

# Short Film's Global Role to Survey the Present and Influence the Future *SDG's* by Tackling the Crucial Complications that Facing Humanity

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**ABSTRACT:** Digital technologies have revolutionized the normal practices in various industries. The short films industry has equally experienced innumerable changes since its first inception in 1910. The industry has seen changes ranging from noble changes from creative processes, ideas or script writing, and featuring and characterization. This paper sets out to assess the historical development of short films from the early 19th Century until the present age, and the future prospects in the film industry. With new ways of sharing the short films varying from social media platforms, direct media, theatres and live performances, filmmakers have multiple opportunities to craft and showcase their talents in short films. Besides, short films strongly influence society as they impact the audience's future interactions and thinking patterns, especially using the themes or content relayed in the short films. Therefore, short films play a great role in shaping society's morals and people's behaviors. Recently, short films were explored to showcase the United Nations' universal goals to promote social cohesion among the global population. The paper concludes by analyzing the challenges and future potential of the short films industry, especially educating and entertaining the masses.

**KEYWORDS:** short films, global awareness, UN *SDG's*, future, humanity

## Introduction

Short films are motion pictures that often display over a shorter time period than the actual feature films normally forty minutes or less inclusive of the credits. In the ancient ages, the consumers of short films did not realize the short time frames as they were emotionally consumed by the seconds-long performances, scenes of exotic cities, aesthetically appealing backgrounds and scantily dressed people going about their normal lives (Cooper & Dancyger 2012). With the new technologies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, short films began to be lengthened beyond forty minutes to create room for more creative ideas and clearer thematic presentations. The films were mainly filmed at local, national and international film festivals, but with the new approaches in the digital revolution, short films began to gain popularity on other platforms. The short films were also a reserve for independent filmmakers running on low or no budgets, but with the new age of technology, other producers joined the creative market with better film productions. Short films represent a monumental development in the entertainment industry, with a diverse presentation varying from live-actions, computer coded or animated productions.

## Discussion

Short film producers or content creators receive production funding from sponsors, film grants, not-for-profit organizations or personal investments. The main aim of this art genre is to entertain, educate and inform the masses, thus the producers are open to showcase their talents in multiple ways. The uniqueness of a particular short film may attract donors, private investors, production companies or film studios for future productions. As a result, the short films have gained enormous liking from governments, individuals or corporate firms as they aid in passing important messages. Initially, the short films would disappear immediately after they were aired at

the cinemas. However, the new endorsements resulted in better means of film archival, thus, the films can be found in different genres such as documentaries or fictions standing out in the present day (Briceno 2019).

**Short films were originally simple, but they have evolved into new genres with more controversial themes and obscure topics over time.** The most popular themes in the modern-day short films include social, cultural or political aspects, with the aim of advocacy or creating awareness of the thematic matters. The short film industry has significantly constricted down to be a call in the film and entertainment production, although its unique features still stand out. Some researchers have raised concern on the lasting impression created by short films. Some argue that short films have a lasting impact on the audience though some disagree with the assumption. The most popular response for this concern is that the longevity or powerful impact left on the audience depends on producers or director's ability to calibrate the content presented to the needs of the audience (Chapman 2013). Often, relatable content such as abortion, gender-based violence or euthanasia may have a more permanent impact than comical films.

**Short films have the potential to enhance the audience's knowledge.** Short films are based on good storytelling, thus for effective communication and better engagement with the audience, producers should conduct thorough background studies beforehand (Puspawati 2021). Directors, on the other hand, should be keen when assigning roles to the characters to ensure that the actual presentation and theme tally with the initial intent of airing the short film. Moreover, maintaining a healthy balance between the themes, main ideas, characters outplay, and filming stage is critical to attract and maintain the interests of the audience throughout the viewership. It is also important to maintain the balance to keep their audience informed, entertained and satisfied for future viewership. Moreover, technological advancements have also enhanced the process of film-editing using unique software, to increase the audience's engagement and plausible interest in certain genres. Digital technologies have also provided equal platforms for online release to reach wider market coverage than the ancient periods, thereby increasing the film's popularity in a shorter span of time.

**Short films have received remarkable attention in the recent past.** As people get busier with business, careers, studies and personal development, short films have received more attention as people's attention continues to reduce. With the short films, audiences are able to connect quickly to enjoy fiction and imaginative genres yet thriving in the fast-paced societies. According to Chapman (2013), short films are more plausible and attractive to the audience due to their precise nature and ease to follow through the entire plot. The modern-day society members have a higher preference for short-length films or entertainment genres due to their busy lives. Moreover, short films are attractive to filmmakers as it allows them opportunities to employ unlimited resources or new materials to tap into the emerging film markets (Sundquist 2010). For instance, documentaries are forms of short films and they help the audience to enjoy a wide pool of content, different thematic presentations and characterization on pertinent aspects. The short documentaries thereby play a great role in enriching the audiences' knowledgebase and stimulating change by creating awareness on global issues such as climate change. Also, the short documentaries aid in children's learning through visual class presentations. Some people use short documentary films to promote local or regional comedy, and sketches to exchange entertainment insights among the creators or promote.

**The United Nations advanced seventeen sustainable development goals with the aim of improving people's wellbeing and transforming the world.** The goals encompass; Gender equality, good health and wellbeing, decent work and economic growth, zero hunger, affordable and clean energy, clean water and sanitation, life below water, life on land, no poverty, quality education, sustainable cities and communities, reduced inequality, responsible production and consumption climate action, innovation and infrastructure, peace and justice, partnerships and stronger organizations to achieve the goals (Lu et al. 2015).

These goals can be articulated and actualized in the short films before being reflected in the societies. This can be through showcasing stories in short films that display united people or organizations working towards the common goals of development and sustainability. During the action festival event in North Lawn- the UN Headquarters, filmmakers submitted dissimilar short films in a global contest showcasing the interplay of the seventeen sustainable development goals. In all the films, producers managed to exemplify their talents and robust understanding of the universal goals. The short films were interactive, transformative and educative for the global populations to emulate and work towards implementing each of the aspects. The films also depicted the great role of digital technologies in transforming the short film industry and the future potential of films to rally alongside the universal goals (East & White 2016). The short films also educated the masses on the unique ways to resolve the global economic and social issues, and how to pull together with relevant forces to achieve the goals laid out in the sustainable development plan.

**Short films are a lucrative phenomenon with innumerable benefits to societies.** Short films allow the content creators to express their innate emotions and feelings in unique ways. They also allow people to learn important aspects on artwork, creative expressions and effective means of communications to different target audience. Short films also encourage people to try new ventures and be discovered in the global marketplace. In 2013, the Sundance Film Festival received a massive turnout averaging to about 8,161 short film makers which was significant increase, and the numbers were bound to continue rising with the new technical developments (Mousley & Firlot 2016). Additionally, short films have attracted the sales and marketing units as they represent an efficient way of marketing products in new or untapped markets. Other merits of the short films industry are that it helps in discovering and marketing new talents from amateur filmmakers. For instance, in the BFI film festival, millions of filmmakers are gathered to showcase their talents and gain insights from other filmmakers to enhance their creativity during content creation. Some innovative and promising filmmakers may also benefit from financial aids or partnerships during the film festival events, which is an efficient way to address the economic unemployment or other social evils especially among the youths. Besides, the content developed or showcased in the short films can be a reflection of the complex issues facing most people in the society, thereby be an efficient means to reach the relevant powers for immediate action.

### **Future Aspects**

Despite the great successes and innovations associated with the short film industry, the industry continues to sink with untold challenges. The most common issues incorporate poor quality of short films where it reflects majorly attributable to financial limitations and inadequate come across among most of the short filmmakers (Briceno 2019). Secondly, the short films industry is flooded with amateur filmmakers popping up the social world with the content, which makes it difficult for most of them to be noticed or appreciated for their tireless efforts. Additionally, the veteran filmmakers may impose high costs or unfair recruitment criteria to develop the upcoming filmmakers which may scare away the amateurs or inflict fears of rejection among them. Some filmmakers have associated anxiety of losing prestigious endorsements from mega companies, this also increases the tension in the industry causing unfair practices in the industry. Lastly, filmmakers also face the challenge of remaining relevant or consistent over time with the content, scripting or presentation process (Irving & Rea 2012). The world is constantly evolving with new customer tastes, preferences and consumption patterns, thus remaining creative with unique short films for the new generations, global issues and concepts is quite challenging.

### **Conclusion**

Globalization has significantly fast-tracked the expansion of the short-film industry. Short films have evolved into new and interesting phases which entertain, educate, inform and reward the

filmmakers and the general public. The industry has also promoted a great decline in social issues such as unemployment among the youths, thereby increasing the gross domestic product (GDP) of the said economic markets. However, the efforts of filmmakers may be shuttered by the wide range of challenges in the industry, including poor quality films, lack of funding, stiff competition among filmmakers and unclear channels to engage the audiences.

The most effective way to boost the productivity and continuity of short films is through providing equitable funding to the filmmakers. From the article, the benefits of short films are well tabulated, thus I would recommend that governments, private institutions and international should avail a kitty to boost the training, equipment and production of short films. There should be a responsible executive arm to cater for the needs of short films just like sports. This will allow the filmmakers to enjoy their efforts and grow in multiple ways to impact the societies with knowledge or entertainment.

As sustainable development goals become more widely implemented on the international scale, there emerges a growing role for films in manifesting the different experiences, challenges and outcomes involved in the process. Most importantly, as the challenges themselves facing mankind today evolve in their nature and required remedies, films, must readily adapt with this transformation. **Films, which have always served to tell the story and struggles of man, must continue to illustrate this narration truthfully, picking on the scars that not only live in our minds but also in the physical world we live in.**

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