Digital Communication, Social Media Animations and the Transformation of Film Industries: Views from Africa

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Abstract

This work was on the topic, Digital Communication, Social media animations and the transformation of film industries. It was a survey to obtain the views of residents of three select African countries. The countries affected are Ethiopia, Egypt and Democratic Republic of Congo. The objectives were: To know the category of social media animations preferred by viewers of films in select African countries; assess the major gains of social media animations to viewers of films in select African countries; analyze perceptions about social media animations by viewers of films in select African countries; find out the proportion of relationship between social media animations and the growth of film viewership in African society. The two communication based theories which were adopted to support this research were the Uses and Gratification theory and the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. The population of the study was pegged at 348 million persons and a sample size of 768 in consideration of the limitations of the scope chosen for the research. Data was collected through the use of questionnaire through electronic mails. The findings was that 527 persons or 69% of the sample size agreed that animations contribute with positive relationship to the growth of the film industry in African countries. It was in part recommended that film makers sustain the tempo of presenting animations for simplification of concepts to viewers.

1. Introduction

The communication and film making business in Africa has long been distinct by amusing storytelling traditions. Hence, a greater aspect of interactions among African involve the application of inter and group communication with stories and narratives. In spite of wide usages, dimensions and changes, these forms of communication are not carried out without challenges. It ranges from distortions, framing, manipulations and absence of modifications in production, distribution, and absence of global recognition. This has been the situation even with undergoing digital changes in communications. This is to say that adjustments from crude ways of communication to the application of digital devices has been very minimal in African countries. Noticeable, at the heart of transformation of communication in advanced countries lie the dynamic intersection of explosive growth of social media created animations and the structures of supports to internationalize the film industries. Historically, African film industries have navigated through a complex path, from the colonial, post-colonial "African film" to the market-driven video film industries In Nigeria, there is the Nollywood, Kenya dominated by the Kani through democratized production and consumption (Ebewo & Uwah, 2021). Concretely, there has been persistent barriers of limited theatrical infrastructure, piracy,

and uneven access to international markets. However, the waves of the digital age and the pervasive penetration of mobile technology and social media platforms have injected new creativities. Across platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter, the film industry controllers have infused originalities of native animations. These are the works of illustrators, and storytellers emerging and, bypassing traditional gatekeepers to craft and disseminate animated contents that are with immediacies, friendly, culturally planned and with familiarity of the viewers (Akpabio, 2022).

This occurrence is not merely a marginal trend but a significant cultural and economic development. Social media animation through creativity of the African film producers encompass a diverse spectrum, from short-form, meme-driven humour and socio-political figures commentaries to serialized narratives exploring folklore, contemporary life, and imaginaries. These creations are characterized by agile production cycles, direct engagement with audiences, and the innovative use of affordable digital tools. This has pulled fresh ideas, curiosities and attention, language and vocabularies within the communication platform driven by social media ecosystem (McDonald & Smith, 2023). Crucially, this creative digital network is fostering vibrant informal and formal media economies, new pathways for dominance in advertising, brand building, and audience retention and theme sustainability (Lobato & Thomas, 2021).

The relationship between the film industries and the floating of creative animations provide potent indicators for effective communication. In a developing setting, the absence of animations for entertainment and interpretation of complex actions can cause negative responses to certain messages. The seeming acceptability of animations and viral successes has increasingly been leveraged in commercial opportunities, film advertising, and transitions into longer-format films and television productions (Obiaya & Umeh, 2023). This suggests greater transformations as social media act as low barrier grounds for broader concepts in the film industry. Also, this digital growth also represents a model that challenges conventional productions, and distribution paradigms. It raises critical questions about localization of the film industry" in an era of digital content based platforms (Garcia & Mbaine, 2022).

By synthesizing perspectives from across Africa, this survey seeks to investigate how animations by filmmakers, industry stakeholders, and audiences are perceived by the impact of social media animations. Ultimately, understanding these views become essential to mapping the contours of a rapidly evolving film landscape, where the social media tend to regulate much transformations to an arguably reference to digital renaissance in media service.

2. Objectives of the study

1. To know the category of social media animations preferred by viewers of films in select African countries.
2. To assess the major gains of social media animations to viewers of films in select African countries.
3. To analyze perceptions about social media animations by viewers of films in select African countries.
4. To find out the proportion of relationship between social media animations and the growth of film viewership in African society.

3. Research questions of the study:

1. What is the major category of social media animations preferred by viewers of films in select African countries?
2. What is the outstanding gain of social media animations to viewers of films in select African countries?

3. What is the key form of perception about social media animations by viewers of films in select African countries?

4. What proportion of relationship exist between social media animations and the growth of film viewership in African society.

4. Literature Review

Digital Communication Development

Digital communication development refers to the progressive transformation of communication processes through the integration of digital technologies, platforms, and networked media systems. It encompasses the evolution of information creation, distribution, interaction, and consumption facilitated by the internet, mobile technologies, social media, artificial intelligence, and data-driven communication tools (Castells, 2021; van Dijk, 2022). This transformation has fundamentally reshaped social interaction, business operations, governance, education, and cultural production across the globe.

This acceleration of digital communication in the twenty-first century has been driven largely by broadband expansions, smartphone diffusion, and the growth of platform-based communication ecosystems such as social media, messaging applications, and streaming services. These technologies have reduced communication barriers, enabling real-time global interaction and democratizing content creations. As a result, individuals and organizations participate in interactive, networked communication environments using user-generated content, algorithmic curation, and continuous connectivity (Kietzmann et al., 2021).

In addition, one of the defining features of contemporary digital communication development is the convergence of media formats. Text, audio, video, animation, and virtual contents coexist within unified digital platforms, creating multimedia communication experiences with immersive and persuasive traditional forms of communication (Scolari, 2022). This convergence has expanded the scope of digital storytelling, online advertising, political communication, and entertainment industries, while altering audience behavior and media consumption patterns.

Furthermore, advancements in artificial intelligence and data analytics have intensified the personalization of digital communication. Algorithms now shape what users see, read, and engage with, enabling targeted messaging and predictive communication strategies (Gillespie, 2022). While these developments enhance communication efficiency and relevance, they also raise ethical concerns regarding privacy, surveillance, misinformation, and algorithmic bias.

In developing regions, particularly in Africa and parts of Asia, digital communication development has become a catalyst for socio-economic transformation. Mobile connectivity and social media platforms have expanded access to information and inclusive development. However, persistent digital divides related to infrastructure, affordability, and digital literacy continue to shape unequal access and outcomes within and across societies.

Overall, digital communication development represents not merely technological change but a comprehensive restructuring of how societies communicate and organize knowledge. Its continued evolution significantly influence cultural identity, engagements and global interconnectedness.

Social Media Animations

Social media animations are short, eye-catching videos or motion graphics intended to engage viewers rapidly on social media platforms. Animations use movements, transitions, and visual effects to make content lively, helping brands tell stories, display products and communicate messages in notable ways.

Social media animations refer to the strategic use of animated visual contents, short-form cartoons, explainer animations, and dynamic visual effects distributed through social networking platforms for communication and entertainment purposes. With the increasing dominance of visual culture in digital environments, animations have emerged as central communication tools that enhance message clarity, emotional appeal, and audience engagement. This is noticeable across social media platforms of TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter).

The growth of social media animations is strongly connected to changes in audience consumption behavior. Contemporary audiences demonstrate a preference for short, visually stimulating, and interactive content, making animated media particularly effective in capturing attention in saturated digital spaces. Animated contents generate engagement rates than static visuals, especially among younger demographics who dominate social media usage (Chen & Chen, 2022). The cognitive processing of animated content also supports better information retention, as movement, colour, and narrative sequencing enhance comprehension and recall (Mayer, 2021).

From a communication perspective, social media animations perform multiple functions. They simplify complex information through visual storytelling, making them highly effective for educational messaging, public awareness campaigns, and brand communication. Organizations increasingly adopt animation to communicate corporate identity, product value, and social messages in ways that are emotionally resonant and culturally adaptable. In social advocacy, animated contents have become persuasive tools, shaping public opinion and mobilizing collective action through visually compelling narratives (Bennett & Pfetsch, 2021).

In the creative and entertainment industries, social media animations serve both promotional and artistic purposes. Film producers, musicians, and content creators employ animation to promote releases, engage fan communities, and expand trans-media storytelling across digital platforms. This has contributed to the growth of participatory culture, where audiences do not merely consume contents but actively remix, comment on, and redistribute animated media (Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2021). Such interactions strengthen brand loyalty and audience attachment, particularly within the global film and media industries.

Technological advancement has further accelerated the development of social media animations. The availability of affordable animation software, mobile editing applications, artificial intelligence tools, and cloud-based production platforms has lowered entry barriers, enabling independent creators and small enterprises to produce high-quality animated content. This democratization of animation production has significantly expanded creative participation, especially in developing regions where traditional media production resources are limited.

However, the increasing dominance of animated content also raises concerns regarding information overload, digital manipulation, and the spread of misleading visual narratives. The persuasive power of animation, combined with algorithmic amplification, can intensify the circulation of misinformation and propaganda, posing ethical and regulatory challenges for digital communication governance.

Animations and Their Contributions to Films

Animation has become one of the most influential components of contemporary filmmaking, reshaping both the artistic and commercial dimensions of the global film industry. Beyond its traditional role in children's entertainment, animation now functions as a core cinematic technology that enhances storytelling, expands creative possibilities, and strengthens audience engagement across diverse film genres.

One of the most significant contributions of animation to films is its ability to visualize the impossible. Through computer-generated imagery (CGI), motion capture, and digital compositing, filmmakers can create worlds, characters, and events that transcend physical limitations. This has broadened the scope of cinematic storytelling, allowing films to explore fantasy, science fiction, historical reconstruction, and speculative narratives with unprecedented realism and emotional depth (Prince, 2021; Manovich, 2022). As a result, animation has become indispensable in contemporary blockbusters in film productions.

Animation also enhances narrative efficiency and emotional communication. Animated sequences support the expression of abstract ideas, internal emotions, and symbolic meanings that are difficult to portray through live-action alone. According to Mayer (2021), visual motion and narrative sequencing significantly improve audience comprehension and memory retention, making animated elements powerful tools for cinematic storytelling. Films increasingly integrate animation to clarify complex plots, communicate psychological states, and intensify emotional impact.

Economically, animation has become a major driver of film industry growth. Animated films and animation-driven franchises generate substantial global revenue through box office sales, streaming distribution, merchandising, and transmedia extensions. The integration of animation expands market reach by appealing to both youth and adult audiences, fostering cross-generational consumption and long-term brand loyalty. Moreover, the rise of streaming platforms has increased global demand for animated content, encouraging production expansion and international co-productions.

Technological innovation has further strengthened the role of animation in film production. Advances in artificial intelligence, real-time rendering, virtual production, and motion capture technologies have reduced production costs while improving creative flexibility and visual quality. These tools allow filmmakers to experiment with hybrid formats that combine live-action and animation, blurring the boundaries between physical and digital cinema and expanding the aesthetic language of film.

However, the growing dominance of animation in film production also raises concerns regarding creative homogenization, escalating production budgets, and overreliance on visual spectacle at the expense of narrative depth. Balancing technological innovation with artistic integrity remains a central challenge for filmmakers and film scholars.

Film Viewers and Animations

The interaction between film viewers and animated content has become increasingly central to contemporary cinematic experience as animation now shapes audience engagement, perception, and consumption patterns across global film markets. The expansion of digital technologies and streaming platforms has further intensified audience exposure to animated and animation-enhanced films, reinforcing animation as a dominant visual language in modern cinema (Tryon, 2022; Lobato, 2023).

From a cognitive and affective perspective, animation significantly enhances viewer attention and emotional response. Visual motion, stylized representation, and symbolic imagery embedded in animation facilitate deeper narrative comprehension and emotional resonance among audiences (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2021; Krämer & Winter, 2022). These elements contribute to stronger viewer immersion, making animated films particularly effective in sustaining audience interest and narrative recall.

Contemporary film audiences increasingly view animation as a legitimate and sophisticated storytelling medium rather than a genre confined to children's entertainment. Animated films now address mature themes including identity, social inequality, mental health, and political conflict, thereby expanding their appeal to adult audiences and strengthening cultural legitimacy (Furniss, 2021; Wells, 2023). The growing popularity of hybrid productions that

merge live-action and animation further demonstrates evolving audience preferences for innovative cinematic forms.

Digital media environments have transformed the viewer–animation relationship from passive reception to participatory engagement. Social platforms, fan communities, and streaming ecosystems allow viewers to interact with animated films through content sharing, fan art, commentary, and remix culture, reinforcing long-term audience loyalty and franchise sustainability (Johnson, 2022; Scott & Stanfill, 2023). Such participatory practices significantly influence consumption decisions and brand attachment.

Moreover, animation strongly shapes viewing choices within highly competitive digital markets. Visual creativity, aesthetic originality, and technological sophistication serve as primary factors in audience selection of films, especially within global streaming services where attention competition is intense (Wayne, 2022). Successful animated productions not only attract large viewership but also generate extended economic value through merchandise, sequels, and cross-platform storytelling.

Despite these advantages, concerns persist regarding sensory overload and narrative superficiality in animation-heavy films. Excessive visual spectacle may undermine story coherence and emotional depth if not carefully balanced with narrative substance (Ndalianis, 2021; McClean, 2022). Maintaining equilibrium between technological innovation and meaningful storytelling remains essential for sustaining viewer satisfaction.

Types of Animations in Films

Animation in contemporary cinema exists in diverse forms, each contributing uniquely to storytelling, visual aesthetics, and audience experience. The choice of animation technique is often determined by narrative purpose, production resources, technological capacity, and target audience. The major types of animation used in films include the: Traditional animation, also known as hand-drawn animation, involves creating sequences of images frame by frame to produce the illusion of movement. This technique remains influential for its artistic expressiveness and emotional warmth. Although largely replaced by digital methods in mainstream production, 2D animation continues to thrive in independent cinema and culturally driven film projects, where its stylistic qualities enhance narrative depth and artistic authenticity.

Computer-Generated (3D) Animation employs computer software to create lifelike characters, environments, and visual effects. It is the dominant form of animation in contemporary filmmaking, especially in feature films, fantasy, science fiction, and animated franchises. 3D animation enables realistic motion, dynamic lighting, and complex world-building that significantly elevate cinematic immersion.

Stop-motion animation uses physical objects such as puppets, clay models, or cutouts, photographed incrementally to simulate movement. This form offers a tactile and handcrafted aesthetic that appeals strongly to niche audiences and artistic filmmakers. Despite its labor-intensive process, stop-motion remains valued for its originality and visual charm.

Motion graphics involve animated text, shapes, and graphic elements, often used in film titles, promotional sequences, documentaries, and explanatory segments. In narrative films, motion graphics enhance information delivery and visual engagement while maintaining stylistic coherence with the story.

Visual Effects (VFX) Animation integrates animated elements into live-action footage to create scenes that cannot be filmed in reality. This includes digital creatures, environments, explosions, and fantasy elements. VFX has become indispensable in modern cinema, particularly in action, superhero, and science fiction films.

Rotoscoping involves tracing over live-action footage frame by frame to create realistic animated movement. This technique allows for natural human motion while retaining artistic stylization, and it is often used in experimental films and music-based cinematic productions.

Hybrid animation combines live-action and multiple animation techniques within a single film. This approach expands narrative creativity and visual complexity, allowing filmmakers to merge real-world performance with imaginative animated environments and characters.

Review of Related Literature

Cheng, & Nagai (2024) studied the Effect of Product Placement in Animation on Generation Z Consumers. This empirical study investigated how product placement within animated films influenced Generation Z consumers' cognition, attitudes, and purchase intentions. Using a quantitative survey design, data were collected from a sample of Generation Z participants who viewed selected Chinese animated films featuring embedded brand placements. The study employed pre- and post-viewing questionnaires to measure changes in audience perception and behavior. Results showed that product placement significantly enhances viewers' brand cognition, improve brand attitude, and increase purchase intention. The authors also developed a mathematical model to evaluate the effect of product placement using factor analysis, highlighting that audience attitude was the strongest determinant of the overall effect. This research provided empirical evidence for the effectiveness of animation as a marketing channel and offers insights for brands and media producers seeking to optimize promotion strategies through animated content.

Zhang (2025) studied "Factors Influencing College Students' Cinema Visits for Animated Movies: A Case Study of Sichuan Universities in China". This empirical study explored the determinants of college students' intentions to watch animated films in cinemas. Drawing on a structured questionnaire administered to 166 university students in Sichuan Province, China, and employing multiple linear regression analysis, the research examined how factors such as attitude, perceived behavioral control, hedonic motivation, and eudaimonic motivation influence cinema-going behavior. Findings indicated that attitude, perceived behavioral control, and eudaimonic motivation have significant positive effects on students' intention to visit theaters for animated films, whereas subjective norms, hedonic motivation, social influence, external rewards, and electronic word-of-mouth showed no significant effects. The study also included an intervention phase (IDI), demonstrating that structured engagement activities can further enhance viewing intentions across key motivational variables. This research offered empirical evidence on audience behavior in the animated film market and practical insights for filmmakers and marketers aiming to attract young viewers.

This empirical study examined the main factors that influence audience preferences when selecting animated films. Using an integrated analytical approach combining fuzzy analytic hierarchy process (FAHP) and grey relational analysis (GRA), the research evaluates data from Chinese viewers to identify the most influential selection criteria such as narrative quality, character design, visual effects, and emotional engagement. Results show that storytelling and emotional impact significantly guide audience decisions, outweighing technical elements like animation style alone. The findings provided quantitative evidence on how audiences evaluate animated films and offer insights for filmmakers and marketers in prioritizing production and promotion strategies.

5. Theoretical Framework

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

The Uses and Gratifications Theory explains how audiences actively select media to satisfy specific needs, such as entertainment, information, social interaction, or personal identity. In

the context of film and animation, UGT helps to understand why viewers choose certain animated films or social media animations, and how these media fulfill emotional, cognitive, or social gratifications (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch 1973; Ruggiero, 2021). The theory assumes that audiences are not passive; they actively engage with media content to achieve desired outcomes, which can include pleasure, emotional catharsis, or educational benefit.

Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)

The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning posits that people learn more effectively when information is presented through both visual and auditory channels rather than through a single mode. Applied to animation in films, this theory explains why animated visuals combined with soundtracks, narration, or textual elements enhance audience comprehension, retention, and engagement (Mayer, 2021, Plass, Moreno & Brünken (2022). It highlights the cognitive processes behind how viewers interpret animated content, making it a useful framework for analyzing animation in education, marketing, and entertainment.

6. Research Method

The method of research was the use of online survey. Online surveys allow the measurement of awareness level of an issue and the influence across different cities (Akpan & Udo, 2025). It is suitable for high geographic reach and low in cost. Online surveys bypass physical borders, and giving researchers the ease to collect data simultaneously.

Population of the study

The population of the study was 348 million persons drawn from three African countries. The select African countries and their population are Ethiopia at 120 million persons in the East, Egypt 114 million persons in the North and Democratic Republic of Congo 105 million persons in the Central zone of Africa. The three countries were chosen based on valuable criteria. For instance, Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa with a diverse cultural and linguistic heritage. Egypt (North Africa) is one of the world's most densely populated regions. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Central Africa) is the largest country in Sub-Saharan Africa by area and the fourth most populous on the continent.

Sampling and Sample Size

At the infinite population rate, using Adams (1971) sample size formula, at 90% level of confidence and 5% margin of error the sample size was pegged at 384 persons. In order to ensure adequate spread of the sample size to affected countries, the sample size was doubled from 384 to 768 persons. This facilitated the creation of 768 copies of questionnaires for respondents.

Instrument of the study

The instrument of obtaining data for the research was an online questionnaire with 10 close ended questions spread to cover the variables of the research objectives. Each question was with four options for the recipient to tick an option of choice. The use of questionnaires was further justified by the versatility and methodological strength in measuring attitudes, perceptions, and self-reported behaviors. They are particularly effective for studies aiming to establish correlations between variables, such as linking customer satisfaction to service quality or understanding public health behaviors. The incorporate validated scales was to ensure that the data collected was both reliable and valid for testing hypotheses. Furthermore, the anonymity provided by self-administered questionnaires can reduce social desirability bias, encouraging more honest responses on sensitive topics compared to face-to-face methods.

Validity and Reliability

For the validation of the instrument of research, a pretest of the questions was done among 20 persons in Uyo, a Nigerian city with individuals having similar social and economic features like cities in Ethiopia, Egypt and Democratic Republic of Congo. This was to check inconsistencies in questions. The validated copies were divided proportionately and mailed to respondents through personal e- mail addresses obtained from Internet service Providers. Ethiopia was allocated 284 copies, Egypt had 252 copies and Democratic Republic of Congo had 232 copies.

7. Method of Data Analysis

Data obtained from respondents through replies of separate e- mails were anlysed using the Table of frequencies and supported with pie charts. This made it possible for the ascertaining and calculation of the least and the highest scores per questions raised as objectives.

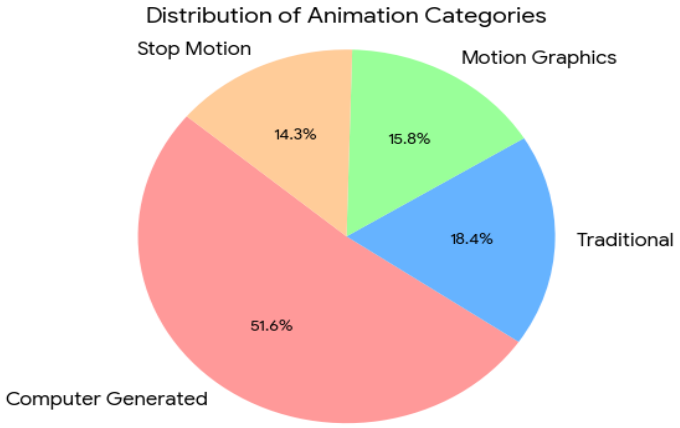
Data Analysis

Analysis of data followed each of the objectives and research questions.

RQ1: Table 1: The category of social media animations preferred by viewers of films in select African countries.

Animation Category	Respondents	Percentage
Traditional	141	18%
Stop Motion	110	14%
Computer Generated	396	52%
Motion Graphics	121	16%
Total	768	100 %

Source: Online survey 2026



Pie Chart 1

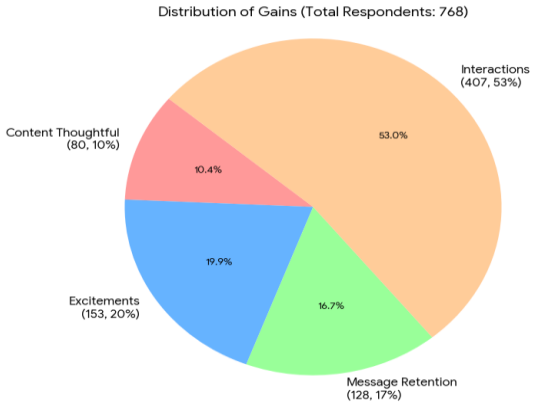
The pie chart below visualizes the distribution of respondents across different animation categories based on the data provided. The data reveals a clear preference or prevalence for certain animation styles among the 768 respondents: Dominance of Computer Generated Animation: This category is the most significant, accounting for 52% of the total. With 396 respondents, it represents more than half of the entire group, highlighting its status as the industry standard in modern animation. Traditional Animation: Holding the second-largest share at 18% or (141 respondents), traditional animation remains a relevant and respected medium, though it is significantly less common than computer-generated methods. Motion Graphics: Following closely behind traditional animation, motion graphics accounts for 16%

of the distribution (121 respondents). This reflects its extensive use in advertising, titles, and digital content. Stop Motion: This category is the least common among those surveyed, representing 14% of the total (110 respondents). Given the labor-intensive nature of stop motion, its smaller share is expected, yet it maintains a distinct niche. In summary, the animation landscape is currently dominated by Computer Generated techniques, while Traditional, Motion Graphics, and Stop Motion occupy relatively similar, smaller portions of the market.

RQ2. Table 2: The major gains of social media animations to viewers of films in select African countries.

Gains	Respondents	Percentage
Content Thoughtful	80	10%
Excitements	153	20%
Message Retention	128	17%
Interactions	407	53%
Total	768	100%

Source: Online Survey 2026



Pie Chart 2

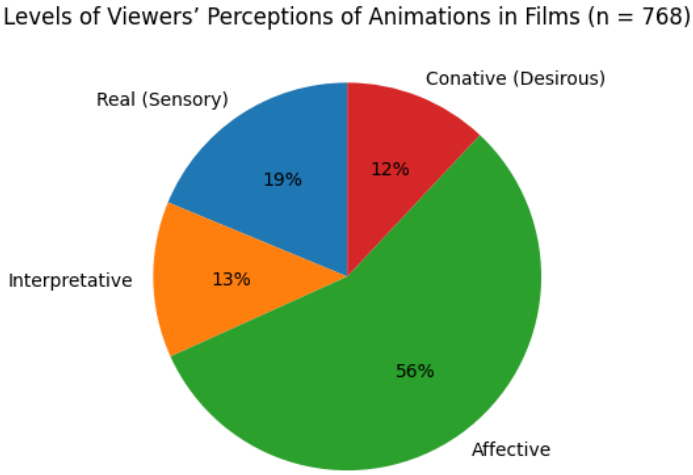
The data in Table 2 and pie chart 2 provided for the 768 respondents. Analysis showed that interactions had the most significant gain identified is Interactions, which accounts for more than half of the total responses (53%, or 407 respondents). This indicated that the audience highly values active participation and engagement over passive consumption. Secondary gains was on Excitements at (20%) and Message Retention (17%) as the next most frequent responses. Together, they suggest that roughly one-third of the audience prioritized the emotional experience and the ability to remember the core message. Content Thoughtful represents the smallest segment at 10%. While it is a positive gain, it suggested that for this specific group, the "how" (interactions and excitement) was more impactful than the "what" (depth of thought in the content).

RQ3. Table 3: Perceptions about social media animations by viewers of films in select African countries.

Perceptions	Respondents	Percentage
Real (Sensory)	144	19%
Interpretative	100	13%
Affective	432	56%

Conative (Desirous)	92	12%
Total	768	100%

Source: Online Survey 2026

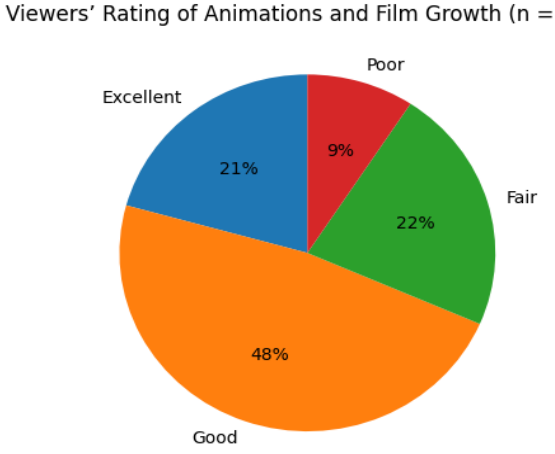


Pie Chart 3 Description: Viewers' Perceptions of Animations in Films (n = 768)

The Table 3 and Pie chart 3 presents the distribution of respondents across four perception levels regarding animations in films. The Real (Sensory): 144 respondents (19%), Interpretative: 100 respondents (13%), Affective: 432 respondents (56%), Conative (Desirous): 92 respondents (12%),

RQ4. Table 4: Relationship between social media animations and the growth of film viewership in African society.

Relationship	Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	159	21
Good	367	48
Fair	171	22
Poor	71	9
Total	768	100



Source: Online Survey 2026

Pie Chart 4

Table 4 and Pie Chart 4 show viewers comments on the relationship between animations and growth of films. Excellent had 159 or 21%, Good 367 or 48%, fair 171 or 22% and poor 71 or 9%. This showed that animations relationship in film transformation was rated positively in combining Excellent and Good at overall 526 or 69% responses.

8. Discussion of Findings

On the categories of social media animations, the frequency Table 1 and the pie chart 1 visualizes the distribution of respondents across different animation categories based on the data provided. The data reveals a clear preference or prevalence for certain animation styles among the 768 respondents: Dominance of Computer Generated Animation: This category is the most significant, accounting for 52% of the total. With 396 respondents, it represents more than half of the entire group, highlighting its status as the industry standard in modern animation. Traditional Animation: Holding the second-largest share at 18% (141 respondents), traditional animation remains a relevant and respected medium, though it is significantly less common than computer-generated methods .Motion Graphics: Following closely behind traditional animation, motion graphics accounts for 16% of the distribution (121 respondents). This reflects its extensive use in advertising, titles, and digital content. Stop Motion: This category is the least common among those surveyed, representing 14% of the total (110 respondents). Given the labor-intensive nature of stop motion, its smaller share is expected, yet it maintains a distinct niche. It shows that the animation landscape is currently dominated by Computer Generated techniques, while Traditional, Motion Graphics, and Stop Motion occupy relatively similar, smaller portions of the market. The shift toward Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) as the dominant force in the animation industry is a widely documented phenomenon. The turning point came when digital tools began to outpace traditional hand-drawn methods in both commercial viability and aesthetic influence. This is in line with the position of Furniss (2016) that the technical and industrial shifts in the animation world have moved away from cel animation because Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) allowed for greater efficiency in production pipelines and met the audience's growing demand for three-dimensional depth. Yoon (2021) also adds that contemporary industrial analysis of digital technologies have restructured the global animation market. She argues that the transition to CGI is not just an aesthetic shift but a structural one, where the dominance of computer-generated techniques is driven by the integration of global production pipelines and the efficiency of digital assets.

In the discussion of the gains of social media animation, analysis showed that Interactions at (53%) was the largest segment, showing that social media animations strongly encourage viewers to engage through likes, shares, comments, or discussions.

Excitements (20%) indicates that animations effectively stimulate emotional responses and increase viewers' interest in films. Message Retention (17%) highlights that animations help viewers remember key themes or messages, enhancing comprehension and learning. Content Thoughtful (10%) suggests that while animations contribute to thoughtful engagement with film content, this is less pronounced compared to interactive and emotional gains.

The implications are that social media animations are powerful tools for audience participation, which can drive popularity and word-of-mouth promotion. Social media animations have emotional appeals for excitement as a key gain. Message retention indicates that animations can be used to simplify complex narratives or highlight moral/educational themes, improving viewers' comprehension.

Content Depth: Although fewer viewers cited thoughtful engagement, integrating meaningful storytelling with animation can enhance intellectual appreciation of films.

In overall it means that social media animations not only entertain but also actively engage audiences, strengthen message retention, and foster interactive communities around films, contributing significantly to film growth and audience loyalty. Liu and Fan (2024) found that animated content on social media stands out compared with static posts, attracting more likes, shares, and comments from users because its dynamic and visually appealing nature fosters higher engagement and participation.

Concerning the perception of viewers, the Table 3 and pie chart 3 shows that the affective perception level dominates, with more than half of the respondents (56%) indicating that animations primarily influence them emotionally. This suggests that viewers respond most strongly to how animations evoke feelings such as excitement, pleasure, suspense, and emotional attachment.

The real (sensory) perception accounts for 19%, indicating that a notable proportion of viewers focus on visual realism, sound quality, colour, and motion effects when assessing animations. This highlights the importance of technical and aesthetic quality.

The interpretative level (13%) reflects viewers who engage cognitively with animations, interpreting meanings, symbols, and narrative relevance. Although smaller, this group represents critical viewers who value storytelling depth and message clarity.

The conative (desirous) level, at 12%, represents viewers whose perceptions translate into behavioural intentions such as the desire to watch, recommend, or seek similar animated films.

The above analysis submits that viewers retort most powerfully to how animations induce feelings such as excitement, pleasure, unsureness, and emotional attachment. This is in line with Cai (2024) argument that animation serves as a potent medium for emotional engagement and storytelling, showing how visual elements, sound, and narrative strategies are used to evoke emotional resonance among viewers, which aligns with the position that animations strongly influence audience feelings such as excitement, empathy, and emotional attachment.

Overall, the findings imply that animations contribute most to film success when they emotionally engage audiences while maintaining strong technical and narrative standards.

On the relation of social media animations to the growth of films, the Table of frequency 4 and pie chart 4 illustrates viewers' ratings of animations and film growth based on responses from 768 participants. Good (48%) represents the largest proportion of respondents (367 persons), indicating that nearly half of the viewers believe animations contribute positively to the growth of films. Excellent (21%), accounting for 159 respondents, shows that a significant segment of viewers perceives animations as making a very strong and impactful contribution to film development. Fair (22%), with 171 respondents, suggests that some viewers acknowledge the role of animation in film growth but feel its impact is moderate, possibly due to technical or resource limitations. Poor (9%), representing 71 respondents, indicates a small minority who believe animations have little or negative influence on film growth, often linked to poor quality or weak integration.

Overall, the chart reveals a largely positive contribution, with 69% (Excellent + Good) of respondents affirming that animations significantly enhance the growth and development of films.

This result is also in agreement with the work of Dinç, (2023) that advances in animation and visual effects technologies have significantly influenced global cinema production trends and the digitalisation of film, implying that animation has helped drive growth in film production and audience engagement.

9. Conclusion

Overall, animation stands as a transformative force that contribute artistically, economically, technologically, and culturally to the film industry. Animation has become

inseparable from contemporary film-viewing culture, profoundly influencing audience engagement, consumption behavior, and industry development. Understanding this dynamic relationship is essential for filmmakers, scholars, and media practitioners navigating the evolving landscape of global cinema.

In developing film markets, particularly in Africa and Asia, animation contributes to cultural representation and industry diversification. Local animation studios increasingly produce films and series that reflect indigenous stories, folklore, and social experiences, strengthening cultural identity while participating in global media circulation. This development not only promotes cultural preservation but also creates employment opportunities and stimulates creative economies.

In sum, social media animations represent a transformative force in contemporary communication, blending creativity, technology, and strategic messaging. Their growing influence across cultural, educational, political, and economic spheres underscores their importance as a subject of scholarly inquiry and policy consideration.

The diversity of animation techniques in films reflects the expanding role of animation as both an artistic medium and a technological instrument of storytelling. Each type contributes distinct aesthetic qualities and narrative possibilities, enabling filmmakers to engage audiences through innovative and immersive cinematic experiences.

Recommendations

1. Filmmakers should focus on animations that strengthen emotional appeal, as this has the greatest influence on viewers.
2. Strong sensory appeal through high-quality visuals and sound enhances first impressions and credibility.
3. Animations should be meaningfully tied to the storyline to satisfy interpretative viewers.
4. Filmmakers should focus on visually and emotionally stimulating animation to retain audience attention since animations can stimulate viewing decisions, word-of-mouth promotion, and repeat patronage.

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