CULTURE, MEDIA & FILM | CRITICAL ESSAY

Gentrification in media spaces: Nollywood in perspective
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Abstract: Gentrification has been stigmatised for its single-reality definition that upholds class, standard and especially displacement. While displacement remains an outcome of the gentrification process, this study attempts to investigate the concept beyond its usual negative Marxist critique. It perceives the concept, a neologism and thus incorporates it into media study where it is used as a metaphor to examine state interest and investment in the transformation of Nollywood. This study proposes that the concept of gentrification, interpreted from a modern liberal perspective, could give insight and understanding to the growth and development of evolving film economies. It offers a definition for the concept in media studies and reviews previous studies to determine the extent to which gentrification has been studied in media spaces. With a focus on understanding the transformation of the Nigerian film industry popularly known as Nollywood, this study narrows down to the industry. It examines as gentrification certain transformations reshaping the industry such as class struggle, changes in quality, aesthetics and standard of production, and most importantly displacement in places of production and consumption. Hence, using political economy as a theoretical framework, this study attempts to answer the research question: how does gentrification describe the transformations reshaping the Nigerian film industry?

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT
Nollywood, the Nigerian film industry, has been stereotyped as poor quality film industry for many years since the video boom of the 1990s. As an industry established to meet the entertainment needs of the working class or general masses, low budget remains one of its many realities. But from 2009, with an increase in the exposure of filmmakers to further trainings, increased interactions between Nollywood and other cinemas across the world and availability of fund and standardized distribution, transformations became noticeable in the industry. These transformations are making films which are usually readily available to the masses hardly available to them. Besides the audiences being disenfranchised from their usual place of consumption (VHS/VCD/DVD), filmmakers appear to be in competition to make the best quality films of cinema and festival standard. Could these transformations reshaping the famous film industry be likened to the gentrification of the industry? How does gentrification occur within media spaces? This paper interrogates these questions with Nollywood, the Nigerian film industry in focus.
Subjects: Media Communication; World Cinema; Film & TV Communication; Media Studies

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1. Introduction
Gentrification has held a single definition since being coined by Ruth Glass in 1965. While it captures a process that introduces and sustain aesthetics within a given space, criticisms against it persist due to its introduction of class discriminations and displacement. Despite the stigmatization against it, gentrification beautifies by adding aesthetics and value through reinvestment and rehabilitation. It is a gradual process which does not happen without warning or overtake those concerned without notice. Gentrification engages with issues of class, standard and aesthetics that are affiliated with formalization. The process is therefore good for new businesses and for development of existing businesses.

Originally an urban studies term stigmatized with class discrimination, it has remained scarce in media scholarship. Suggesting the transformation of a locality into an ideal city suited to the elite and professionals, gentrification gives meaning to the political and economic transformations that reshape media industries and the implications this has for those who work within the industry. This study is interested in investigating and understanding recent transformations in Nollywood as gentrification. Nollywood is a sobriquet for the Nigerian film industry. Since shortly before 2010, the industry has been witnessing remarkable transformations in production, distribution and consumption. While it could be argued that investigating these changes as gentrification might imply putting a baggage of amorality on the industry’s achievement (Ezepue, 2020), gentrification in this study must not be conceived with the usual single reality of negativity. From studying gentrification in Nollywood, its benefits can be perceived in two-folds. One benefit is for the industry and its players and the other for the state and its economy. Gentrification study is important for the industry because it usually indicates potential beneficiaries as well as losers. It will equally benefit the Nigerian government which is looking to diversify the economy.

Divided into five sections, this paper begins with a discourse of gentrification as applied to urban geography. As a term rarely used in media studies, this is to establish the background of the concept to adequately apply it to media study. In addition to exploring a concept stigmatized for its single-reality definition of class secession and displacement, this paper considers the concept, a neologism, evaluates its place in wider cinematic studies and then in the context of contemporary Nollywood transformation. The aim of this study is to evaluate the transformations that are reshaping Nollywood, interrogate them as gentrification and weigh its benefits and implications for the industry, its players and consumers, and its impact on the political economy of the nation. The methodology adopted for this study is qualitative and data was collected via ethnographic observations and interviews with industry players.

Being thus grounded in political economy, this discourse shall be structured around the modern liberal perspective. As a framework, modern liberal perspective to political economy offers flexibility and resilience as it hybridizes classical, radical and conservative perspectives. It demands social justice while preserving both private property and democracy. Its belief in the classical liberal’s business cycle is altered by the assertion that market is not always self-regulating. Like in radical perspective, modern liberalists accept that for a market to boom and be stable, state regulation is inevitable and essential. It borrows from structuralism the view that market does not exist in a vacuum, but is shaped by social, economic and political factors. This perspective is beneficial in the investigation of power struggle within Nollywood, industrial interactions with the state and the implications of the regeneration reshaping the industry. This framework enables the presentation of gentrification as a way to investigate changes in consumption, production and distribution patterns which result from increased state-industry interaction and policy changes.
1.1. The concept of gentrification

Coined by Glass (1964), gentrification has remained a subject of heated debate in policy issues, public circles and scholarship. Developed with a focus on transforming living spaces (Atkinson, 2000; Butler & Robson, 2001), gentrification has been discussed in various other fields as close to urban study as real estate and as far from it as the cinema. These studies integrate the concept, both as theory and evidence into various aspects of urban research (Lees et al., 2008). Hence, gentrification has become a “lens through which to examine a variety of intersecting phenomena in a city and/or neighbourhood context” (Lees et al., 2008:xvi).

Gentrification in urban studies means the renovation and transformation of a neighbourhood, previously occupied by the working class, to suit the tastes of the middle and upper class (Atkinson & Bridge, 2005; Smith, 1996). Over the years, this idea of unjust displacement of one class by another has not changed, but scholars have argued over the narrowness of the traditional definition of the term and the selectivity of its understanding. The close attention paid to the displacement of individuals and sometimes on the displaced poor in gentrification studies makes the concept problematic and causes a constriction of analyses and research. Bondi (1999) expresses frustration over gentrification studies’ closed doors on new insights, and Slater (2002) queries existing facets, believing that there are aspects of gentrification yet to be explored. One of such aspects is the controversial displacement itself. Once considered a gentrifying neighbourhood, every movement out of a locality is termed displacement. Displacement however, comes in various forms (Marcuse, 1985). While some forms are directly linked to gentrification, others are not. Molies (2011), for instance, acknowledges eviction as a form of everyday urban displacement that can occur as a non-gentrification form of displacement. Studies by Davidson (2009) and Davidson and Lees (2005) equally consider the constitution of displacement. They opine that displacement could occur in various other unconventional ways including a displacement that does not physically relocate individuals out of the neighbourhood. As an essential and consistently discussed component of gentrification, displacement forms an unavoidable discourse in virtually all gentrification studies. Yet displacement in gentrification still appears rather invisible, and as Chum (2015) notes, the extent or severity of displacement continues to be an issue of debate among scholars. In fact, according to Atkinson (2000), investigating displacement is tantamount to measuring the invisible.

The key defining factors of gentrification are urban property renewal, class structure, space (working-class neighbourhood) and displacement. Smith and Williams (2006) explain that certain political, social and economic factors are responsible for the transformations in an urban landscape that eventually lead to the reshaping of the locality and a consequent change in class structure. They maintain that gentrification “is a visible spatial component of this social transformation” (3). It is a social as well as economic and political transformation that leads to the creation of inner-city spaces suitable and affordable to the more affluent occupiers or users (Hackworth, 2002). Gentrification presents out-movers the tough options of relocating to less desirable places or paying higher rent.

Still acknowledged a neologism (Smith, 2002), redefinitions and extensions of its boundaries to embrace other processes of change have portrayed gentrification in terms of globalisation, urban regeneration (Atkinson & Bridge, 2005) and revitalisation (Rubino, 2005). As its definition boundaries expand, different situations are identified to which the gentrification process can be applied. There is a turn in categories of investigation involving gentrification. For instance, Anderson (1990) applies it to the study of race, Rothenberg (1995) examines sexuality, Ganti (2012) explores Bollywood cinema and its audiences and Hassler-Forest (2014) looks at television and audiences. Accordingly, Krase (2005) stresses the permissibility in taking ownership of the word. This post-modernist perception of the concept gives it a dual or even multiple reality interpretation. Atkinson and Bridge (2005) expostulate that rather than interpreting gentrification as a direct, conflict-ridden displacement of the poor masses, it ought to be seen as a process of reconstructing a space
to serve middle and upper class interest. The concept has more and deeper universal truths than just displacement.

1.2. Gentrification in the media

The gentrification that occurs in urban spaces is no different from that which occurs in media spaces. The identifying factor of gentrification is the movement of class, usually of a higher class moving into a space occupied by a lower class. In urban spaces, it could be interpreted as the middle class moving into a space occupied by the lower class neighbourhood. In media spaces, gentrification is identified with the movement of classes of creative talent and professionalism. In other words, the process begins with an influx of new creative talent, educated/trained professionals moving into a space formerly occupied by amateurs or non-professionals. It is marked by the entrance of or exposure to new creative in a media space saturated, if not stagnated by players who are too comfortable to instigate a change. This ideology birthed the old and new Nollywood debate which continues to divide rather than unite the industry players. This indicates another significance of this study—to put to rest such debates by establishing that these changes are inevitable in every evolving film economy. Because gentrification is rarely associated with the media or studies of the media, very little scholarly work has been done in this area of study.

Film is one of the art forms that contribute to or are associated with neighbourhood revitalisation (Grodach et al., 2014). Prior to its emergence as the movie city of America, Hollywood according to Marcy (2007), “used to be scary place, but now there are great bars, restaurants and stores, and it feels like its own cool neighbourhood” (2). The drastic regeneration, the author writes, is anchored on the refurbishment of existing theatres and construction of new ones, as well as the presence of fashion retailers. Discussed from a fashion perspective, Marcy’s Hurry to Hollywood illustrates how art and media could stimulate gentrification. In addition to being instrumental to gentrification (especially by giving publicity to the process), art and media equally undergo gentrification. While suggesting links for research agendas in gentrification discourses, Huber (2012) remarks that the media hold a crucial impact on gentrification, and thus suggests that they are not underestimated considering that people rely on the information gathered from media sources. Studies like Huber’s, however, focus on media coverage of and contribution to the gentrification process rather than the occurrence of the process within the media.

In her essay on agricultural gentrification, Sutherland (2012) notes that the gentrification process could occur from both within and outside a given locale. The author, therefore, defines agricultural gentrification as resulting from both the in-movement of wealthy newcomers and the social upgrading of resident agricultural households. Interpreted as both chaotic (Beauregard, 1986) and multifaceted (Sutherland, 2012), the concept of gentrification, as well as its derivatives, appears to have a multiplicity of interpretation. Gentrification in the media industry will therefore respond to both internal and external stimuli. It is an outcome of changes in preferences and/or capital allocation within the media industry. It translates to the amount of productive capital returning to the media industry or the amount of capital moving within the media industry, resulting in a radical transformation of the industrial structure. Media gentrification or gentrification in the media industry can be conceptualized in this study as the transformation of media spaces brought about by the movement of economic capital.

Of all media forms, gentrification has been most readily applied to studies on film industries and perhaps television. The earliest appearances of film in gentrification discourses and debates describe its contribution to the gentrification process. Colomb (2009) observes that in East London, the concentration of artists and art happenings, like exhibitions and installations, attracted creative professionals like filmmakers, actors, designers and musicians, thereby setting off the gentrification process. Like Grodach et al. (2014), Zukin (2010), Marcy (2007), and Colomb (2009) identify film and other media forms as gentrification stimulants rather than gentrifiable fields. Hence, DeSeno (2009) illustrates how filmmakers are gentrifiers. With instances drawn from interviews with local residents, the author concludes that artists do not strive to fit into an already
established neighbourhood, but instead, attempt to take over and recreate the locale. Drawn from the study of a single neighbourhood within an American city, this conclusion may be specific and unique only to the given neighbourhood.

In her ethnographic study of Bollywood, Ganti (2012) examines the radical transformations that reshaped Hindi film production between the 1990s and 2010. She credited the gentrifying efforts to Hindi filmmakers whose ability to gather capital and manage the risk and uncertainties of filmmaking business, as well as professionalism and social respectability culminated to the industrial reformations. Another essential ingredient to the transformation is linked to the political economy of the Indian State that embraced neoliberal economic ideals. The author notes that the neoliberal restructuring of the national economy altered India’s media (film especially) landscape, expanding to include satellite television and multiplexes. Discussing gentrification here with a focus on audience reception and appreciation, Ganti (2012) does not engage with the issue of developing film economies. She approaches the concept in its newfound interpretation; one described as “sugarcoated” by Slater (2006), a popular, increasingly scholarly image of the concept. Ganti’s exclusion of a displacement discourse aligns with Slater’s (2006) opinion that in gentrification studies, there is a current demise of displacement as a delineating attribute of gentrification. My approach considers displacement as inherent in the gentrification process. It presents a critical approach to gentrification that investigates policies and corporate/state interests in evolving economies and how they might lead to a displacement of “functional” informalities in evolving film economies like Nollywood.

Gentrification, in general, has transcended race, locale, discipline and timeframe. Identified within the film industries, Ganti (2012) explains the concept as a deliberate and conscious effort by industry players to understand and represent their audiences. As a purely economic process, gentrification in the film industry requires formalisation of the industry. In Bollywood, Ganti (2012) notes that the establishment of film academies and corporatisation of the industry were valid steps which transformed Indian cinema. But utmost to the gentrification of Bollywood was the presence of investors (high profile Indian corporations and conglomerates) who established new production and distribution companies, thus prompting a transformation of already existing production, distribution or exhibition companies. As a result, there was and has continued to be more abundant capital to finance film production. Such corporatisation avails industry players with low-cost filmmaking, spreads risk, thus reducing its impact on the filmmakers.

An essential boost to gentrification is the availability of capital. Continuous inflow of capital sustains regeneration, which eventually gives way to gentrification. This explains Bollywood’s gentrification. The reforms in the industry (especially in finance and organisation) Ganti (2012) notes, “transformed it from being a very undercapitalised enterprise to one where raising capital is not perceived as the main challenge or constraint” (266). With gentrification in place within the industry, films, previously made especially for the masses are now being made for both the masses and classes, or only for the classes. Such shift in audience target, from the masses to niche audiences or the gentry, ought to evoke the same reaction generated by displacement in urban gentrification. Due to the invisibility of audience displacement, this shift is rather considered a sign of artistic maturation and industrial modernisation. A focus on audiences of class is akin to developing what Lees (2012) terms world city status, an ideal which appeals to both media and economics. With a focus on audience re-imagination in the Indian cinema, Ganti (2012) offers that the gentrification of India’s political economy impacted on the production and consumption of cultural products like Bollywood films.

1.3. Gentrifying Nollywood?
Modern liberalism or the modern liberal perspective to international political economy holds that business cycle is not self-regulating. This implies that when there are economic busts, businesses would need some boost to ensure their survival. At this point, the government is expected to promote the economy by investing in it. In the early 2000s, Nollywood experienced a bust which
scholars have described variously as contributing to the stagnation of the industry. The filmmakers had only their old model straight to VCD/DVD production. With the introduction of former president Goodluck Jonathan’s Project ACT Nollywood, resources were made available to the industry. Although mismanaged and unaccountably distributed, it availed the industry of resources in addition to loans made available to the filmmakers. Since this time, industry players have continued to expect and demand that the government becomes more involved in the economic life of the industry. An example is the MOPICON (Motion Picture Practitioners’ Council of Nigeria) bill which some industry players are advancing to the government to pass into law. While passing the bill into law does not automatically guarantee the industry of financial support from the government, it hopes to provide Nollywood with a state-recognised body through which to influence the government’s financial and policy decisions. Finances and policies are key factors in the gentrification process.

By gentrifying Nollywood, I mean an evolving film economy being dispossessed of its informalities and in the process of being incorporated into a formal political economy. Gentrification has been sparsely applied to discussions on Nollywood. A general state of marked improvement in production values, visual aesthetics and narrative content have been observed in Nollywood, but these have not been investigated using any concept. Jedlowski (2013) confirms that new wave filmmakers are currently introducing to the industry elements of professionalism, theatrical exhibition, a change in target audience, larger budget sizes. He does not explicitly term the process gentrification. In a later study (Jedlowski, 2015), the idea of gentrification in Nollywood is highlighted in class or group separation. While discussing the increasing exclusiveness of access to the local production environment, Jedlowski (2015) affirms “strategies toward the creation of more rigid entry points and social privileges acquired over the years by a restricted elite of film practitioners” (Jedlowski, 2015). What the author is referring to here is the proposed MOPICON bill which, under the guise of formalising the industry, intends to introduce restrictions on who enters or practices in Nollywood. MOPICON, if adopted and passed into law will quicken the gentrification of Nollywood as its requirement for education, training and experience will usher in a wave of professionalism across the industry, displacing filmmakers who are unable to professionalise their practice.

While professionalization is currently ongoing in the industry (Ezepue, 2020), it is not as rapid as MOPICON intends to achieve. Jedlowski’s (2015) study, which provides a background for this research, outlines some of the reforms that are currently regenerating the industry. Contrary to established knowledge on how amateurs, businessmen, uneducated and untrained aspiring filmmakers run Nollywood (Ajibade, 2013), Jedlowski indicates a marked influx of professional filmmakers. The technical expertise required for making feature films, which Ajibade (2013) notes as lacking in the industry, has become relatively commonplace in high budget feature length films like Ramsey Noah’s Living in Bondage - Breaking Free, BB Sasore’s God Calling, Akay Mason’s Elevator Baby. These films, among others, contain what Adesokan (2011) describes as the aesthetic tendency usually missing in Nollywood films. In addition to this newfound expertise in technical aspects of filmmaking, the content and approach to filmmaking, in general, are equally witnessing waves of transformation. A quick comparison between Living in Bondage (1992) and Living in Bondage (2019) will highlight these changes despite Living in Bondage (1992) being a classic of its times. Living in Bondage—Breaking Free takes flamboyance, extravagance and lavish to a level uncommon to Nollywood in the 1990s and early 2000s. Its dialogue is not protracted and repetitive, hence the movie’s overall pace is lively and engaging rather than melodramatic and insipid.

Existing as a shadow film economy (Lobato, 2012), with a rising tension between formality and informality, Nollywood is faced with attempts at formalisation, regulation and consolidation by film producers. Like the regeneration of a city, these attempts are aimed at making “Nollywood, a quintessentially informal media economy, more amenable to conventional measurement and accounting, bringing it into the formal realm” Lobato (2012:60). Lobato does not give details of this
initiative, but Bud’s (2014) study does. He illustrates how government regulatory bodies such as the Nigerian National Film and video Censors Board contradict themselves by going into negotiations with guilds and individuals, especially marketers in the course of shaping the film distribution system. The author highlights that while the laws are often in place, implementation is usually a challenge. For instance, the Licensing Controversy of 2006 that sought to provide license to film distributors or marketers, hence formalising distribution in the industry, was followed by nearly 4 years of dormancy, during which time activities returned to usual. Contrary to Lobato’s (2012) optimism in the Nigerian state government, Bud (2014) notes that well-conceived private initiatives are more functional. He cites an example in Gabosky’s G-Media, established in 2014 with a loan from the Bank of Industry. G-Media proposes to operate with the same blueprint submitted to Nigerian National Film and Video Censors Board. Launched at the time of Bud’s publication, G-Media’s efficiency at implementing its proposed distribution network was uncertain. As at 2020, G-Media continues to release and distribute successful films such as Mahmood Ali-Balogun’s Tango With Me, Kunle Afolayan’s Phone Swap and October 1, among others. Its challenge remains stiff competition with the pirate market and network. Other such private endeavours include filmmaker Obi Emelonye’s The Nollywood Factory, Tunde Kelani’s MainFrame Productions, and Moses Babatope’s Talking Drum Entertainment that produce and distribute films within and outside the country.

These individuals, along with notable filmmakers like Emem Isong, Mahmood Ali-Balogun, Izu Ojukwu, Kunle Afolayan, among others are the artists whose presence in Nollywood incites regeneration. Jedlowski (2010, 2013) posits that they are pushing towards a conventional industry model bereft of informality, a mature industry with global reach. In addition to meeting cinema standards, they aim at a formal distribution system that allows opportunities to reach the audience in diaspora. In essence, their primary aim is not to make better films essentially for the local audience. They target the glocal audiences, an objective that prompts a distribution which begins with international and ends at the local level. This explains the contemporary tendency for international premieres. Jedlowski (2013) perceives these premieres as successful “social events” (36) aimed at mesmerising the audience with feelings of uniqueness. Although the author does not explain why he believes so, it is probably because these “international” premieres do not yield as much as local ones should or could. International premiere is another factor with the potential to gentrify Nollywood. According to Jedlowski, international premiere will encourage bigger budget productions, attract conventional movie funding and integrate Nollywood into the world of formal business.

Consistent in Jedlowski (2013), Lobato (2012), and Bud’s (2014) studies is the submission that there is a division among the producers in the industry. While a group prefers the flexibility of its informality with a large local market, the other group favours integration into the formal film industry, hoping to “filter off the negative elements that blocked the (progress of the) industry” (Jedlowski, 2013, p. 41). All three authors are uncertain what the future and the reforms hold for the industry. Noting the inconsistency of state support in the industry, Lobato concludes that it is unlikely that increased regulation, whether by the state or individuals, will unseat informality in the industry, especially in the distribution sector. Jedlowski leaves his study open-ended, optimistically concluding that the transformations in the industry would be long-lasting, taking the industry to the next phase of development. Although these transformations so far have not suggested gentrification of the industry or the displacement of any industry player and audience, they align with Ganti’s (2012) definition of coolness that “encompasses aesthetics, affect, social class, identity and subjectivity” (79). For Ganti, being cool means being gentrified.

A study conducted by an associate professor at Harvard Business School provided some early indicators of gentrification. While his study centres on neighbourhood change, I find the parameters useful to gentrification in the media. Opening and proliferation of cinemas/viewing centres across the country and the expansion of alternative film distribution channels in the industry are early indicators or predictors of gentrification. This is because they will impact on both content and quality of production. With formal investors readily funding film projects now as opposed to before,
regeneration is underway in the industry. Once sustained, the gentrification of Nollywood will be inevitable. A gentrified or gentrifying Nollywood is not bad in its entirety. Gentrification holds a lot of potentials for media and cultural industries. As Ganti’s study indicates, gentrification has benefitted Bollywood more than endangered it.

1.4. Implications of Gentrification on Nollywood

One of the realities of gentrification in Nollywood is that some businesses, content producers and consumers will be displaced, but some will thrive and expand and new ones will be introduced. Nollywood ace filmmaker, Kunle Afolayan has recently launched his production company (KAP) as well as a film academy. Film academies are on the increase across Nigeria, registered and run mostly by film practitioners like Emem Isong, Stephanie Okereke-Linus, Zeb Ejiro, Joke Silva and Olu Jacobs, among others. Filmmakers without registered institutes also offer trainings and workshops to industry hopefuls (see image). In an interview, filmmaker Opa Williams avers that young professionals are being absorbed into the industry. There is a rising preference for filmmakers with demonstrable knowledge and/or experience. Existing filmmakers are thus availing themselves to further trainings in order not to be displaced.

Upgrade in technology, formalization of distribution and targeting a new audience class impact on distribution in contemporary Nollywood. Although a vast number of films are still being distributed straight to DVD/VCD, in an interview, Upper Iweka-based DVD/VCD/CD producer and dealer, Mr Okparakunne, hints a consideration of abandoning the business as yield had dropped drastically. This could be linked to developments in technology and the varieties of consumption mediums now available to Nollywood audiences. Filmmaker Lancelot Imasuen, however, maintains that despite the trying times, yield from DVD/VCD sales still outweighs the challenges of cinema distribution. Actor/director, Stan Nze, explains that filmmakers are sometimes left on the queue for several months before their films are shown at the cinema. Filmmakers thus explore other options of distribution like Internet/Online platforms, Pay-per-view, satellite television, private screenings, etc

With only 45 cinemas currently available across Nigeria (Agina, 2019) protracted showings in cinemas before an eventual release on DVD deprive a certain class of individuals access to such films at the same time as others. Thus, beyond the cost of the luxury, there is the displacement arising from no access or proximity to the theatre. Although this disenfranchisement is only temporal (i.e., in situations where the films are eventually put on DVD), it lasts long enough to be a contributing factor in the old and new Nollywood divide.

Gentrification and its attendant displacement do not occur in the media as they do in urban development. Displacement in the media is technology implicated. For instance, a production, distribution or consumption medium is not completely displaced unless the technology which sustains it goes out of date or becomes overtaken by another. Therefore, producing straight to DVD in Nollywood and consuming in the same medium will be completely displaced when the technology is no longer economically viable.

As a regenerative tool, gentrification creates tension within a cultural industry, raising friction between the beneficiaries and those likely to be displaced. As in urban gentrification, those most at risk of displacement are previously existing industry players and consumers. Consumers who are unable to reach or afford cinema tickets are temporarily displaced from consuming new Nollywood films distributed via the cinema. Also, industry players who are unable to keep up with Nollywood’s regeneration, expose themselves to modern technology, trainings and understand novelties and trends in the industry, are displaced from the new Nollywood filmmaking class. Although some previously existing industry players are in denial of the existence of this new wave, they understand that some form of gentrification is underway and so are making effort to forestall displacement. One such effort is the MOPICON bill which has been disguised as a tool for the formalisation of the industry. While the bill has the potential to eventually formalize the industry and its activities, Miller (2016) believes that it is designed to “protect the already established movie-makers from competition from newcomers” (109).
2. Conclusion

This study has interrogated gentrification in media spaces, with a focus on Nollywood. It explored how the industry is transforming in a way that resembles the process of gentrification in urban spaces. It illustrates film industry gentrification using Ganti’s exploration of gentrification in Bollywood. This study thus concludes that Nollywood is transforming in ways that are bringing about class separations in production, distribution and consumption. The industry's interaction with foreign and corporate organizations like Bank of Industry, Netflix, MultiChoice, among others is impacting on its informal operations. This study also reveals that displacement is evident especially in consumption spaces, although this is only temporary. There is also deliberate effort by filmmakers to professionalize or acquire updated knowledge in order to remain relevant in the industry. The implication of this is that competition is becoming stiffer and opportunities are equally opening up for newcomers and existing industry players. It is important to note that gentrification does not occur in the film industry in the same exact ways that it occurs in urban development.

This study adopts an ideological framework that perceives gentrification as a postmodern concept with multiple reality interpretations. It projects the concept as a struggle of contending interests striving for power control. This power control is measured in government–industry relationship as well as among industry players to determine how capital and class shape power relations. It equally recognises the controversy over displacement, the usual outcome of the gentrification process. Beyond this negative Marxist critique of the concept, this study establishes that displacement of players in gentrifying media economies may not essentially be directly connected to the gentrification process. Hence, some of those counted as displaced, especially the industry players, could be individuals sampling new economies. This is one advantage the gentrification process holds for developing media economies—providing alternative, parallel economies to accommodate the so-called displaced individuals.

This study adopts a modern liberal position to the interpretation and understanding of gentrification, a perspective that appreciates the relevance of state intervention, however limited, in the regeneration of industries. This position demands that the government creates room for individuals to excel; a process which industry players refer to as "enabling environment". This position captures the individualism in Nollywood and reflects upon the changing circumstances in economic and social processes within the industry. It allows the opportunity to contemplate on collectivism; a rare phenomenon in Nollywood often used only as a means to an end. The perspective ensures a consideration of collective response to the gentrification of Nollywood's social and economic environment where state support must allow individuals to flourish. From a modern liberal perspective, this study propagates a positive critique of gentrification, a process which presents parallel economies to accommodate industry players who may be perceived as displaced.

This research posits that gentrification will hold varied implications for the media industry. It argues that gentrification in the media industry could result from in-moving professionals or upgrading of existing industry players. It argues that re-investments by private individuals, corporate bodies and the government to curb disinvestment can stimulate the gentrification process even in an emerging film economy like Nollywood. Gentrification in Nollywood is conceptualized as the transformation of production, distribution and consumption as a result of their interaction with policies and the movement of economic capitals within the industry. Future research would ascertain the possible sustainability and further impact of the gentrification process on Nollywood.

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