

THE STAGE AND THE SCREEN:

PERSPECTIVES ON ARTS PRODUCTION IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA
A Festschrift in Honour of Dr. Gabriel Adekola Oyewo at 70

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RASAKI OJO BAKARE
GBEMISOLA REMI ADEOTI
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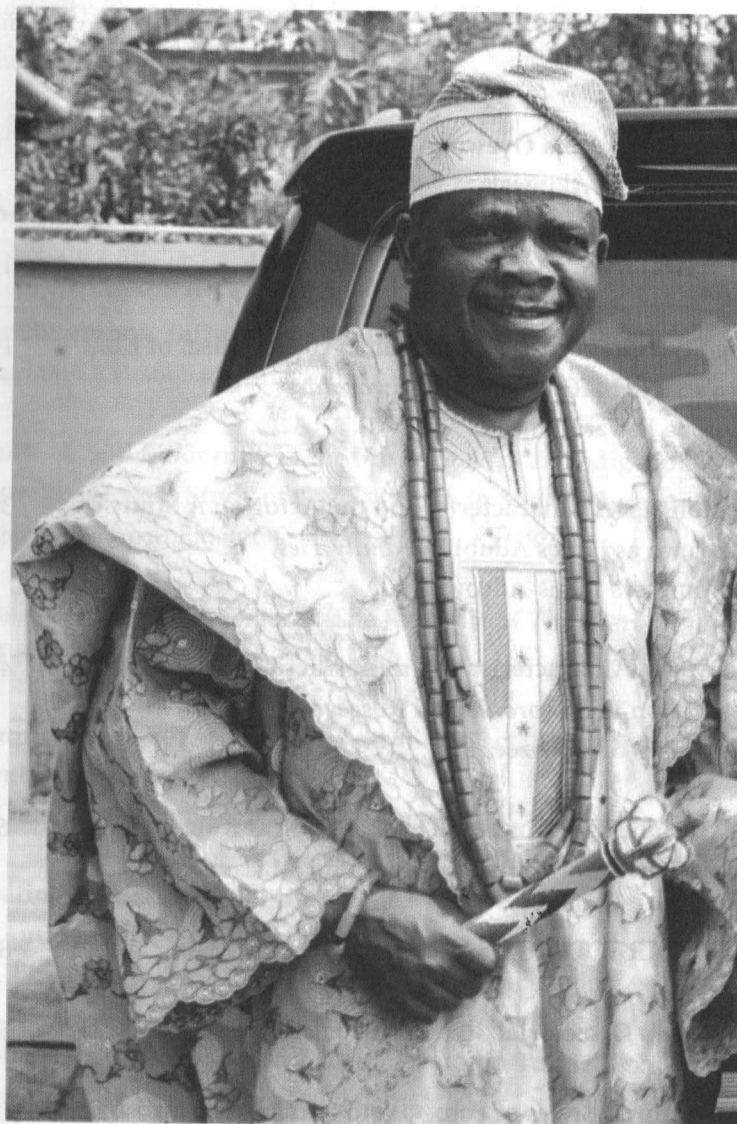
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MANAGING THE NIGERIAN HOME VIDEO PRODUCTION COMPANIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BY KAZEEM RUFai-AHMAD

Introduction

The importance of management in any organisation cannot be over-emphasised. This is because managers and leaders are saddled with managerial responsibilities to achieve organisational goals and objectives. Certainly, having a good manager may not be enough, for the success of any organisation. It is, however, crucial for any organisation either commercial or non-commercial, to operate an establishment within certain principles and theories of management before real success can be attained. According to M.O. Peter as cited in Adedokun (2001: 34), "management is the process by which managers create, direct, maintain and operate purposive organisations through systemic coordinated operated human efforts." This shows that management is concerned with putting the right people in the right position at the right time with required material resources to accomplish set objectives. If management is about planning, directing, staffing, coordinating and controlling human and materials resources, this paper therefore, examines management in the Nigerian Home Video industry. Furthermore, it examines the management structure, cast and crew motivation and management issues as related to product marketing and advertising procedures of Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited which is a major film production company located in Ilorin, Kwara State.

History of Video Film Industry in Nigeria

The emergence and the development of the Nigerian movie industry can be traced to the early featured films, which were produced on 16mm and 35mm celluloid and made available to the cinema audience in the seventies and early eighties. These films according to Oni (2008: 17) includes Francis Oladele's *Kongi's Harvest* (1970) and *Bull Frog in the Sun* (1971); Ola Balogun's *Alpha* (1971) and *Amadi* (1975); Ladi Ladebo's *Count Down at Kusini* (1976) and *Ajani Ogun* (1976), directed by Ola Balogun, *Bisi Daughter of the River* (1977) with Jab Adu and Kola Ogunninga; Adamu Halilu's *Shaihu Umar* (1976), *Kanta of Kebbi* (1978) and *Ija Ominira* (1979), directed by Ola Balogun. Other films that fall within this period are films produced by the doyen of Nigerian theatre Hubert Ogunde. Ogunde produced *Aiye* in 1979, *Jaiyesimi* in 1981 and *Aropin N'Tenia* in 1982.

As mentioned earlier, the historical development of Nigerian film industry cannot be complete without making a critical reference to the pioneering efforts of the Yoruba travelling theatre and the subsequent intervention of the likes of Hubert Ogunde, Oyin Adejobi, Duro Ladipo and Moses Olaiya. The Yoruba travelling theatre troupes have long existed and have striven to produce their drama in cinema and television stations.

The birth of the home video format was made possible because of the economic downturn that characterised Ibrahim Babangida's regime due to the fallout in the proper execution of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). This situation brought about high overhead in producing film in cinema format. Consequently, the producers "turned to the relatively cheap and less cumbersome video technology" (Oni 2008: 17). In the 1980s and 1990s, television drama gained more recognition in the country while featuring productions like Lola Fani-Kayode's *Mirror in the Sun*, Zeb Ejoro's *Ripples and Hopes*, John Ndanusa's *Supple Blues* and Amaka Igwe's *Checkmate* on

NTA networks. These serials and series were staples in the viewing experience of the Nigerian audience. According to Ayakoroma (2008: 2), "Kenneth Nnebue, an electronic equipment dealer has the credit for recording a breakthrough in 1992, with the production of the first commercial video film, *Living in Bondage*". He claims further that the death of cinema and the loss of mutual relationship between independent producers and the NTA gave rise to the business prospects of the video film industry to receive attention.

Jide Kosoko in his claim refuted the assertion that *Living in Bondage* was the first commercially oriented home video in Nigeria. In his words, "*Living in Bondage* was produced in 1992, how does that take away the record of 1988? What should be said of it is that, it was the first successful attempt. Even my own movie, *Asiri Nla* was produced in 1992 and it sold about 150,000 copies. I can go on mentioning Yoruba movies that came out before *Living in Bondage*" (Adeyemi 2014: 391-392).

Oni (2008: 17) corroborates that "the foray of the Yoruba travelling theatre groups into the video film business started in 1988 when Kenneth Nnebue collaborated with the late Isola Ogunsola to produce *Aje ni Iyami*. Apparently, Oni's view justifies the claim that the Yoruba were the first set of people to start the video film in Nigeria.

The Content and Context of Management and its Application in the Nigerian Home Video Industry

To produce a film which will attract huge box office return, Home Video Production Companies need to be planned, organised and coordinated in order to attain optimum result. Planning, organising, staffing, directing, supervising, controlling and motivation are essential theatre management functions which are pre-requisite for sustainable home video productions in Nigeria.

At the planning level, what script to produce and casting procedures are essential things to consider in planning any home video

production. On the other hand, organising involves allocation of jobs to individuals in an organisation. Staffing as a theatre management function deals with filling and keeping positions filled in an organisation. Nwamuo (1986: 5) suggests that after proper planning and organising have been attained in the theatre, the next important element is motivation. This is because human relations and management are crucial at this level. In fact, a theatre manager should ensure that artists' goals are in consonance with the overall goals and objectives of the organisation and as well creating room for interpersonal relationship and training among staff.

Chijioke (2004: 604) also opines, "management is very important as it enables us plan on how to invest the available resources to realise a target. Therefore, our creativeness in the theatre should be properly managed to yield positive result which will benefit artists and the society". For effective application of management in the Nigerian home video production companies, the theatre manager will decide at the planning stage, what is to be done and how, allotting time and sharing responsibilities among staff on what should be done, coordinating these tasks and ensuring that they conform with the mission and philosophy of establishing such home video production companies.

Perspectives on Management in the Nigerian Home Video Industry

The nature of management in the Nigerian home video industry takes the pattern of management at the organisation and production level. At the organisational level, we have the producer/manager or sometimes actor-producer as the head of the organisation. He is supported by the efforts of workers such as the Administrative Secretary, Account Manager. Sometimes, the Production Manager forms part of the administrative personnel. At the production level of management, the Producer/Manager still serves as the head of the production crew. At times, he performs the coordination of production activities with supports from other executives such as

Executive Producer, Artistic Director, Production Manager, Technical Team and Director of Photography among others. At the top line of management and production of films in the Nigerian home video industry, there are producers at different basic levels. There are Executive Producer, Producer, Producer-Manager, Actor-Producer, Director-Producer, Actor-Director-Producer, and so on. Ayakoroma (2008: 52) sheds more light on the nature of film production management in Nigerian film industry. According to him,

The business of contemporary Nigerian film production is in the hands of a group of practitioners, called the executive producers (EPs). They are the financiers of the many films which are churned out daily. At inception, they merely provided the funds and depended on trained producers/directors to produce scripts of their choice. The scripts were generated by the producers/directors, or sometimes the EPs.

However, it has been discovered through this study that funding the production in Nigerian home video industry took different dimension. As Ayakoroma rightly states, funds for productions are made available by some executive producers who are not fully involved in film productions but explore the opportunity offered by the venture to make more money. This assertion was corroborated by (Bardi 2012: 13) when he states that "at the beginning, the government was in charge of film production and exhibition. But with development, individuals and organisations got involved in film production and exhibition in Nigerian". Aside this category, some artistic directors, actors and even crew members have shown interest in funding and producing their own films. This situation does not negate the fact that film marketers are also involved in funding film project not only because of profit maximisation and reduction of overhead cost, but also to influence certain decisions in the production of films. In the Nigerian home video industry, the marketers are the Alpha and Omega. Thus, they

determine to certain level, the control and management of the production process ranging from selection of cast and crew to marketing of the final film products.

Managing Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited

Biography of Dan Kazeem

AbdulFatai Adeniyi Kazeem popularly known as Dan Kazeem attended University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) where he studied Yoruba and graduated in 1985. He did his National Youth Service Corp in Kwara State Broadcasting Corporation (Radio Kwara) where he was awarded best 'Corper of the Year' and was later retained as an artist by the corporation. Thereafter, he was permanently employed in 1988 as Producer II. He pioneered the Freelance and Independent Broadcaster Association of Nigeria (FIBAN) in which he served as the President and subsequently the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He is the current Governor of the Theatre Arts and Motion Pictures Producers Association of Nigeria (TAMPAN). Dan Kazeem is a film producer, a broadcaster, an actor and a master of ceremony.

Background of Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited

In the Nigerian movie industry today, Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions has built its name among the comity of movie producers, having produced some notable movies in Yoruba as well as TV serials. Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions is a movie producing company owned, controlled and financed by AbdulFatai Adeniyi Kazeem popularly known as Dan Kazeem. Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited has other entertainment companies or subsidiaries such as Fadex Entertainment which deals with broadcasting and Dan Kazeem Drama Outfit where new talents are discovered and trained for acting, entertainment and programme presentation. The company has produced home movies and Television serials which include *Oja Aimon* (1997) and *Ariwo Nla* (1998)

sponsored by Doyin Global Soap and Detergents Company. Dan Kazeem in an interview with the researcher acknowledges that:

when I started, I didn't go into film production initially. I just wanted to be a broadcaster. I just realised that popular figures are into film production. So, I started inviting people. That is when we formed Vision Production Organisation (VPO). But before VPO, I have produced two home movies titled *Tanwa* and *Bola Omo Oriirin* in 1990". Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited has also produced *Iwo Nikan* (2003), *Abawon Nla* (2004), *Sister Mary* (2014) and *Omo Alhaji* (2015).

Organisational Structure of Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited

Dan Kazeem Home Video Production Limited operates on commercial bases. It is an independent and self-financing company. It does not enjoy any financial support from the government or other funding agencies except through advert packaging and sales of video films. The organisational structure of Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited is an administrative structure. It does not have a permanent production structure except the inclusion of Production Manager into the administrative structure. Dan Kazeem in an interview on 23 February 2015 admits that the company does not have a permanent artistic director, costumier, props manager and other production personnel except that they are contracted whenever a production is at hand.

Dan Kazeem is a Producer- Manager and Chief Executive Officer of the company. There is a Production Manager who handles film productions. He is the intermediary between the producer and the cast and crew. There is also a Financial Controller who handles production budget and a secretarial staff who types script. Other production crew such as the Director of Photography, set man, and production assistant

are not permanent staff of the company. Structurally, therefore, Dan Kazeem Production Limited is headed by the Producer who at the same time serves as the Chief Executive Officer and the company is run by three major departments. Namely: Administrative Department, Account Department and Production Department.

Cast and Crew Management in Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited

In Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited, the management style employed falls within the participative style of management. The producer cum Chief Executive Officer delegates duties and responsibilities to his subordinates with the hope that they will deliver. There is an effort put in place for cast and crew management. The establishment of Dan Kazeem Drama Outfit is mainly to train cast and crew members on new innovations in the industry. Sometimes, if there are seminars and workshops organised by the Film Censorship Board or the Nigerian Copyright Commission, the company usually sponsors its staff and some cast members.

In the quest to effect adequate management strategy, the company enters into a written agreement with any invited artists for production and builds its operation on the admonition received from the advisory board in which popular artists like Dele Odule, Adebayo Salami (Oga Bello) and Dr. Segun Olohunfemi constitute members. Though these advisers are not permanent Board members, they are consulted whenever a production is going on. Sometimes they are invited to location as guest artists to give creative and artistic advice.

Planning and Organisation in Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited

In Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited, planning and organisation of production begins with the conceiving of ideas. Thereafter, professional scriptwriters are invited to screen the play, i.e. adapting the story into a film script. The process is later extended to

include casting and selection of crew members, contracting artists, selecting locations, crew meeting for wrecking, shooting, editing, preview and production of master copy.

Marketing Strategies and Film Distribution Channel in Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited

Ryan as cited in Fosudo (2013: 21) posits that marketing is the "bridge between production and consumption- encouraging all those activities performed in order to get goods and services into the hands of consumers". Marketing management is a crucial area of business activity. This is because marketing generates the incomes which the managers and production crew use in creating products or services. Hence, if a business has a weak marketing strategy, the company will spend a lot of time and money to gather sales. Marketing and distribution of film products in Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited goes through a private marketing company popularly known as Marketers. The company sells the master copy of film produced to a marketer who either buys the master copy at an agreeable price or sells the film per jacket. Therefore, marketing function is vested in the hands of the marketer. Sometimes, the company shows its films in a cinema before mass production is made available to the public.

Advertisement Procedures in Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited

Dan Kazeem Home Video Production Limited is a film production company which employs various marketing and advertising tools to promote the marketability of its films. The company advertises its films in Television and Radio. It also makes use of posters, fliers, banners and sometimes small billboard for advertisement. In business management, communication with both internal and external public of an organisation is very important. The internal public comprises of the staff while the external public consists of the suppliers and the customers. Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited is able to

communicate the arrival of its films in the market through the employment of various advertising tools mentioned above.

Findings

From this study, we are able to discover that the issue of management is a pre-requisite for successful and viable home video productions in Nigeria. More so, effective management can promote economic viability of home video production companies. It is also important to state that improper marketing management has militated against the survival tendency of home video productions outfits in Nigeria. The marketers are the Alpha and Omega in the industry. Sometimes, these marketers serve as both the producer and marketer. They finance film production and dictate who will feature as the lead actor in a production. Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited is not exonerated from this malady.

Furthermore, Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited does not have a marketing department in its organisation. Sales and marketing are good operational elements that dictate the survival of a company. This is because it is the section which generates revenue for an organisation. There is going to be revenue jeopardy for a company that does not operate an in-house marketing department. Also, some of the personnel working in Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited are not formally trained in the theatre profession, ranging from the Producer to Artistic Director and this leads to indiscipline among artists. Some artists enter into multiple contracts at the same time. This is causing delay in the production schedule and lateness to locations. This situation is also replicated in Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it has been established, we hope that the application of management to the Nigerian home video production company is crucial for the attainment of the company's set goals and

objectives. Certainly, management of human resources through effective cast and crew management is a pre-requisite for a viable home video company. Similarly, professionalism and paying due respect to the ethics of theatre profession, team building and a good leadership skill are managerial elements which will promote the economic viability of home video production companies operating within the Nigerian home video industry. This study, therefore, concludes that to achieve this, the operators of home video production business in Nigeria should apply different motivation and management approaches to their business in order to achieve optimum performance.

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- Interview**
- Oral interview with AbdulFatai Adeniyi Dan Kazeem, Producer and Chief Executive Officer of Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited, Ilorin, 23 February 2015.
- Oral interview with Muhammed O.S., Administrative Secretary of Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited, Ilorin, 5 May 2015.
- Oral interview with Omotoyosi L.O., Personal Assistant and Trainee of Dan Kazeem Home Video Productions Limited, Ilorin, 5 May 2015.