to the prolific rate of productions. When the internet was introduced into Nigeria in 1995, little did one know how its impact could revolutionize the movie industry — or its distribution strand. The movie industry has made giant strides since the debut home video (*Living in Bondage*) was produced in 1992. Although internet subscription in the country is still besieged by teething problems such as high cost of data, illiteracy, poverty, and epileptic power supply, its usage was facilitated in part by access to mobile telephony credited to the effort of the Olusegun Obasanjo Administration who deregulated the telecommunication sector. This deregulation paved way for accessibility and affordability of mobile phones. With such mobile devices, the internet became only a click away. For Ebekue (2018), the marketing of Nigerian films outside the shores of the country is easier with the internet. In fact, social networking platforms such as Facebook and Instagram allow movie makers to publicise their films ahead of release dates.

Furthermore, media convergence has allowed for the online presence of Nollywood films through platforms such as the Ibaka T.V, Iroko T.V and YouTube. With these digital television stations, the activities of movie pirates are curtailed to an extent as access to the T.V is mainly by subscription. On the other hand, Sousa et al (2016) argues that media audiences' illegal reproduction of film and its dissemination can be facilitated online. These activities have implications for the profit margin of movie producers. Nonetheless, the buzz word in the Nigerian film industry nowadays is movie premiere. Movie producers are afforded the opportunity of recouping the bulk of their initial investment through such venture. Beyond this, the collapse of boundaries between the traditional and new media forms has implication on the

Nigerian film industry especially in terms of disseminating information through films to target audience in a timely fashion. Audience members also publish their comments in the form of feedback online (Esan 2011). The movie industry had not always enjoyed audience feedback because in the past films were distributed physically in four major cities in the country. Lagos, the commercial hub of Nigeria has two main centres for the distribution of films, the Alaba international market and Idumota. In the South Eastern part of the country, films were distributed in two main markets, Aba and Onitsha, while Kano market served the needs of Nollywood in Northern Nigeria (Ebekue 2018).

A Theoretical Framework

New trends in the media are traceable to the 90s when new technologies evolved and became more widely adopted. As communication technologies got adapted new media cultures and forms emerged. Studying these new media cultures became important as their existence revealed new challenges in the media landscape. Holmes (2009) argues that scholarship of new media predates the 90s and only became formalized within that period. He reasoned that new media theory should be linked to Marshall McLuhan who predicted in the 50's that the electronic age would transform the world into a global village. This prophecy was thought to have been fulfilled with the advent of telecommunications and television which opened new vistas to audiences. In Africa for example audiences were exposed more vividly to new worlds, through films and television shows emanating from Western countries. McLuhan is also credited with his views on the concepts of media convergence and the 'medium is the message'.

Media convergence facilitated by the growth of Web 2.0 manifested in the collapse of boundaries between otherwise distinct mass media and the controls of media producers and consumers. Contemporary scholars likened media convergence to the evolvment of a monomedia (Holmes 2009; Kalamar 2016; Okoroafor 2016). The argument is that the digitization of the media will ultimately result in a single online platform. Radio, television and telephone will have online presence as is currently the case. Jenkins (2006) among others affirm that digitization of the media will lead to the fragmenting of media audiences as the culture of convergence promotes new consumption patterns. These new patterns of engagement offer new opportunities for storytelling.

Television had been known to dominate attention of audiences, capturing their thought in the process. The mode of engagement had so implicated it. So it had been assumed that when individuals sit in front of the television set, they are docile in thinking, passively accepting the broadcast. This assumed passivity is challenged

by greater interactivity enabled by web 2.0 which Jenkins also alludes to. He notes that internet users are empowered to develop their own content. Social networking platforms like YouTube are designed to be intuitive; little or no training is required to upload content on such sites. There is no doubt that this audience empowerment has yielded much dividend particularly in fostering a culture of creativity. The enormity of consumer power is exemplified in uprisings around the world such as the Arab Springs and the Bring Back our Girls Campaign (BBOG) movements in Nigeria were precipitated on the social media (Jost, Barbera, Bonneau, Langer, Metzger, Nagler, Sterling, Tucker 2018). Similarly, social networking sites have the capacity for virality — to reproduce content and spread this widely and quickly (Bruni, Francalanci and Giacomazzi 2012; Al-Rawi 2017). This development could serve both positive and negative purposes as evident in the trend that reveals internet as a domain for the propagation of fake news. Notwithstanding, prevalent media features in the digital age can be exploited to great advantage in the domains of commerce, industry, education, and health care as this paper seeks to explore.

Methodology

The paper is premised on a study which employed qualitative textual analysis to investigate the extent to which transmedia storytelling was used in creating awareness on postpartum depression in a Nollywood film. Though this was a qualitative approach, there was some logic to the selection of the texts examined for this discussion. The study was conducted in three phases. In the first phase, a search was conducted for Nigerian home videos on YouTube in the month of January 2019.. Though as many as sixty Nigerian home videos in the Yoruba and Igbo language were accessed following a keyword search, in the end, *Little Drops of Happy* was chosen as the case study. Produced by Maymunah Kadiri, a neuropsychologist and film maker, it is a 2017 English speaking Nigerian movie which focused on postpartum depression.

The second phase of the study was the investigation of the movie's potential to use of transmedia storytelling techniques to create awareness on postpartum depression. To realise this, Google search engine and platforms such as Facebook, and YouTube were visited in January 2019 (and later in June 2020). The search for content created for radio and newspaper on *Little Drops of Happy* was conducted. When properly streamlined, the search results showed that top five posts referred to Pinnacle Online Health Radio – a privately owned radio station which has an online presence. A specialist in general health matters, it also addresses issues of mental health.

Channels Television, because of its dedicated coverage of news on Nollywood was selected. Channels Television is a privately owned station domiciled in Lagos Nigeria.

It has distinguished itself in its news reportage and quality broadcasting and has a decent audience following especially amongst the elite. There were indications that it had been used to promote the film as the station came up in the search for *Little Drops of Happy*. So did a number of national newspapers; the weekend editions of *The Guardian*, *The Cable* are notable.

The third phase of the research project which occurred between 10th and 12th of June 2020 was geared at understanding audience feedback on the film. YouTube was visited. Audience feedback which appeared in the comment box beneath the videos were examined to see how these could contribute to shaping the story — if this mechanism could be adopted within the transmedia story telling.

Characters and Movie Plot

Little Drops of Happy stands out for several reasons. It was directed by a woman Grace Edwin-Okon and produced by a subject expert (a neuropsychologist) Maymunah Kadiri. This medical practitioner is a film maker with a difference; her movies are tailored to create awareness on health issues. Her cast and crew appear to have been chosen to align with the cause addressed in the film. The director and co-producer is an internationally trained film maker who has won a number of national awards. She is reputed for making films that promote social causes.

The lead actress in the movie - Osas Ighodaro is a Nigerian-American actress with a social conscience. She is the founder of Joyful Joy Foundation which is devoted to raising awareness and funds to fight against malaria. She had won the Miss Black USA pageant in 2010. Playing alongside her is Mercy Aigbe Gentry, a prominent Nollywood actress who is known for her advocacy against domestic violence. Mercy is popular and features across the language divide attracting audiences from the Yoruba and English-speaking Nollywood markets. Mercy is also a brand ambassador and social influencer.

The plot focuses on the mental health of a woman who had recently been delivered of a baby. To compound her ill health, the protagonist had to deal with the reality of a cheating husband. The absence of a support system particularly from her absentee /unfaithful husband must have aggravated her condition. The movie thus addresses the vicissitudes of life that is commonly encountered. The affinity with reality is a good basis for collaborative development of the movie storyline, as will be fitting in transmedia storytelling which has the following features: The story must be told across media platforms; it should allow for audience engagement or participation and it should (usually) be a product of media conglomerates and franchises. These reflect various expressions of media convergence as set out by Jenkins (2006). In the next

section, the paper will consider how well *Little Drops of Happy* conforms to these, mindful to note potentials yet to be realized.

Conforming to the Transmedia Storytelling Features

The film premiered in Lagos, distributed through cinemas chains — Silverbird Galleria and Genesis Deluxe Cinema — both in Lagos but with branches in other major Nigerian cities. A private screening of the movie was also held at the Ford Foundation premises in Lagos. Thereafter the film premiered in some of the major cities in Nigeria. However, these exhibitions were preceded by promotional activities.

Many traditional media (press, radio, TV and outdoor media) have evolved their multimedia platforms which fosters interactivity and audience engagement. Users of these platforms can zap across channels (usually from the same device) and share the content with ease thus enhancing audience reach in what has become a fragmented media-scape. Promotional efforts used to support the distribution of products would typically rely on a media mix; this was the case with the promotion of *Little Drops of Happy*.

Trailers for the film were disseminated via Channels Television. Besides this, other promotional material – posters, interviews and even report of the promotional tour was broadcast on the channel and archived online. The movie preview featured an interview with the producer and movie director. These individuals gave brief background information to stimulate audience interest in the film; other aspects of the story were disseminated through the online version of weekend newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *The Cable Lifestyle* which also carried promotional information about the film. Though there were opportunities to comment on the reports, there was no comment on either of these stories which were posted in October / November 2017.

Pinnacle Health Radio is the online radio station used to promote *Little Drops of Happy*. Besides having a presence on Facebook, it has its own multimedia platform which facilitates interaction – a website which accommodates variety of forms - podcasts, videos and written articles. Trailers and other promotional materials were also found on these. Posts were further linked to other social platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube). The website was used to tell the story of postpartum depression factually among other health issues which were covered.

Audience Interactions

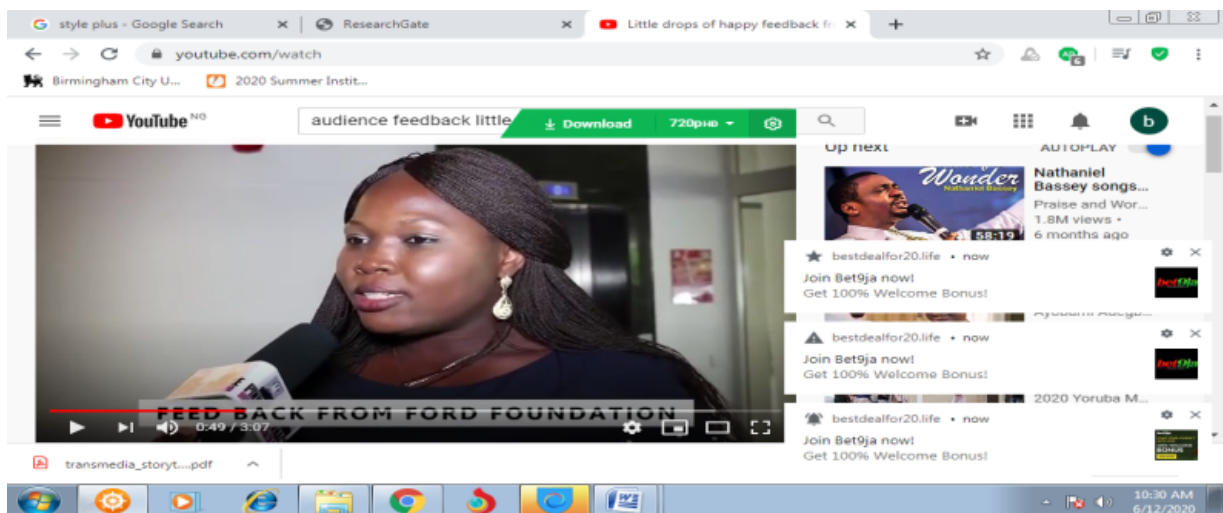
As noted above, there were several opportunities for the type of audience interaction required in transmedia storytelling. The promotional stories were told with twists as appropriate for audiences in different spaces to spark interest. These stories were tailored to suit the specificity of each of the medium revealing information about the movie by instalment. Had the production not been a one-off film, it might have been possible to tap into ideas from the audience feedback to shape the story. Such audience contribution could have helped to weave in relatable storylines that would make the discussion more robust. This sort of audience engagement is desirable since an objective of the movie was to create awareness of this mental illness as an issue of public health.

According to Sousa et al (2016), while some movie producers accommodate a continuous stream of audience feedback to be included in their story line, some limit audience interaction and participation. *Little Drops of Happy* is one of the latter; audience feedback is not used to extend the movie plot. Safeguarding their control on the plot is one reason for limited incorporation of audience feedback into story lines (Sousa et al 2016). Audience input could deviate a plot from its original ideas, in view of the immense power given by social media to audiences to express themselves. Yet they do not always use this power. The archives suggest that the audience did not comment publicly on the trailers – not on a website nor on YouTube. As shown below, though a modest number of views were recorded, it attracted no more than one comment each.

Little Drops of Happy Trailers

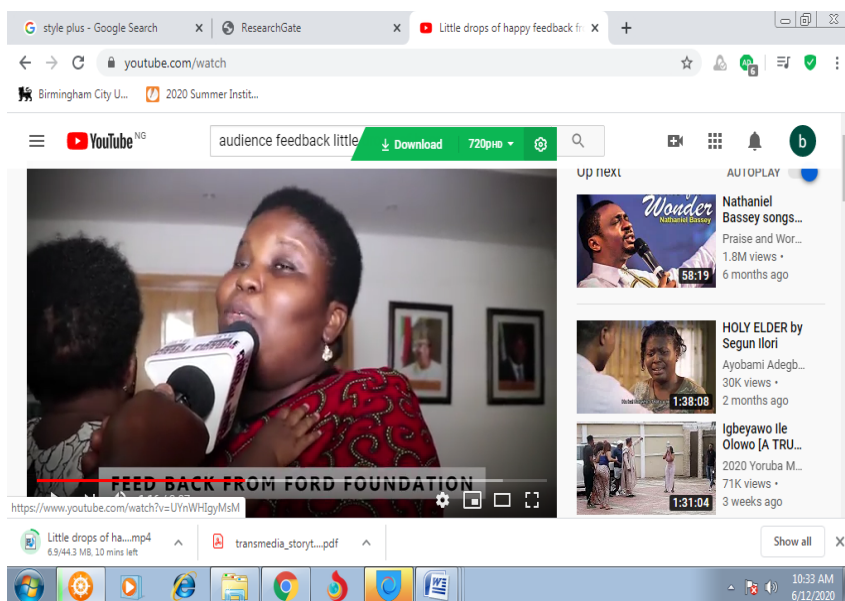
length of trailer/ date of post	Number of views	Comments
2.09 / March 27 2017	650	0
2.31/ August 17 2017	468	1
1.00/ August 12 2017	46	0
3.26 / May 9 2018	91	1

The post screening interview at the premiere proved to be more successful. Audiences were more forthcoming with feedback. Below are excerpts of such feedback (with screen shots) taken from the event held at Ford Foundation Viewing Centre in Lagos.



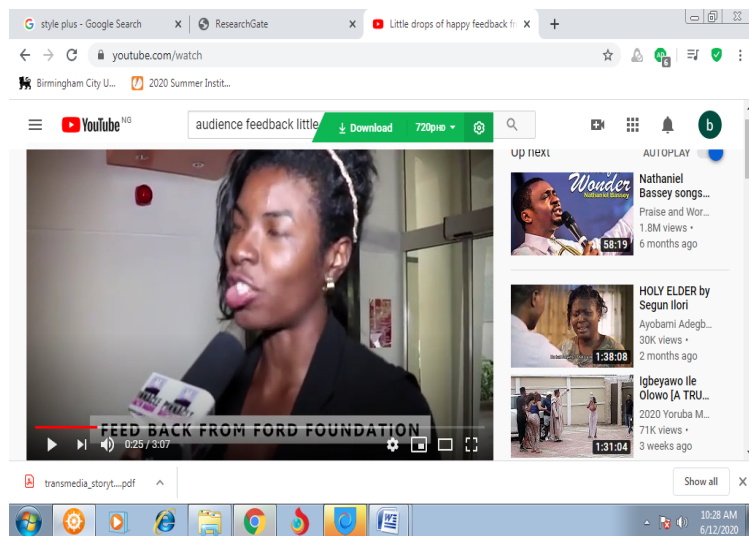
Excerpt 1

“It’s something I could relate with personally. It has a lot of authenticity to it. It is something that is appealing to every human being. It is an awesome job”.



Excerpt 2

“I was fortunate to watch the movie. I thought the issue is very timely considering the suicide that has been happening in Nigeria. I think it is an issue that needs to be discussed and I was glad about the movie. It highlighted some of the suicides we have been having in Nigeria. I am very optimistic that this movie will start a new trend in Nigeria”.



Excerpt 3

“It really wowed me, even though . . . [that was not] from the beginning, but toward the tail end when the lady started praying, you know she didn’t give up.”

The appraisals indicate aspects of the storyline that resonated with these viewers. The pattern of response suggests that for transmedia collaborative storytelling to occur, audiences with more intense commitment (as fans) and a deliberate invitation requesting audience contribution of ideas to enrich the plot is needed.

Required Collaboration –Media Conglomerates and Franchises or Authors?

In furtherance of the film’s mission, a health App was developed by Pinnacle Medical Services. As reported in the press, the app was created to “help users check their mental well-being, manage stress easily before taking any irrational decision, and connect patients with a psychologist or counsellor” (Odunowo, 2017). This has potential for a functional franchise. The uptake of this was not investigated. Suffice to say it is yet to acquire the status of a light saber associated with Star Wars.

It is unclear if the co-producers for *Little Drops of Happy* (Pinnacle Medical Services and Speakout Initiative) had other financiers aside from support an American Embassy in Nigeria. In any case, the arrangement is evidence of collaboration between organizations even if they are much more modest than conglomerates. By Hollywood standards, the frugality in Nollywood, the Nigerian film industry is well known. Moreover, as noted by Sousa et al (2016), conglomeration of transmedia producers is usually fraught with conflict and controversy especially regarding copyright ownership. Such tensions are rife in the entertainment industry. There are several examples of breakdown of boy bands in the Nigerian music industry – Plantashun

Boiz, the Remedies, Style Plus and more recently P Square who are twins. Such tensions could undermine creativity and expansion of opportunities in the industry. Thus, this feature is not crucial to transmedia storytelling. What is more essential is that transmedia producers develop gripping story lines. Ethem (2016) agrees with this. Collaboration of authors which helps to expand a storyline offers immense potential to unleash latent creativity and create more intriguing plots.

Conclusion

This paper has focused on the movie *Little Drops of Happy* which sought to address postpartum depression, an overlooked yet popular mental health issue. It went on to explore how best to bring this to public attention. To this end it acknowledged changes in the media-scape, recognizing opportunities that have emerged with the convergence culture. The novelty of transmedia storytelling was brought to the fore in this paper. The type of audience engagement which it facilitates should make for more effective communication, as required for movies with a mission. Besides postpartum depression, there are a legion of health issues that film can help to address. Thus, the agenda-setting role of films is acknowledged. Given the popularity of Nollywood across the African continent and beyond, it is heartening that the potential to make movies more purposeful than mere entertainment.

Transmedia storytelling technique relies on media convergence. As social conditions align to enable such new realities, it is right to examine how to make it work. Though it still poses challenges, transmedia storytelling has been tried elsewhere (UK, USA) especially with established TV and film series with some success. Using *Little Drops of Happy* as case study, the paper has explored potentials of the technique with a view to forestall some of the current challenges in the movie industry. Transmedia storytelling is also a veritable instrument for edutainment, an approach useful for tackling social issues and effecting behaviour change. Movie producers can explore its use in greater details noting the findings presented in this paper. They should consider how to achieve collaborations that are devoid of rancour; ensure the security of their intellectual property; elicit feedback with which to shape storylines that resonate with diverse audiences that must be addressed.

References

- Ahmad, A.R and Hamasaeed, N.H. (2015) 'The role of social media in the Syrian uprising', *Journal of Economic, Environment and People*, 4(2),pp 39-48.
<file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/105-576-1-PB.pdf>
- Al- Rawi, A. (2017) 'Viral news on social media'. *Digital Journalism* Routledge
<file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/ViralNewsonSocialMedia.pdf>
- Alawode, S.O, Atofojomo, O and Fatonji, S (2015) 'Home video depictions of health and moral decadence as correlates of entertainment education in Nigeria', *Mediterranean Journal of Social sciences* Rome-Italy 6(2).
- Berger, C.R. (1993) 'Meta-analysis in context: a proto-theory of interpersonal communication', in Allen, M., Preiss R.W., Gayle, B.M., and Burrell, A. N (eds.). *Interpersonal communication research advances through meta-analysis*. New York: Routledge. ,
- Bruni, L, Francalanc, C. and Giacomazzi, P. (2012) 'The role of multimedia content in determining the virality of social media information', *Information* , pp 278-289.
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.301.4651&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Ebekue ' UJAH 19(2) pp 88-111.
file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/The_new_media_as_a_viable_alternative_to_tradition.pdf
- Edwards, L.H. (2012) 'Transmedia storytelling, corporate synergy and audience expression'. *Global Media Journal* 12 (20)
<http://www.globalmediajournal.com/open-access/transmedia-storytelling-corporate-synergy-and-audience-expression.pdf>
- Esan O. (2011) 'Audience appreciation of Nigerian films', in L. Hubner (ed) *Valuing Films*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp121 – 145.
- Freeland, A.M. (2012) An overview of agenda setting theory in mass communication. Available at:
https://www.academia.edu/3355260/An_Overview_of_Agenda_Setting_Theory_in_Mass_Communications
- Goldsmith , D. (2001) A normative approach to the study of uncertainty and communication, *Journal of Communication*, 51(3) September 2001, pp 514–533. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2001.tb02894.x>
- Han, P.K, Klein, M.W and Arora, N.K. (2012) Varieties of uncertainty in health care: a conceptual taxonomy. *Medic. Decision Making* 31 (6), pp 828 – 838.
- Idachaba, A.A (2018) Elements of traditional African drama in contemporary Nigerian video-film. Available at: <https://academicjournals.org/journal/JMCS/article-abstract/38B0EB756758>
- Idang G.E (2015) African culture and values *Phronimon* 16(2), pp 77-111. Available at:
<http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/phronimon/v16n2/06.pdf>
- Javanshir, R., Carrol, I B., Millard, D. (2020) Structural patterns for transmedia storytelling *PLOS ONE* 15 (1). Jost, J.T, Barbera, P., Bonneau, R., Langer, M., Metzger M, Nagler, J., Sterling, J. and Tucker, J.A. (2018) How social media facilitates political protest: information, motivation and social networks *Advances in political psychology*, Vol 39, pp 85-118. Available at:
file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Howsocialmediafacilitatespoliticalprotest_Informationmotivationandsocialnetworks.pdf

- Kalamar, D. (2016) Convergence of media and transformation of audience. *Informatol* 49 pp 3-4, 190-202. Available at: <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Kalamar.pdf>
- Holmes, D. (n.d) New media theory, in Littlejohn, S.W and Foss, A.K (eds) *An encyclopaedia of communication theory*. (eds) . Los Angeles, United States of America: SAGE. Available at: <https://teddykwz.files.wordpress.com>
- McAdams, M. (2016) Transmedia story – telling paper presented for the world journalism education congress in Auckland New Zealand July 14-16.
- Okoroafor, O.E (2016) Media convergence: a paradigm shift in journalism education in Nigeria. review of journalism and mass communication. Vol 1 No1 Pages 19-42. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ae20/392a3a3d2f9786f4aded56259901c2586de7.pdf>
- Parsons, C.E. Young, K.S. Rochat, T.J., Kringelbach, M.L. and Stein, A. (2012) Postnatal depression and its effects on child development: a review of evidence from low- and middle-income countries in *British Medical Bulletin*, 101(1), March 2012, pp 57–79. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/bmb/ldr047>
- Perryman, N. (2008) Doctor who and the convergence of media: a case study in transmedia story telling. *The international journal of research into new media technologies*, London, SAGE 14 (1), pp 21-39.
- Sousa, M.N, Martins, M.L and Zagalo, N. (2016) Transmedia storytelling: the roles and stakes of the different participants in the process of a convergent story in a divergent media and artefacts, in Lugmayr, A and Dal Zotto, C(eds.) *Media convergence handbook* Vol 2 Berlin: Springer, pp 117-135. Available at: [file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Transmedia_Storytelling_The_Roles_and_Stakes_of_th%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Transmedia_Storytelling_The_Roles_and_Stakes_of_th%20(2).pdf)
- SungKwon,Y, Byun, D.H. (2018) An exploration of the limitations of transmedia story telling: focusing on entertainment and education sectors. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 10(4), pp 35-43. Available at: <https://academicjournals.org/journal/JMCS/article-abstract/38B0EB756758>
- White, M.D and Marsh, E (2006) Content analysis: a flexible methodology, in Baker, L..M Library (ed.)*Research methods. Library Trends* 5(1), pp 22-45
- Ogunwole D (2017) 'Little Drops of Happy set for the cinema', *The Guardian Saturday Magazine*, 7 October . Available at: <https://guardian.ng/saturday-magazine/little-drops-of-happy-set-for-the-cinema/>
- Awojlugbe O. (2017) 'Little Drops of Happy, Justice League...10 movies you should see this weekend', *The Cable Lifestyle*, 25 November,2017. Available at: <https://lifestyle.thecable.ng/little-drops-happy-justice-league-10-movies-see-weekend/>