

**ENHANCING VIEWERSHIP OF NOLLYWOOD FILMS THROUGH SOCIAL
MEDIA USING THE FILMIC NARRATIVE “A TRIBE CALLED JUDAH” AND
“LOVE IN EVERY WORD”**

BY

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UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

OCTOBER. 2025

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS,
FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF
ARTS DEGREE IN THEATRE ARTS**

OCTOBER, 2025

DECLARATION

I declare that;

This project is based on the study undertaken by me in the department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin under the supervision of Dr. Grace Shalom Israel.

All ideas and views are products of my personal research and where the view of others have been used and expressed, they were duly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned certify that this work was carried out by Omijie Victoria Ofure with Mat No. ART2101261, in the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Benin, Benin City.

We also certify that the work is adequate in scope and quality in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts.

Dr. (Mrs) Grace Shalom Israel
Project Supervisor

Prof. Josephine Abbey
Head of Department

Date

Date

DEDICATION

First of all, I wish to honor and dedicate this work to God. This research work is also dedicated to my Dad who gave me hope when all hope was and has always been my motivation to keep going whenever I felt like giving up.

I sincerely appreciate all you've done for me in obtaining this academic journey.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6
1.4 Research Questions --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	8
1.5 Research Hypotheses --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	8
1.6 Significance of the Study --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	9
1.7 Scope of the Study --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	13
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	16
1.9 Historical Foundation and Nollywood's Emergence --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	18

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to Literature Review --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	20
2.2 Conceptual Framework --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	21
2.2.1 Traditional Storytelling --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	21
2.2.2 Indigenous Communication Systems --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	25
2.2.3 Drama (in Traditional Contexts) --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	29
2.2.4 Early Mass Media --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	32
2.2.5 Viewer Experience (in Historical Contexts) --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	36
2.3 Theoretical Framework ---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	40
2.3.1 Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	41
2.3.2 Social Learning Theory / Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	45
2.3.3 Parasocial Interaction Theory (PSI) --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	48
2.3.4 Performance Theory and Orality/Literacy Studies --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	50

2.4 Empirical Review --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	52
2.4.1 Studies on Oral Traditions and Storytelling in Nigeria --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	53
2.4.2 Research on Indigenous Communication Systems --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	58
2.4.3 The Emergence of Early Mass Media and Audience Response --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	62
2.5 Indigenous Narratives and the Rise of Nollywood --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	66
2.5.1 Review of Traditional Narrative Forms --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	66
2.5.2 From Performance Arts to Film --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	66
2.5.3 Nollywood’s Cultural Role --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	67
2.6 Summary of Empirical Review ----	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	68
2.7 Gaps in the Literature --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	69
Chapter Three: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY									
3.1 Research Design	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	71
3.2 Population and Sample --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	71
3.3 Sampling Technique --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	71
3.4 Research Instruments --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	72
3.5 Data Collection Procedure --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	72
3.6 Data Analysis --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	72
3.7 Synopsis of the Case Study Films --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	72
Chapter Four: DATA AND PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS.									
4.1 Demographic Information --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	74
Table 1: Gender Distribution --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	74
Table 2: Age Distribution --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	74
Table 3: Academic Level --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	75
4.2 Nollywood Film Consumption --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	75
Table 4: Frequency of Watching Nollywood Films --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	75

Table 5: Viewing Platforms --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	76
Table 6: Film Choice Factors --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	76
4.3 Social Media Usage --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	77
Table 7: Most Used Platform for Film Content --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	77
Table 8: Hours Spent Daily on Social Media --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	77
Table 9: Engagement with Nollywood Content --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	78
4.4 Case Study Analysis --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	78
Table 10: Awareness of the Films --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	78
Table 11: Campaign Effectiveness (Perceived) --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	79
Table 12: Box Office Performance --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	79
Table 13: Social Media Performance --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	80
4.5 Research Questions Answered --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	80
4.6 Discussion of Findings --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	81
4.7 Recommendations --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	83
Chapter Five: CONCLUSION.									
5.1 Summary of Findings --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	84
5.2 Conclusion --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	85
5.3 Recommendations --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	86
5.4 Suggestions for Further Research --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	86
Reference --	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	88

ABSTRACT

This study investigates how social media enhances the viewership of Nollywood films, with a particular focus on the case studies of *A Tribe Called Judah* (2023) and *Love in Every Word* (2025). Drawing upon Uses and Gratifications, Social Learning, and Parasocial Interaction theories, the research traces Nigerian storytelling traditions through to the digital era, highlighting the continuity of communal engagement. Chapters One through three provided historical and theoretical context, while Chapters Four and Five examined contemporary strategies and outcomes. The qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed, analysis engagement metrics from YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. Findings show that the YouTube trailers (*A Tribe Called Judah* – approximately one million, six hundred thousand views; *Love in Every Word* – approximately one million, two hundred thousand views), Instagram updates (*A Tribe Called Judah* – one hundred and twenty thousand followers, ten thousand likes; *Love in Every Word* – eighty-five thousand followers, seven thousand likes), and TikTok challenges (#ATribeCalledJudah, approximately forty million views; #TribeOfJudah, approximately twenty-five million views; #LoveInEveryWord, approximately thirty-two million views) significantly boosted awareness, audience participation, and parasocial bonds with characters. The qualitative analysis were carried out on 150 students both online and printed forms. The study concludes that integrating platform-specific strategies, fostering user-generated content, and aligning campaigns with cultural themes enhance Nollywood's digital reach. Recommendations encourage filmmakers to balance viral marketing with high-quality storytelling, while leveraging social media to recreate Nigeria's tradition of communal narrative experiences in a digital context.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Long before the pervasive reach of digital networks, the diverse cultures and communities across Nigeria thrived on rich, intricate systems of storytelling and information dissemination. These traditional methods were not merely means of communication but were deeply interwoven with the social, cultural, and spiritual fabric of the people. Storytelling, in particular, served as a cornerstone of communal life, acting as a primary vehicle for education, entertainment, moral instruction, and the preservation of history. From the ancient empires of Oyo and Benin to the numerous ethnic groups scattered across the vast landscape, narratives were meticulously crafted and passed down through generations, shaping identities and reinforcing societal values. The inherent human desire for compelling narratives, for understanding the world through shared experiences, and for connecting with others through collective engagement is a timeless phenomenon that has manifested in myriad forms throughout Nigerian history.

Oral traditions stood paramount in this pre-literate and early-literate era. Elders, griots, bards, and skilled storytellers held revered positions within their communities, serving as living libraries of collective memory. They recounted myths of creation, epic tales of heroes and deities, fables imparting moral lessons, and historical accounts of lineage and conquest. These storytelling sessions were often communal events, taking place under moonlight, around crackling fires, or during significant festivals. The performance aspect was crucial; storytellers employed gestures, vocal inflections, drumming, and even call-and-response techniques to engage their audiences, transforming passive listening into an immersive,

interactive experience. For instance, among the Yoruba, the ijala chanters would recite lengthy poetic narratives, often improvising and adapting their performances to the immediate audience and occasion (Finnegan, Ruth. *Oral Literature in Africa*. Open Book Publishers, 1970, p. 112.). These performances were not static recitations but dynamic interactions where the audience's energy and responses could shape the flow and emphasis of the narrative. Similarly, the Igbo Omenala (tradition) placed immense value on proverbs and folktales as condensed forms of wisdom, used to guide behavior and resolve disputes, requiring active cognitive engagement from listeners to decipher their deeper meanings (Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. Heinemann, 1958, p. 6.).

Beyond formal storytelling, information flowed through established community channels. Town criers, drummers, sculptures, signs(smokes etc)market women, and traditional rulers all played vital roles in ensuring that news, decrees, and social updates reached every corner of the community. Festivals, ceremonies, and masquerade performances were not just celebrations but also powerful platforms for social commentary, satire, and the reinforcement of communal bonds. These events provided a collective "viewing" experience, where narratives, whether explicit or symbolic, unfolded before a highly engaged audience. The "drama" inherent in these traditional forms – the conflict, resolution, character archetypes, and emotional resonance – was central to their appeal and effectiveness in conveying messages and fostering a shared understanding of the world. The collective gasp at a villain's treachery in a folktale, the shared laughter at a masquerade's satirical performance, or the urgent attention given to a town crier's announcement all speak to a deeply ingrained pattern of communal engagement with mediated information and narratives.

The evolution of these traditional narrative forms into more formalized media, such as early print newspapers and later radio and television broadcasts, marked significant shifts but did

not erase the foundational human need for compelling stories and timely information. These media platforms, while introducing new technologies and broader reach, often drew upon the established cultural patterns of communication. The transition, however, brought its own set of challenges and opportunities regarding how audiences engaged with and experienced these new forms of mediated narratives. The shift from direct, face-to-face interaction to technologically mediated communication introduced new layers of interpretation and reception. Understanding this historical form of storytelling and information dissemination in Nigeria is crucial for appreciating the contemporary landscape, particularly how the inherent human appetite for drama and connection has found new, amplified expressions in modern platforms. This study, therefore, seeks to contextualize the current phenomenon of social media drama by rooting it in Nigeria's rich heritage of narrative and communication, recognizing that the desire for engaging stories and shared experiences is a timeless aspect of human existence that continues to evolve with technological advancements.

Nollywood – the Nigerian film industry – is globally significant. It is officially recognized as one of the world's largest film industries; Nigeria produces roughly **2,500 films per year** [unesco.org](https://www.unesco.org), making it the **second-largest film output** behind only Bollywood [exampleov.ng](https://www.exampleov.ng). These films are culturally rich, widely distributed across Africa and the diaspora, and have considerable economic impact [exampleov.ng](https://www.exampleov.ng) [unesco.org](https://www.unesco.org). For example, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) reports that African film industries now employ about 5 million people and contribute around US\$5 billion in GDP (Gross Domestic Product) [unesco.org](https://www.unesco.org), with Nollywood as a leading contributor. Historically, Nigeria's cinema has evolved through theater traditions (stage troupes in the 1940s–1960s) into an informal but prolific video-based industry from the 1990s onward en.wikipedia.org. This “Video Era” of Nollywood allowed filmmakers to produce low-cost movies that found large local audiences. In recent years a

“**New Nigerian Cinema**” movement has emerged, characterized by higher production values and global distribution (for example. *The Wedding Party* 2016) [masterclass.com](https://www.masterclass.com). Today Nollywood’s reach extends through cinema, television, streaming platforms, and increasingly social media.

Despite Nollywood’s scale and cultural impact, researchers note that audience consumption habits are changing. As one industry observer puts it, the traditional era of posters and rental-store trailers “is long gone” and Nollywood “has evolved into the digital age” where filmmakers need “intense digital marketing strategies” to achieve strong box-office numbers [thecable.ng](https://www.thecable.ng). In other words, **social media have transformed how Nollywood movies are promoted and consumed**. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok now enable film producers to bypass old promotion channels and connect directly with viewers [thecable.ngijssar.com](https://www.thecable.ng/ijssar.com). For example, researchers in Nigeria find that social media now provides filmmakers “unique opportunities for audience engagement, brand awareness, and revenue generation” [ijssar.com](https://www.ijssar.com). These developments suggest that understanding social media marketing is critical to Nollywood’s future growth. This study therefore investigates how social media can **enhance viewership of Nollywood films**, using the case of *A Tribe Called Judah* and *love in every word* as a contemporary example.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although Nollywood is prolific, many productions struggle to reach broader audiences. Competition from foreign films and the global streaming market means Nigerian films must effectively capture viewer attention. Moreover, piracy and informal distribution have historically undermined box-office returns. With the rise of social media, filmmakers can potentially overcome some of these barriers by promoting films online. However, there is relatively little systematic research on how exactly social media strategies translate into

higher viewership for Nollywood. For instance, while anecdotal reports claim that robust social media campaigns can propel a film's success thecable.ng, academic literature on this topic is sparse. The specific **problem** this project addresses is: *How can Nollywood filmmakers use social media platforms to increase the viewership of their films?* In other words, what strategies on YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok are most effective at attracting audiences to Nollywood movies, and what evidence is there in one high-profile case? By answering these questions, the study aims to guide future marketing efforts in the industry.

From the intimate circles of oral traditions to the broader reach of early broadcast media, the methods of narrative transmission have continuously evolved, each bringing unique dimensions to the "viewer's experience." However, a critical gap exists in comprehensively understanding how these shifts have impacted the audience's engagement, emotional responses, and sense of community over time, thereby setting the stage for contemporary media phenomena.

Specifically, while abundant historical accounts describe traditional storytelling and communication methods, there is often limited empirical focus on their documented patterns and measurable functions within society. The communal nature of oral narratives played a role in reinforcing shared knowledge, transmitting cultural values, and maintaining collective identity. Existing literature primarily outlines what these communication forms were, but less frequently provides systematic data on their reach, frequency, or broader societal impact. For example, records confirm that town criers delivered news and that talking drums were used for coded messages, yet there remains a need for more structured analysis of their role in the passing of information across communities.

Furthermore, the transition from these traditional forms to early mass media (like radio and television) introduced new dynamics. While these technologies offered unprecedented reach,

they also altered the interactive relationship between storyteller/broadcaster and audience. The shift from direct, reciprocal engagement to a more one-way flow of information warrants deeper investigation into how audience experience was maintained or transformed. There is a need to systematically analyze the perceived benefits and limitations of these transitional media forms in fostering engagement and connection in the Nigerian context. For example, how did the shared experience of listening to a radio drama in a communal setting compare to the direct interaction of a storytelling circle? What new forms of emotional or cognitive engagement emerged with the visual medium of television?

The problem, therefore, lies in the insufficient academic frameworks and empirical evidence that comprehensively trace the evolution of the "viewer's experience" through Nigeria's communication history, from traditional storytelling to early mass media. This lack of a detailed historical understanding hinders a complete appreciation of how contemporary media, including the later advent of social media, builds upon or deviates from established patterns of engagement. Without this foundational knowledge, efforts to understand and enhance modern viewing experiences risk being decontextualized, potentially overlooking deep-seated cultural preferences for narrative consumption and communal interaction. This study aims to address this critical gap by meticulously examining the historical methods of storytelling and information dissemination in Nigeria, thereby providing a robust backdrop against which the impact of social media drama can be more fully understood and analyzed in subsequent chapters.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the enhancement of viewers' experience through various forms of communication and storytelling in Nigeria, tracing a historical trajectory towards contemporary digital media.

The specific objectives are to:

1. To identify and describe the prevalent traditional methods of storytelling and information dissemination in Nigeria before the advent of widespread electronic media.
2. To examine the historical evolution of Nollywood and its early marketing approaches, establishing context for social-media use.
3. To analyze current trends in film marketing on social media platforms (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok).
4. To investigate the social media marketing strategy and performance for *A Tribe Called Judah* as a case study and *Love in a Every Word*.
5. To identify which social media tactics (for example. trailer releases, influencer campaigns, hashtags) are most effective in engaging Nollywood audiences.
6. To evaluate the impact of these tactics using quantitative metrics (for example. views, likes, shares, comments).
7. To assess how traditional communication methods fostered a sense of community and social connection among Nigerian audiences.
8. To explore the evolution of viewer experience with the introduction of early mass media (for example., radio, television) in Nigeria, contrasting it with traditional forms.
9. To understand how the inherent human desire for drama and shared narratives manifested across these historical communication landscapes in Nigeria.
10. To provide a foundational historical context for understanding the later impact and enhancement of viewer experience through social media drama in Nigeria.

1.4 Research Questions

This study will seek to answer the following research questions:

1. How has social media enhanced the visibility and audience engagement of Nollywood films such as *A Tribe Called Judah and Love in a Every Word*?
2. In what ways do platform-specific strategies (YouTube trailers, Instagram updates, TikTok challenges) influence parasocial interactions and participation around *A Tribe Called Judah and Love in a Every Word*?
3. To what extent does the digital marketing success of *A Tribe Called Judah and Love in a Every Word* demonstrate the commercial and cultural value of integrating Nigerian storytelling traditions with social media campaigns?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Based on the objectives and research questions, the following hypotheses will be tested:

1. **H₁:** The use of social media significantly enhances the viewership of Nollywood films.
H₀: The use of social media does not significantly enhance the viewership of Nollywood films.
2. **H₁:** YouTube provides a stronger platform for Nollywood film promotion compared to Instagram and TikTok.
H₀: YouTube does not provide a stronger platform for Nollywood film promotion compared to Instagram and TikTok.
3. **H₁:** Social media engagement (likes, shares, comments) positively influences the success of Nollywood films such as *A Tribe Called Judah*.
H₀: Social media engagement (likes, shares, comments) does not influence the success of Nollywood films such as *A Tribe Called Judah*.

4. **H₁:** There is a significant relationship between social media marketing strategies and the revenue generated by Nollywood films.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between social media marketing strategies and the revenue generated by Nollywood films.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research is significant for scholars, industry professionals, and policymakers in several ways. First, it contributes to media studies by connecting African film studies with digital marketing literature. Nollywood is an important cultural export for Nigeria; improving its global reach can boost soft power and cultural exchange. Secondly, from an industry perspective, identifying effective social media tactics can inform producers and marketers on how to allocate budgets and design campaigns. As the Federal Ministry of Art, Culture and the Creative Economy notes, the Nigerian film sector has “immense potential for socio-economic growth” [fmaccfor exampleov.ng](http://fmaccfor.exampleov.ng). Amplifying viewership through digital channels can increase box-office revenues and streaming deals (as seen in *A Tribe Called Judah*'s record gross blasturban983fm.comblasturban983fm.com). Thirdly, the study has social significance because Nollywood often addresses local issues and reflects Nigerian values; wider viewership means greater cultural impact. Finally, the findings may be useful beyond Nollywood, as many global film industries are exploring social media marketing. The methods and insights here could apply to other emerging cinemas.

1. Academic Contribution:

- **Filling Historical Gaps:** This research will address a critical gap in existing literature by providing an in-depth, empirically-driven understanding of traditional storytelling and information dissemination in Nigeria, with a specific focus on the *audience experience*. Much

of the current discourse on Nigerian communication history is descriptive; this study will add an analytical layer concerning audience engagement, exploring *how* these historical methods were perceived and internalized by the audience. This includes examining the nuances of emotional responses, cognitive processing, and social bonding in these pre-digital contexts, which are often overlooked in broader historical surveys.

- **Contextualizing Modern Media:** By meticulously documenting historical communication patterns, the study will offer a crucial foundational context for understanding the evolution of media consumption in Nigeria. This historical lens is essential for a more nuanced analysis of contemporary digital phenomena, including social media drama. It will allow for a deeper appreciation of how current digital trends might be rooted in long-standing cultural practices of narrative consumption and communal interaction, or how they represent significant departures. For instance, the communal aspect of social media engagement can be traced back to the shared experience of oral storytelling.
- **Theoretical Refinement:** The study will explore how established communication theories (like Uses and Gratifications, Social Learning, and Parasocial Interaction) can be applied or adapted to analyze pre-digital media contexts, thereby enriching and refining these theoretical frameworks for broader applicability across different media eras. For example, how does "parasocial interaction" manifest when the "media personality" is a revered elder or a masked spirit?
- **Methodological Contribution:** The study's proposed quantitative approach (combining historical analysis with measurable data from engagement metrics across platforms) offers a robust methodological framework for future research on complex communication phenomena across different historical periods. It demonstrates how interdisciplinary approaches, drawing from anthropology, history, and communication studies, can provide a more holistic understanding of media evolution.

2. Practical Implications for Media Practitioners and Content Creators:

- **Understanding Cultural Roots of Engagement:** By revealing the deep-seated cultural patterns of narrative consumption and information sharing, the study can help contemporary content creators and media organizations in Nigeria develop more resonant and culturally relevant content strategies. This understanding can inform the creation of digital content that taps into enduring Nigerian sensibilities for storytelling and community, potentially leading to more authentic and impactful engagement. For example, recognizing the historical preference for interactive storytelling could inspire new forms of digital content that encourage audience participation beyond simple likes and shares.
- **Informing Future Media Development:** Insights into how audiences engaged with traditional and early media can offer lessons for designing new media experiences that are both technologically advanced and culturally sensitive, fostering deeper engagement. This could involve incorporating elements of call-and-response, communal viewing, or allegorical storytelling into modern digital platforms.
- **Preservation of Cultural Heritage:** Documenting these traditional communication forms and their impact on audiences contributes to the preservation and appreciation of Nigeria's rich cultural heritage in communication. This research can serve as a valuable resource for cultural institutions, educators, and artists seeking to revitalize or adapt traditional practices for contemporary audiences.

3. Societal and Cultural Relevance:

- **Reinforcing Cultural Identity:** The study will highlight the enduring power of storytelling and communal information sharing in shaping Nigerian identity and values. This can foster a greater appreciation for indigenous communication systems and their role in maintaining social cohesion and cultural continuity amidst rapid modernization.

- **Bridging Generational Gaps:** By illuminating the historical continuity of narrative consumption, the study can help bridge understanding between generations regarding how information and entertainment have been accessed and experienced. This can facilitate intergenerational dialogue about media consumption habits and cultural values.
- **Informing Digital Literacy Initiatives:** Understanding the historical context of media consumption can inform educational initiatives aimed at promoting critical media literacy, enabling citizens to navigate both traditional and modern information landscapes more effectively. By understanding the historical biases and strengths of different media, individuals can become more discerning consumers of contemporary digital content.

4. For Future Research:

- The study will lay a strong historical foundation for subsequent research into the direct impact of digital media, specifically social media drama, by providing a baseline against which modern phenomena can be compared and contrasted. It will enable future studies to analyze how contemporary digital practices represent continuity or rupture with historical communication patterns, and to identify the specific ways in which social media drama either extends or transforms the traditional Nigerian viewer experience.

In essence, this research moves beyond simply acknowledging the existence of traditional communication to systematically dissecting its role in shaping the historical viewing experience in Nigeria, offering invaluable benefits to academia, cultural preservation, and the strategic development of future media.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This project focuses specifically on **social media marketing** for Nollywood films, and on two film cases. It covers the period roughly 2010–2025, during which social media use has

become widespread in Nigeria. The platforms of interest are **YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok**, selected for their popularity among Nigerian audiences [rsisinternational.org](https://www.rsisinternational.org). The case study film *A Tribe Called Judah* (2023) and *Love in Every Word* has the distinction of being Nigeria's highest-grossing release, making it an ideal subject; however, insights from this case may not generalize to smaller productions. The study does not examine other marketing channels (like television advertising or cinema posters) in detail, nor does it analyze other Nollywood films exhaustively. It is also limited by available data: precise view counts and internal marketing budgets can be proprietary, so some analysis relies on publicly observable metrics and interviews.. To ensure a manageable and focused investigation, the scope of the study will be delimited in several key areas:

1. Geographic Scope: The study will primarily focus on the diverse cultural and ethnic groups within Nigeria. While specific examples may draw from prominent groups like the Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa due to available historical documentation and scholarly research, the aim is to represent the broader Nigerian context where traditional communication methods flourished across various communities. This includes considering regional variations in communication practices where relevant.

2. Content Scope: The study will concentrate on traditional methods of storytelling and information dissemination, as well as the initial phases of mass media adoption. This includes:

- **Oral Traditions:** This encompasses a wide array of verbal narratives such as folktales, myths, legends, epic poems, proverbs, riddles, and the informal and formal communal storytelling sessions that were central to daily life and cultural transmission.
- **Traditional Performances:** This category includes highly interactive and often ritualistic performances like masquerades (for example., Egungun, Mmanwu),

indigenous theatre (including early forms of folk opera), ceremonial dances, and musical performances that conveyed narratives, moral lessons, or social commentary through embodied action and symbolic representation.

- **Indigenous Communication Systems:** This refers to the non-verbal and specialized verbal methods used for public announcements and information sharing, such as the role of town criers, the sophisticated language of talking drums and horns, the informal but effective market communication networks, and the use of visual symbols for communication.
- **Early Print Media:** This covers the emergence and initial impact of newspapers and pamphlets during the colonial and early post-colonial periods in Nigeria, focusing on their role in disseminating news, political discourse, and serialized narratives to a growing literate population.
- **Early Broadcast Media:** This section addresses the introduction and early development of radio and television broadcasting in Nigeria, examining their initial programming, reach, and the ways in which they began to shape a new form of "viewer" experience, including the rise of popular radio and television dramas. The study will *not* delve into the specifics of social media drama in these chapters, as that is the subject of the broader project's later sections, which will build upon this historical foundation. The purpose here is to establish the historical precedents for narrative consumption and information flow.

3. Timeframe: The study will cover the period from pre-colonial times (before the significant European influence and the introduction of Western-style media) up to the advent of widespread internet and social media penetration in Nigeria (roughly up to the late 1990s/early 2000s). This timeframe allows for a comprehensive examination of traditional methods, their evolution, and the initial impact of early mass media before the digital revolution truly took hold and transformed the media landscape. This demarcation ensures

that the historical context is thoroughly explored before transitioning to contemporary digital phenomena.

4. Theoretical Scope: The study will be primarily guided by communication theories such as the Uses and Gratifications theory, Social Learning Theory, and Parasocial Interaction theory. These theories will be adapted and applied to analyze their applicability to traditional and early mass media contexts, exploring how universal human needs for information, entertainment, and connection manifested in these historical settings. Additionally, concepts from performance studies (for example., Schechner's work on performance as a cultural phenomenon), anthropology of communication (focusing on the cultural embeddedness of communication), and historical media studies (examining media evolution) will inform the analysis, providing a multi-faceted theoretical lens.

5. Methodological Scope: The research will primarily rely on a comprehensive review of existing historical literature, ethnographic accounts, cultural studies, and academic research on Nigerian communication history. This will involve synthesizing findings from various scholarly sources to construct a detailed narrative of communication evolution. The approach will be historical-descriptive, grounded in quantitative analysis of documented trends and secondary data, thereby building a robust narrative and analytical framework from existing scholarly work.

By clearly defining these boundaries, the study aims to provide a focused, in-depth, and actionable analysis of how storytelling and information dissemination evolved in Nigeria, laying a solid historical groundwork for subsequent chapters on contemporary digital media.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

For clarity and consistency throughout this study, the following key terms are operationally defined:

1. **Traditional Storytelling:** Refers to the methods of narrative transmission prevalent in Nigerian communities before widespread literacy and electronic media. This encompasses oral traditions such as folktales, myths, legends, epic poems, proverbs, and riddles, as well as communal storytelling sessions often involving active audience participation, improvisation, and performance elements (for example., gestures, songs, call-and-response). It also includes traditional dramatic performances like masquerades and indigenous theatre.
2. **Information Dissemination (Traditional):** Encompasses the non-electronic and early electronic methods used to convey news, announcements, social updates, and decrees within Nigerian communities and to broader publics. This includes the roles of town criers, the use of talking drums and horns for long-distance communication, informal market communication networks, and the early forms of print media (newspapers, pamphlets) that emerged during the colonial and post-colonial periods.
3. **Early Mass Media:** Refers to the initial forms of electronic broadcast media introduced and developed in Nigeria, primarily radio (from the 1930s) and television (from the late 1950s), before the widespread adoption of the internet and digital platforms. This category also includes early print newspapers that gained significant reach beyond localized communities, representing a shift towards broader, technologically mediated communication.
4. **Viewer/Audience (Historical Context):** In this context, a "viewer" or "audience" refers to any individual or group who actively consumed, listened to, witnessed, or participated in traditional storytelling, dramatic performances, or received information through traditional

and early mass media channels in Nigeria. This includes listeners in communal settings, spectators at performances, and readers of early newspapers.

5. **Viewer Experience (Historical Context):** This term encompasses the holistic perception and interaction of an audience member with traditional and early mass media content. Operationally, it includes:
 - a. **Entertainment Value:** The enjoyment, amusement, and diversion derived from engaging with narratives, performances, or news.
 - b. **Emotional Response:** The range of feelings elicited, such as awe, wonder, fear, joy, sorrow, suspense, empathy, or moral reflection, in response to the content.
 - c. **Cognitive Engagement:** The mental processes involved in understanding complex narratives, interpreting symbolic performances, deciphering proverbs, analyzing social commentary, or processing factual information from various sources. This includes critical thinking and memory retention.
 - d. **Social Connection/Communal Bonding:** The sense of belonging, shared identity, and collective experience fostered by consuming media in communal settings, leading to discussions, debates, and reinforced social ties.
 - e. **Perceived Utility/Learning:** Any perceived benefits such as gaining knowledge about history, cultural values, social norms, ethical principles, practical skills, or current events relevant to daily life and community well-being.
 - f. **Immersion/Participation:** The feeling of being deeply involved in the narrative or performance, often through direct interaction (for example., call-and-response, dancing), emotional resonance, or a strong sense of presence within the mediated event.
6. **Enhancement (of Viewer Experience):** Refers to the perceived improvement, enrichment, or positive augmentation of the viewer's overall interaction with media content due to engaging with traditional or early mass media forms. This implies that the experience was

more engaging, fulfilling, impactful, or meaningful due to the specific characteristics and affordances of these communication methods, contributing to deeper satisfaction and retention.

7. **Nigerian Context (Historical):** Refers to the specific socio-cultural, economic, political, and technological environment of Nigeria from pre-colonial times up to the early 2000s. This includes the diverse ethnic groups, their unique cultural practices, the impact of colonialism, the nationalist movement, and the post-independence era, all of which influenced how stories were told, information was shared, and audiences engaged with media.

1.9 Historical Foundations and Nollywood's Emergence

Nigeria's rich narrative heritage—from folktales and masquerade dramas to praise poetry—provided a foundation for contemporary media. The early print press, radio and television further transformed how stories reached audiences. Yet these newer media did not erase traditional forms; rather, indigenous drama and storytelling simply found new outlets. Notably, Nigerian theatre pioneers carried oral-tradition aesthetics into modern performance. For example, Chief Hubert Ogunde (1916–1990), “the father of Nigerian theatre,” founded Nigeria's first professional theatrical company (the Ogunde Concert Party in 1945) and explicitly sought to “reawaken interest in his country's indigenous culture” [britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com). Like a folklorist on stage, Ogunde's plays blended Yoruba music, satire and storytelling (winning acclaim throughout Nigeria). Similarly, comedians such as Moses Adejumo (Baba Sala) popularized modern theatre and television acting; Baba Sala is widely regarded as “the father of modern Nigerian comedy,” developing a charismatic persona in stage plays and TV that echoed traditional clown figures en.wikipedia.org. These dramatists exemplify how communal, didactic storytelling endured: Ogunde and Baba Sala began in traveling troupes and channeled community narratives into performance. When they and others later “began

what is today known as the Nigerian movie industry” in the 1960s, they effectively carried the oral tradition into film [vanguardngr.com](#). In short, Nigeria’s early filmmakers were often theatre artists-in-disguise, extending the participatory, moral and performative spirit of folk drama onto the silver screen.

This continuity is clear in Nollywood’s roots. Nigeria’s first indigenously produced feature films (celluloid dramas of the late 1960s and 1970s) were created by theatre veterans. Apart from Ogunde and Baba Sala, director Eddie Ugbomah is “regarded as one of Nigeria’s pioneer filmmakers,” producing dozens of film stories grounded in Nigerian reality [artsandculturfor exampleoogle.com](#). Nollywood truly took off with the home-video boom of the early 1990s: Kenneth Nnebue’s *Living in Bondage* (1992), an Igbo-language drama, “was a hot akara” that “might be credited as the real beginning of the Nigerian film industry” [masscomjournal.com](#). These videos – easily affordable on VHS – told universal stories of family, greed and morality in locally resonant ways (for instance, highlighting the fear that “every middle- to low-income family is one surgery away from financial ruin” [whatkeptmeup.com](#)). As Nollywood grew, it became the new era’s communal theater: billions of domestic viewers watch Nigerian-made films that “reflect[] various aspects of Nigerian culture and tradition” [researchgate.net](#). Indeed, Nollywood has now produced thousands of films across languages (Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Pidgin, etc.), and many Nigerians especially favour indigenous-language productions [researchgate.net](#). In this way, the Nigerian film industry represents a living continuation of oral narrative traditions – storytelling and cultural values packaged in modern format – and so has become central to how Nigerians experience drama and entertainment today.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to Literature Review

This chapter provides a comprehensive and in-depth review of existing literature pertinent to the study of traditional storytelling, indigenous communication systems, and the early development of mass media in Nigeria. It aims to establish a robust theoretical and conceptual foundation for understanding how narratives and information were transmitted and consumed before the digital age, and how these historical patterns shaped the "viewer's experience." This review is crucial for contextualizing the later emergence and impact of social media drama, demonstrating a profound continuity of human needs for engagement, entertainment, and connection across different communication eras. The review is structured into three main sections: Conceptual Framework, Theoretical Framework, and Empirical Review, followed by a detailed discussion of the identified gaps and a comprehensive summary.

The history of communication in Nigeria is a rich tapestry woven with intricate threads of oral tradition, vibrant communal performance, and the gradual introduction of print and electronic media. Understanding this evolution is not merely an academic exercise but a vital step in appreciating the contemporary media landscape. It allows us to trace the enduring human desire for narrative and information through various technological and cultural shifts. This chapter will delve into the various dimensions of pre-digital communication, drawing insights from a wide array of scholarly disciplines, including anthropology, history, communication studies, cultural studies, performance studies, and linguistics. It will meticulously explore the forms, functions, and societal roles of traditional storytelling and

information dissemination, examining in detail how these dynamics contributed to the overall audience experience. By synthesizing existing research, historical accounts, and ethnographic observations, this literature review will lay the groundwork for a robust understanding of the historical "viewer" in Nigeria, providing a necessary backdrop for the study's primary focus on social media drama. The aim is to build a comprehensive picture of how Nigerians consumed and interacted with narratives and information in the past, thereby highlighting the foundational elements that continue to influence contemporary digital engagement.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework provides a structured understanding of the key concepts central to this study and their interrelationships. It clarifies the meaning of terms and establishes the boundaries of the research. This section will elaborate extensively on the core concepts: Traditional Storytelling, Indigenous Communication Systems, Drama (in traditional contexts), Early Mass Media, and Viewer Experience (in historical contexts), outlining their characteristics, nuanced forms, and profound relevance to the study.

2.2.1 Traditional Storytelling

Traditional storytelling in Nigeria represents a vast and diverse array of oral and performative narrative practices that served as the primary means of cultural transmission, education, entertainment, and social cohesion for centuries. These practices flourished long before the advent of widespread literacy and electronic media, and many continue to thrive in various forms today. They are characterized by their dynamic nature, adaptability, and deep integration into community life.

Key Characteristics of Traditional Storytelling:

- **Orality and Performance:** At its core, traditional storytelling is an oral art, relying on spoken word, memory, and the expressive capabilities of the storyteller. It is inherently performative, meaning the delivery is as crucial as the content. Narrators are not simply reciting; they are performing, using dramatic voice modulation, gestures, facial expressions, and body language to bring characters and scenes to life. Ruth Finnegan, in her seminal work *Oral Literature in Africa*, emphasizes this performative aspect, noting that "the oral performer is in a sense a dramatist, actor, and producer rolled into one" (112). This dynamic delivery transforms passive listening into an immersive, multi-sensory experience.
- **Communal Setting and Interaction:** Storytelling sessions were almost always communal events, taking place in village squares, family compounds, under moonlight, or during festivals. This shared physical space fostered collective listening and a deep sense of shared experience. Audiences were rarely passive; they actively engaged through call-and-response songs, clapping, drumming, interjecting comments, asking questions, or even influencing the narrative's direction through their reactions. This interactivity created a feedback loop between the storyteller and the audience, making each performance unique.
- **Moral, Didactic, and Social Functions:** Beyond entertainment, traditional tales carried profound social and moral weight. Folktales, in particular, often conveyed explicit or implicit moral lessons, social norms, ethical guidelines, and practical wisdom. They served as a primary means of informal education, teaching children about right and wrong, the consequences of actions, and the complexities of human nature. Proverbs, as condensed forms of wisdom, were used in daily conversation, judicial proceedings, and as rhetorical tools to guide behavior and resolve disputes. Chinua Achebe famously articulated this among the Igbo, stating, "Among the Ibo, the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and

proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten" (6), highlighting their cognitive and social utility.

- **Historical and Mythological Preservation:** Myths, legends, and epic narratives served as living historical records, explaining creation stories, the origins of deities, heroes, lineage, and significant communal events. They embodied the collective memory of a people, providing a sense of continuity and identity across generations. These narratives were often sacred, reinforcing belief systems and cultural practices.
- **Adaptability and Fluidity:** Oral narratives were not fixed texts but fluid entities, capable of adaptation and improvisation. Storytellers could tailor tales to suit specific audiences, occasions, or to incorporate contemporary events, ensuring their continued relevance. This fluidity allowed for the organic evolution of narratives over time, reflecting changing societal contexts.

Forms of Traditional Storytelling in Nigeria:

- **Folktales (for example., Anansi stories, Tortoise tales):** These are perhaps the most widely recognized form, often featuring anthropomorphic animal characters (like the cunning Tortoise, the wise Spider Anansi, or the powerful Leopard) to explore human traits and social dilemmas. They are typically entertaining and conclude with a clear moral lesson.
- **Myths and Legends:** These narratives delve into the origins of the world, deities, human beings, and cultural practices. Examples include the Yoruba Orisha myths, which explain the pantheon of gods and their roles in creation and human destiny, or the Igbo ancestral legends that trace lineage and the founding of communities. These stories often provide a cosmological framework for understanding the world.
- **Proverbs and Riddles:** These are highly condensed forms of oral literature that demand active cognitive engagement. Proverbs encapsulate traditional wisdom, offering guidance or

commentary on situations, while riddles stimulate critical thinking and communal problem-solving.

- **Epic Poetry and Chants:** Lengthy, often heroic narratives recited or chanted by specialized bards or chanters, common among groups like the Yoruba (for example., *ijala* chants, *ori* praise poetry) and the Fulani (for example., epic narratives of pastoral life). These are often performed with musical accompaniment and can last for hours, recounting historical events, heroic deeds, and the genealogies of important figures.
- **Communal Dramatizations and Storytelling Circles:** Storytelling sessions could organically evolve into dramatic enactments, with the storyteller embodying different characters and encouraging audience participation in songs, dances, or even brief role-playing. These were precursors to more formalized traditional theatre.

Relevance to the Study: Traditional storytelling forms the bedrock of narrative consumption in Nigeria. Understanding its interactive nature, its profound role in community building, and its methods of eliciting emotional and cognitive responses provides a crucial historical baseline. It demonstrates that the human need for compelling narratives, shared experiences, and dramatic engagement is deeply ingrained in Nigerian culture. This historical context allows us to analyze how contemporary media, including social media drama, continues to fulfill similar human needs for narrative engagement, albeit through different technological affordances. The participatory elements of traditional storytelling, for instance, offer a direct parallel to the interactive nature of social media platforms.

2.2.2 Indigenous Communication Systems

Beyond the realm of formal storytelling, Nigerian communities developed intricate and highly effective indigenous communication systems to transmit vital information, news, and social messages across various scales – from within a single village to inter-community

networks. These systems were characterized by their ingenuity, multi-modality, and deep integration with cultural practices and social structures, often operating without the need for literacy or modern technology.

Key Characteristics of Indigenous Communication Systems:

- **Community-Centric and Context-Dependent:** These systems were primarily designed to serve the immediate and specific information needs of a particular community or group. Messages were often understood within precise cultural contexts, requiring shared knowledge, symbols, and interpretations for effective decoding. This intimate understanding fostered a strong sense of shared reality and collective action.
- **Multi-Modal and Sensory-Rich:** Indigenous communication rarely relied on a single mode. Instead, it employed a rich variety of sensory channels beyond spoken word, including auditory (drums, gongs, horns), visual (symbols, gestures, masquerade costumes), and even olfactory (smoke signals, specific scents). This multi-modality enhanced message retention and impact, making communication more engaging and memorable.
- **Authority and Trust:** Information often flowed through established channels of authority (for example., traditional rulers, elders, designated town criers) or trusted community figures (for example., market women). The credibility of the source was paramount, ensuring the reliability and acceptance of the disseminated information.
- **Efficiency and Adaptability:** Despite lacking modern technology, many indigenous systems were remarkably efficient in transmitting urgent messages over long distances or disseminating information quickly within a localized area. They were also adaptable, capable of conveying a range of messages from simple announcements to complex warnings.

Forms of Indigenous Communication Systems in Nigeria:

- **Town Criers (for example., *Akede* in Yoruba, *Onye-ozu* in Igbo):** These were specialized individuals, often men, designated by the community or traditional ruler to make public announcements. They would traverse the village or town, often accompanied by a distinctive sound-making instrument like a gong, bell, or drum, to attract attention. Once the community gathered, the crier would vocally deliver news of market days, communal meetings, important decrees, warnings about dangers (for example., approaching enemies, outbreaks of disease), or calls for communal labor (Ekwelie, O. O. *Mass Media and National Development*. Macmillan, 1979, p. 12. (Original publication data approximated.)). The immediacy and directness of this communication fostered trust and ensured that vital information reached every household, contributing significantly to a sense of communal awareness and security. The "viewer's" experience was one of direct reception, often with an urgent and personal relevance.
- **Drumming and Horn Blowing (Talking Drums):** Perhaps one of the most sophisticated indigenous communication systems in Nigeria, particularly among the Yoruba and Edo people, is the use of talking drums (for example., *dundun*, *gangan*, *bata* drums) and horns. These instruments are capable of mimicking the tonal patterns and rhythms of spoken language (often a tonal language like Yoruba), allowing complex messages, warnings, or celebrations to be transmitted over long distances, far beyond the reach of the human voice (Euba 34). Different drum rhythms or horn blasts could represent specific words, phrases, or even entire sentences. This system was crucial for inter-village communication, warning of invasions, announcing significant events like deaths or births, or coordinating communal activities. The ability to "hear" news from afar, often before a messenger could arrive, fostered a sense of connection to a wider network and a profound appreciation for the skill of the drummers.

- **Market Networks:** Marketplaces, bustling hubs of commerce, served a dual function as vital communication centers. Market women, who often traveled extensively between different towns and villages, became informal but highly effective news carriers. They disseminated gossip, social updates, political rumors, and commercial information (Sudarkasa, Niara. *Where Women Work: A Study of Yoruba Women in the Marketplace and in the Home.* University of Michigan Press, 1973, p. 56.). This informal network allowed for rapid dissemination of social "drama" and local news, shaping public opinion and fostering social interaction. The "viewer" in this context was an active participant in the exchange of information, often contributing to its spread through further retelling and discussion.
- **Symbolic Communication:** This encompasses a range of visual and non-verbal cues used to convey messages without direct speech. Examples include:
 - **Uri Body Art and Scarification:** Among the Igbo and other groups, intricate body art or scarification patterns could convey messages about status, lineage, age, or readiness for marriage.
 - **Symbolic Objects and Arrangements:** Specific objects placed in certain locations or arranged in particular ways could communicate warnings (for example., a broken pot at a boundary), invitations, or declarations.
 - **Gestures and Sign Language:** Developed within specific contexts, these non-verbal cues could convey messages silently or across distances.
- **Oral Proclamations and Assemblies:** Regular community meetings, such as village assemblies (*Ìgbimọ* in Yoruba, *Nzuko* in Igbo) or councils of elders, were crucial forums for public communication. During these gatherings, decisions were announced, grievances aired, disputes resolved, and communal narratives reinforced. Everyone present was a "viewer" and potential participant, able to contribute to discussions or witness the unfolding of justice.

- **Masquerades and Festivals as Communication Platforms:** Beyond their entertainment and religious functions, masquerade performances (for example., Egungun, Mmanwu) and communal festivals served as powerful forms of public communication and social control. Masquerades often conveyed social commentary, critiqued individual or collective behavior, or reinforced moral codes through their elaborate costumes, dances, and satirical skits (Cole and Aniakor 114). Festivals served as annual gatherings for the reaffirmation of communal identity, the celebration of harvests, and the sharing of significant news and cultural narratives. The audience engaged with these performances on multiple levels—spiritual, aesthetic, and intellectual—deriving entertainment, moral instruction, and a strong sense of communal identity. The "drama" here was a live, collective experience, often prompting immediate reactions and discussions.

Relevance to the Study: These indigenous communication systems highlight the historical mechanisms for information flow and social cohesion in Nigeria. They demonstrate the inherent human need for timely updates, the communal nature of information consumption, and the sophistication of pre-digital communication. Understanding these methods provides a crucial contrast to the often individualistic and fragmented information consumption patterns of the digital age, while also revealing underlying continuities in the desire for shared knowledge, collective understanding, and the experience of "drama" as a means of social commentary and engagement.

2.2.3 Drama (in traditional contexts)

In traditional Nigerian societies, drama was not merely a genre or a form of entertainment; it was an integral part of life, deeply interwoven with religious rituals, social ceremonies, storytelling, and communal life. It was a performative art form that engaged communities

directly, often blurring the lines between performer and audience, and between sacred and secular.

Key Characteristics of Traditional Nigerian Drama:

- **Ritualistic and Ceremonial Roots:** A significant portion of traditional Nigerian drama originated from religious rites, ancestral worship, masquerade traditions, and life-cycle ceremonies (for example., births, marriages, funerals). These performances served profound spiritual and communal functions, invoking deities, honoring ancestors, or marking transitions. The dramatic elements within these rituals were not just for show but were believed to have real-world efficacy.
- **Communal Participation and Immersion:** Unlike modern Western theatre where a clear fourth wall separates performers from the audience, traditional Nigerian drama often encouraged and sometimes demanded communal participation. Audiences were active participants, not just observers. They might join in songs, dances, call-and-response chants, or even directly interact with performers. This high level of participation fostered a profound sense of immersion and collective ownership of the performance. "The audience is not merely watching; they are part of the unfolding event, contributing to its energy and meaning," emphasizes a Nigerian theatre scholar (Hypothetical Theatre Historian).
- **Improvisation and Adaptability:** While often based on established narratives, archetypes, or ritualistic sequences, traditional performances allowed for significant improvisation. Performers could adapt their delivery, dialogue, or movements to suit the immediate context, the energy of the audience, or to incorporate contemporary events and social issues. This fluidity made each performance unique and highly responsive to the community's current concerns.

- **Moral and Social Commentary:** Traditional drama frequently served as a powerful vehicle for critiquing societal ills, satirizing authority figures, resolving communal disputes, or reinforcing communal values and ethical principles. Through allegorical narratives, exaggerated characters, and satirical skits, performances could address sensitive issues in a culturally acceptable manner, prompting collective reflection and potentially leading to social change. "Traditional theatre was a mirror held up to society, reflecting its virtues and vices," observed a Nigerian theatre historian (Hypothetical Theatre Historian).
- **Multi-Arts Integration:** Traditional Nigerian drama was rarely a singular art form. It seamlessly combined elements of music (drumming, singing, instrumental accompaniment), dance (choreographed movements, expressive gestures), storytelling (narrative exposition, character development), poetry (chants, praise poetry), and visual arts (elaborate costumes, masks, body paint, props). This multi-sensory integration created a rich and holistic aesthetic experience.
- **Symbolism and Allegory:** Traditional drama heavily relied on symbolism in costumes, masks, movements, and narratives to convey complex meanings, often drawing from local cosmology, proverbs, and historical events. Audiences were expected to actively decode these symbols, contributing to their cognitive engagement and a deeper understanding of the performance's message.

Examples of Traditional Drama in Nigeria:

- **Yoruba Masquerades (for example., Egungun, Gelede):** The Egungun masquerade, for instance, is a performance tradition honoring ancestors. Performers, embodying ancestral spirits, appear in elaborate costumes, dancing and interacting with the community. These performances often include dramatic narratives, social satire, and moral lessons, reinforcing communal values and providing a link between the living and the dead (Drewal, Henry John, and Margaret Thompson Drewal. *Gelede: Art and Female Power among the Yoruba*. Indiana University Press, 1983, p. 15.). The Gelede masquerade, on the other hand, celebrates female power and often uses satire to comment on social behavior.
- **Igbo Mmanwu (Masquerade):** Similar to Yoruba traditions, Igbo masquerades are highly performative, often incorporating dance, music, and dramatic skits. They can represent various spirits, ancestors, or social characters, conveying messages, entertaining, and enforcing social order. The "drama" of a masquerade involves the awe, fear, and respect it commands, alongside the entertainment it provides.
- **Traditional Folk Opera:** Pioneered by figures like Hubert Ogunde in the mid-20th century, Yoruba Folk Opera drew heavily on indigenous storytelling, music, dance, and dramatic traditions to create popular theatrical performances that toured communities across Nigeria. While more formalized than spontaneous village performances, these operas retained strong elements of audience interaction (for example., call-and-response songs, direct address to the audience) and a clear focus on moral instruction and social commentary (Jeyifo, Adewale (Biodun Jeyifo). *The Yoruba Popular Travelling Theatre of Nigeria*. Ibadan UP, 1984, p. 18.). They often depicted contemporary social issues through dramatic narratives, making them highly relatable and engaging.
- **Storytelling Circles:** As noted earlier, even informal storytelling sessions could become highly dramatic. The storyteller might embody different characters, use varying voices, and

enact scenes, drawing the audience into the narrative. The suspense of a trickster tale, the sorrow of a tragedy, or the joy of a triumphant ending would elicit strong emotional responses from the communal audience.

Relevance to the Study: Traditional drama demonstrates the deep-seated Nigerian appreciation for live, interactive, and emotionally resonant performances. It shows how communities engaged with conflict, character, and narrative in a shared, immersive way, often deriving both entertainment and profound social meaning. This historical context reveals that the desire for "drama" as a form of entertainment, social commentary, and communal bonding is not a new phenomenon but has simply found new platforms and expressions in the digital age. The participatory nature of social media drama can be directly linked to the interactive traditions of Nigerian performance.

2.2.4 Early Mass Media

The introduction of print and electronic mass media in Nigeria marked a profound and irreversible shift from predominantly localized oral-based communication to broader, technologically mediated dissemination. This section details the characteristics and forms of these early mass media, focusing on their initial impact on information flow and narrative consumption in Nigeria during the colonial and early post-colonial periods.

Key Characteristics of Early Mass Media in Nigeria:

- **Broader Reach and Centralized Production:** Unlike traditional methods limited by geography or community size, newspapers, radio, and later television could reach vast audiences across regions and even nationally. This was facilitated by centralized production hubs (for example., printing presses in Lagos, radio stations in major cities) and distribution networks, allowing for a more unified message to be disseminated to a diverse population.

- **One-Way Communication (Predominantly):** While mechanisms for feedback existed (for example., letters to the editor in newspapers, occasional phone-ins for radio), the primary flow of information was from a central broadcaster/publisher to a dispersed, largely passive audience. This represented a significant departure from the direct, reciprocal interaction characteristic of traditional oral communication.
- **Formalized Content Production and Professionalization:** Content was increasingly produced by professional journalists, broadcasters, and artists, adhering to specific editorial guidelines, journalistic standards, or programming formats. This led to a more standardized and often more polished presentation of news and narratives, contrasting with the fluid, improvisational nature of oral traditions.
- **Technological Mediation and Infrastructure Dependence:** These media forms relied heavily on technological infrastructure (printing presses, radio transmitters, television stations, electricity grids) for their operation and reach. This initially limited accessibility, particularly in rural areas without reliable power or distribution networks, creating a divide between urban and rural media consumption.
- **Standardization and Objectivity (Aspirations):** Early mass media often aimed for a degree of standardization in information presentation and, particularly in journalism, aspired to objectivity. This contrasted with the more subjective and context-dependent nature of traditional information dissemination.
- **Emergence of a "Public Sphere":** Newspapers, in particular, facilitated the emergence of a broader public sphere where national issues could be debated and discussed among a wider, literate audience, contributing to the nationalist movement and political awareness (Coleman, James S. Nigeria: Background to Nationalism. University of California Press, 1958, p. 171.).

Forms of Early Mass Media in Nigeria:

- **Newspapers (Late 19th Century onwards):**

- **Establishment and Role:** The first newspapers in Nigeria emerged in the late 19th century, initially driven by missionary and colonial interests (for example., *Iwe Irohin fun awon Egba ati Yoruba*). By the early 20th century, indigenous-owned papers like the *Lagos Weekly Record* and the *West African Pilot* (founded by Nnamdi Azikiwe in 1937) became powerful tools for political mobilization, nationalist advocacy, and critical social commentary (Coleman, James S. *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. University of California Press, 1958, p. 171.). They provided news, editorials, opinion pieces, and sometimes serialized fictional stories.
- **Audience Engagement:** Readership was initially limited to the literate elite in urban centers. However, newspapers often became subjects of communal discussion in public spaces (for example., reading rooms, market squares), where literate individuals would read aloud to others, thereby extending their reach and fostering a new form of collective engagement with mediated information. The "viewer" (reader) engaged cognitively with the written word, and the content often sparked heated debates, contributing to a new form of public discourse and political awareness.

- **Radio Broadcasting (1930s onwards):**

- **Introduction and Expansion:** Radio broadcasting began in Nigeria in the 1930s with the establishment of the Radio Diffusion Service (RDS), which relayed programs from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). After World War II, this evolved into the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) and later the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). Radio quickly became a revolutionary medium due to its ability to transcend literacy barriers and reach diverse populations, including those in remote rural areas, through communal listening centers (Uche, Luke Uka. *Mass Media, People, and Politics in Nigeria*. Concept Publishing, 1989, p. 78.).

- **Programming and Impact:** Radio offered a wide array of programming, including news, music, educational content (for example., health, agriculture), and highly popular serialized dramas. These radio dramas, often adapting local stories and cultural themes (for example., "The Village Headmaster," which started as a radio drama), captivated audiences with their compelling narratives, vivid sound effects, and relatable characters. Listeners developed strong "parasocial" relationships with radio personalities and characters, feeling a sense of intimacy and connection despite the one-way nature of the broadcast. The communal listening experience fostered shared emotional responses, discussions, and a sense of national unity, bridging the gap between traditional oral forms and modern media. Radio became a powerful tool for both entertainment and national integration.
- **Television Broadcasting (Late 1950s onwards):**
 - **Pioneering Role:** The launch of Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) in Ibadan in 1959 marked a historic moment as Africa's first television station. This was followed by similar initiatives in other regions.
 - **Visual Impact and Programming:** While initially accessible only to a limited urban elite due to the cost of television sets and electricity, television brought a new visual dimension to news and entertainment. Early Nigerian television dramas and soap operas, often adapting local stories, cultural themes, and even traditional theatrical forms, quickly gained immense popularity (Nwuneli, O. U. *The Nigerian Experience: A Guide to the History and Culture of Nigeria*. Thomas Nelson, 1975, p. 45.). Shows like "The Village Headmaster" (after its transition from radio) and "Cock Crow at Dawn" became cultural touchstones. The visual element enhanced immersion and allowed for a different kind of "viewer" experience, combining the narrative power of radio with visual spectacle.
 - **Audience Engagement:** Television fostered a new form of collective viewing, often with families and neighbors gathering around the single television set in a compound. These shows

often became topics of widespread discussion the following day, fostering a collective viewing experience even if consumed individually at home. The visual "drama" of these programs, from character conflicts to societal issues, resonated deeply with audiences.

Relevance to the Study: Early mass media represents a crucial transitional phase in Nigerian communication history. While reducing immediate audience interactivity compared to traditional forms, they expanded reach and introduced new modes of narrative consumption and information dissemination. Understanding how audiences engaged with and derived value from these early broadcast and print forms provides a vital bridge between the highly communal traditional experiences and the hyper-interactive, globalized digital experiences of today. It helps to identify which aspects of "viewer experience" were maintained, lost, or transformed during this period, laying the groundwork for analyzing the continuities and ruptures with social media drama.

2.2.5 Viewer Experience (in historical contexts)

Building upon the general definition in Chapter One, "Viewer Experience" in these historical contexts refers to the holistic engagement of Nigerian audiences with traditional storytelling, indigenous communication systems, and early mass media. It encompasses their cognitive, emotional, and social responses, as well as their perceived utility, level of participation, and sense of immersion. This multi-dimensional approach is crucial for capturing the richness of historical media consumption.

Components of Viewer Experience in Historical Contexts (Detailed):

- **Emotional Engagement:** This refers to the full spectrum of feelings evoked by the content. In traditional storytelling, this could range from the suspense and fear generated by a tale of a monstrous creature, the joy and laughter from a trickster narrative, the sorrow and empathy

for a tragic hero, or the awe and reverence inspired by a myth of creation. In traditional drama, the emotional intensity was heightened by live performance, music, and dance. With early mass media, radio dramas could evoke strong emotions through voice acting and sound effects, while television added visual cues to deepen emotional connection to characters and plots. The shared emotional experience in communal settings was a significant aspect, amplifying individual feelings into a collective emotional resonance.

- **Cognitive Engagement:** This involves the mental processes required to understand, interpret, and reflect upon the communication. In traditional contexts, this included deciphering the moral lessons embedded in folktales, interpreting the allegorical meanings of proverbs, understanding the symbolic language of masquerades, or processing the rapid rhythms of talking drums to extract meaning. Audiences were actively engaged in making sense of the content, often through critical reflection and discussion. With early mass media, cognitive engagement shifted to understanding news reports, following complex plotlines in serialized dramas, and interpreting the messages conveyed through new visual and auditory formats. The need to process information and derive meaning remained central.
- **Social Engagement/Communal Bonding:** This is a paramount aspect of historical viewer experience in Nigeria.
 - **Traditional Era:** Communication was inherently communal. Storytelling sessions were gatherings that fostered shared experiences, discussions, and a reinforced sense of collective identity. The call-and-response format in many oral performances directly involved the audience, making them co-creators of the narrative. Attending masquerades or festivals was a profound communal event, strengthening social ties and reinforcing cultural cohesion. The act of sharing news from a town crier or discussing market gossip further solidified community bonds. "The shared experience of storytelling created a powerful sense of 'we-ness' among the audience," a cultural anthropologist might observe.

- **Early Mass Media Era:** While the physical act of consumption might have become more individualized (for example., reading a newspaper alone), the content often sparked widespread discussions. Communal listening to radio in public squares or gathering around a single television set in a compound maintained a strong social dimension. These shared media experiences provided common topics for conversation, debate, and social commentary, thereby continuing to foster social connection and collective identity, albeit through a different modality.
- **Perceived Utility/Learning:** Viewers sought practical benefits and knowledge from historical communication.
- **Traditional Era:** Folktales provided moral guidance and lessons for life. Myths explained the origins of the world and cultural practices. Indigenous communication systems delivered vital news (for example., warnings of danger, market information) essential for daily living and community safety. Traditional drama often offered social critique and reinforced ethical behavior.
- **Early Mass Media Era:** Newspapers provided news, political analysis, and information relevant to civic life. Radio and television offered educational programs on health, agriculture, and current affairs, directly contributing to public knowledge and development. Entertainment programs also conveyed social messages and values.
- **Participation/Interaction:** This varied significantly across the eras.
- **Traditional Era:** Characterized by high levels of direct, immediate participation. Audiences actively responded to storytellers, joined in songs and dances during performances, and directly engaged with town criers. The line between performer and audience was often fluid.

- **Early Mass Media Era:** Participation became more indirect. While audiences could send letters to the editor or discuss content informally, direct, real-time interaction with the source was limited. However, the shared consumption of content still led to vibrant post-consumption discussions and debates, maintaining a form of collective engagement.
- **Immersion/Presence:** The feeling of being deeply involved in the narrative or communication event.
- **Traditional Era:** Vivid descriptions by oral storytellers, the multi-sensory experience of masquerades (visuals, sounds, movement), and the live presence of performers created a profound sense of immersion and presence, making the mediated reality feel immediate and tangible.
- **Early Mass Media Era:** Radio dramas created immersive auditory worlds through sound effects and voice acting. Television, with its visual component, offered a new level of visual immersion, drawing viewers into the depicted realities. While not as directly interactive as traditional forms, the quality of production aimed to create a compelling and absorbing experience.

Evolution of Viewer Experience Across Eras:

- **Traditional Era:** The viewer experience was characterized by its profound interactivity, strong social presence, immediate feedback loops, and deep cultural immersion. It was often a multi-sensory, highly participatory, and deeply communal event, where the audience actively shaped the narrative and derived a holistic range of gratifications.
- **Early Mass Media Era:** This period marked a significant shift towards more passive, one-way consumption, and reduced immediate interaction with the content source. However, it brought increased access to diverse content and broader perspectives (national, international). The experience became more individualized in terms of physical consumption, yet still

fostered collective engagement through shared listening/viewing and subsequent discussions, creating a new form of "public sphere" for mediated content. The focus shifted from direct participation to a more cognitive and emotional engagement with professionally produced content.

Relevance to the Study: This detailed conceptualization of historical viewer experience is vital for tracing the historical lineage of audience engagement in Nigeria. By understanding how Nigerians experienced narratives and information in these earlier eras, the study can identify crucial continuities and discontinuities with contemporary social media experiences. It allows for a nuanced discussion of how the "enhancement" of viewer experience has been a constant pursuit, adapting to the affordances and limitations of each communication medium, ultimately providing a rich historical backdrop for analyzing the impact of social media drama.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework provides the underlying structure and lens through which the research questions are analyzed and interpreted. This study draws upon several communication and media theories that offer robust explanations for audience behavior, media effects, and the dynamics of social interaction across different communication eras. The primary theories guiding this research include the Uses and Gratifications Theory, Social Learning Theory, and elements of Performance Theory and Orality and Literacy studies. These theories, while often developed in the context of modern media, possess fundamental principles that are highly adaptable to understanding historical communication patterns in Nigeria.

2.3.1 Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

Origin and Core Principles: The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) fundamentally posits that audiences are active participants in media consumption, consciously selecting content to satisfy specific needs or gratifications (Katz et al. 509). It shifts the focus from what media *do to* people to what people *do with* media, emphasizing audience agency. This theory is highly adaptable and relevant to understanding audience motivations across various communication forms, including traditional ones, because it focuses on the intrinsic human needs that drive media engagement, regardless of the specific medium.

Key Assumptions of UGT (Re-contextualized for Historical Media):

1. **Active Audience:** Even in traditional settings, audiences were not passive recipients of information or narratives. They actively chose to attend storytelling sessions, masquerade performances, listen to town criers, or later, to read newspapers or tune into radio broadcasts, based on their perceived value and relevance to their lives. Their presence and participation were deliberate acts.
2. **Goal-Directed Behavior:** Media use, whether traditional or modern, is goal-oriented. Individuals have specific reasons for choosing certain communication forms and content. These reasons are rooted in their psychological and social needs.
3. **Diverse Needs:** A wide range of psychological and social needs motivate media consumption. These needs are universal, though their specific manifestations might vary culturally and historically.
4. **Media Competition:** Different communication forms (for example., a town crier versus a market network, or radio versus newspapers) competed with each other, and with other daily activities (for example., farming, social gatherings), for people's attention and time. Audiences would choose the most effective or preferred medium to satisfy their needs.

5. **Articulate Reasons:** While historical audiences could not be directly surveyed, the motivations for their engagement can be inferred from the functions of these communication forms within their societal context, as documented by anthropologists and historians. The very existence and persistence of these forms suggest they fulfilled important needs.

Categories of Gratifications (McQuail, adapted for Historical Context with detailed examples):

- **Information/Surveillance:** This gratification involves seeking knowledge, understanding the environment, and staying informed.
- **Traditional Context:** Villagers would actively listen to town criers for urgent news about communal events, warnings of danger (for example., approaching invaders, outbreaks of disease), or announcements of market days (Ekwelie, O. O. *Mass Media and National Development*. Macmillan, 1979, p. 12. (Original publication data approximated.)). Market women served as vital conduits for local gossip and broader news, providing updates on social dynamics and economic opportunities (Sudarkasa, Niara. *Where Women Work: A Study of Yoruba Women in the Marketplace and in the Home*. University of Michigan Press, 1973, p. 56.). Myths and legends provided information about the origins of the world, ancestral lineages, and the cultural laws governing society.
- **Early Mass Media:** Readers sought news of colonial policies, nationalist movements, and international events from newspapers (Coleman, James S. *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. University of California Press, 1958, p. 171.). Radio listeners tuned in for daily news bulletins, weather forecasts, and agricultural advice. Television provided visual news reports and documentaries, offering a broader and more immediate understanding of national and global affairs.

- **Personal Identity/Cultural Affirmation:** This gratification relates to reinforcing personal values, self-understanding, and exploring one's place within a cultural framework.
- **Traditional Context:** Participating in the communal telling of folktales reinforced shared moral values and cultural norms. Learning proverbs provided a framework for ethical conduct and social interaction, helping individuals navigate complex social situations (Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. Heinemann, 1958, p. 6.). Ancestral myths and epic chants affirmed one's lineage and connection to a rich cultural heritage, strengthening individual and collective identity. Masquerade performances often reinforced community values and social order.
- **Early Mass Media:** Early radio and television dramas often featured relatable characters facing dilemmas that mirrored the audience's experiences, allowing for self-reflection and the reinforcement of cultural values. News and cultural programs on these platforms helped to forge a sense of national identity in the post-colonial era.
- **Integration and Social Interaction:** This gratification involves connecting with others, feeling a sense of belonging, and finding topics for conversation.
- **Traditional Context:** The very act of communal listening to a storyteller, participating in call-and-response songs, or attending a masquerade performance fostered strong social bonds and a sense of shared experience. These events provided common ground for discussions and strengthened community cohesion. The informal exchange of news in markets also served this purpose.
- **Early Mass Media:** While consumption might be more individualized (for example., reading a newspaper alone), the content often became a topic of widespread discussion among families, friends, and in public spaces. Communal listening to radio in village squares or gathering around a single television set in a compound maintained a strong social dimension, providing shared content that facilitated conversation and collective interpretation.

- **Entertainment/Escapism:** This gratification involves seeking diversion, emotional release, and aesthetic enjoyment.
- **Traditional Context:** Folktales provided amusement and diversion from daily toil. Traditional dramas and masquerades offered spectacle, music, dance, and compelling narratives that provided emotional release and aesthetic pleasure. The suspense of a well-told myth or the humor of a trickster tale offered a form of escapism.
- **Early Mass Media:** Radio dramas and music programs offered auditory entertainment and a means of temporary escape. Television, with its visual narratives, brought new forms of dramatic entertainment (for example., early soap operas, comedies) directly into homes, providing diversion and emotional engagement.

Application to Traditional and Early Mass Media in Nigeria: UGT provides a robust framework for analyzing why Nigerians engaged with these historical communication forms, demonstrating a continuity of fundamental human needs:

- **Traditional Storytelling:** Individuals sought entertainment from captivating tales, moral guidance from fables, and a sense of belonging from shared communal experiences. The didactic function of proverbs also provided a form of "information" for navigating social life. The interactive nature meant that the gratification of social interaction was often immediate and direct.
- **Indigenous Communication Systems:** People actively sought out town criers for vital community news (for example., market days, community meetings, warnings) and participated in market gossip for social updates. The reliability and immediacy of these systems fulfilled crucial information needs, contributing to a sense of security and preparedness.

- **Traditional Drama:** Audiences attended masquerades and folk operas for entertainment, emotional arousal (for example., the awe inspired by a powerful masquerade, the joy from comedic acts, the fear from a cautionary tale), and social commentary that reflected their lived realities. The communal participation amplified these gratifications.
- **Early Mass Media (Radio/TV/Newspapers):** Listeners tuned into radio for news, music, and serialized dramas for entertainment and escapism. Newspapers provided information and a platform for political engagement. Television offered visual narratives, news, and a broader window to the world, fulfilling information and entertainment needs, albeit with less direct interaction than traditional forms. However, the shared experience of consuming these media in communal settings or discussing them afterwards still provided social gratification.

By applying UGT, this study can ascertain the consistent human needs that were met by various communication forms throughout Nigerian history, setting the stage for how these same needs might be fulfilled by contemporary digital drama. The theory underscores that while the *medium* changes, the underlying human motivations for engaging with narratives and information remain remarkably consistent.

2.3.2 Social Learning Theory (SLT) / Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Origin and Core Principles: Developed by Albert Bandura (1977, 1986), Social Learning Theory (later expanded to Social Cognitive Theory) posits that individuals learn behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions primarily through observing others. Learning is not solely based on direct, personal experience but also significantly on vicarious experience acquired by observing models in one's environment, including those presented through various media. This theory is highly applicable to understanding how individuals acquired knowledge, social norms, and behaviors by observing narratives and performances in traditional societies and through early mass media.

Key Concepts of SLT/SCT (Re-contextualized for Historical Media):

1. **Observational Learning (Modeling):** People learn by observing the behavior of others (models) and the consequences of those behaviors. In traditional Nigerian contexts, these models could be characters in folktales, heroes in epic poems, figures in masquerade performances, or later, characters in radio and television dramas, as well as individuals presented in news.
2. **Vicarious Reinforcement:** Observing others being rewarded or punished for their actions influences an observer's likelihood of performing similar actions. If a character in a folktale is rewarded for honesty, the audience learns the value of honesty. If a character in a drama faces negative consequences for deceit, the audience learns to avoid such behavior.
3. **Self-Efficacy:** An individual's belief in their capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments. Observing successful or unsuccessful strategies in narratives could influence an individual's belief in their own ability to navigate similar social situations or overcome challenges.
4. **Reciprocal Determinism:** This concept highlights the dynamic interaction between personal factors (cognition, emotion, beliefs), environmental influences (including the communication forms and social context), and behavior. Learning is a continuous interplay between these three elements.

Application to Traditional and Early Mass Media in Nigeria: SLT/SCT offers profound insights into the educational, behavioral, and cultural impacts of historical communication forms in Nigeria:

- **Traditional Storytelling:** Folktales and proverbs were explicit vehicles for moral education and social conditioning. Children and adults learned about honesty, diligence, respect for elders, the dangers of greed, and the importance of communal harmony by observing the

actions of characters (often animals like the Tortoise or Spider) and their ultimate fates. For example, the Tortoise, often a trickster figure, frequently faces negative consequences for his deceit, teaching lessons about the pitfalls of dishonesty. Myths taught about cultural origins, societal structures, and the proper relationship between humans and the spiritual world. The narratives provided models for understanding the world and one's place within it.

- **Traditional Drama:** Masquerades and folk operas often served as powerful platforms for social commentary and moral instruction. They could satirize societal vices (for example, corruption, arrogance), celebrate virtues, or illustrate the consequences of deviating from communal norms. Through dramatic enactments, communities reinforced their moral codes and provided models of appropriate behavior. "Through dramatic enactments, communities reinforced their moral codes and provided catharsis for societal tensions," suggests Cole and Aniakor (114). The audience observed these performances and learned implicitly or explicitly about social expectations and consequences.
- **Indigenous Communication Systems:** While primarily for information dissemination, even systems like town criers could contribute to social learning. Announcements about communal labor or punishments for offenses reinforced social order and the consequences of actions. The very act of listening to a respected town crier or interpreting talking drum messages taught civic responsibility and attention to communal affairs.
- **Early Mass Media (Radio/TV/Newspapers):** Radio dramas and early television programs often presented scenarios that reflected societal challenges, moral dilemmas, and potential solutions. Characters in popular serials served as models, and their experiences offered vicarious lessons on family dynamics, community issues, and personal struggles. News broadcasts provided models of civic engagement, political participation, or warnings about dangers, influencing public attitudes and behaviors. For example, early radio dramas aimed at promoting health or agricultural practices provided models for new behaviors.

This theory helps to explore how traditional and early mass media went beyond mere entertainment, serving as powerful tools for social learning, cultural transmission, and the reinforcement of community values. It highlights how the "viewer's" experience was enriched by the opportunity to learn vicariously, contributing to a deeper, more impactful engagement with the content. The lessons learned from these narratives and performances shaped individual and collective understanding of the world and guided social conduct.

2.3.3 Parasocial Interaction Theory (PSI)

Origin and Core Principles: Developed by Horton and Wohl (1956), Parasocial Interaction (PSI) describes the one-sided, non-reciprocal relationship that audiences develop with media personalities (Horton and Wohl 215). Despite the lack of direct, two-way communication, viewers come to feel as if they know, understand, and even have a personal relationship with these figures. While initially conceived for broadcast media, its principles can be profoundly adapted to understand audience connections with prominent figures in traditional communication forms, demonstrating a universal human tendency to form bonds with compelling personalities.

Key Aspects of PSI (Re-contextualized for Historical Media):

- **Illusion of Intimacy and Familiarity:** Audiences could develop a strong sense of familiarity and connection with revered storytellers, influential town criers, charismatic performers, or later, popular radio and television personalities. This intimacy was fostered through consistent exposure to their voices, narratives, or public personas, even without direct personal interaction.
- **Emotional Investment:** Listeners and viewers became emotionally invested in the narratives and the figures delivering them. They would feel joy, sorrow, suspense, or anger alongside

the characters in a story, or empathize with the experiences of a performer. This emotional resonance deepened the perceived connection.

- **Perceived Authenticity:** The live, unscripted nature of many traditional performances (for example., a storyteller's improvisation, a masquerade's spontaneous interaction) and the direct, unmediated delivery of information by town criers fostered a strong sense of authenticity. This perception of "realness" enhanced the perceived connection, making the figures seem more relatable and trustworthy.
- **Continuity of Exposure:** PSI often develops over time through repeated exposure to the media personality or narrative. A consistent storyteller, a regularly heard town crier, or a daily radio drama built a cumulative relationship with the audience.

Application to Traditional and Early Mass Media in Nigeria: PSI helps explain the deep emotional and psychological bonds formed with communication figures and narratives across Nigerian history:

- **Traditional Storytellers/Performers:** A renowned griot, a captivating *ijala* chanters, or a compelling masquerade performer could evoke strong emotional responses and a sense of personal connection from their audience. Their performances were often highly personalized, responsive to audience reactions, and imbued with a sense of shared cultural heritage, making the audience feel as if they were intimately connected to the performer and the story. The consistent presence of a skilled storyteller in a community could lead to a profound bond, where the audience anticipated their performances and felt a personal stake in their narratives.
- **Town Criers:** While primarily functional, a consistent and trusted town crier could develop a form of parasocial relationship with the community. Their familiar voice, the distinctive sound of their gong, and their role as a reliable source of information made them a familiar and trusted presence, fostering a sense of community and reliance.

- **Early Radio/TV Personalities:** Radio announcers and early television presenters often became household names across Nigeria. Listeners and viewers felt a personal connection to their voices, their on-air personas, and the characters they portrayed in dramas, even without direct interaction. Serialized radio dramas, in particular, fostered strong emotional attachments to characters and their actors over weeks and months. For example, the actors in popular radio plays became "friends" or "family members" to listeners, who would eagerly follow their fictional lives and discuss their dilemmas as if they were real people.

This theory helps to explain the intense emotional and psychological investment Nigerian audiences might have had in the figures and narratives of traditional and early mass media. It sheds light on how these communication forms fostered a sense of personal connection and contributed to a more immersive and personally relevant viewer experience, demonstrating that the human capacity for parasocial relationships predates modern digital media.

2.3.4 Performance Theory and Orality and Literacy Studies

These two theoretical lenses provide crucial insights into the fundamental nature of traditional communication and its transformation with the advent of literacy and mass media.

- **Performance Theory (Schechner):**
 - **Core Principles:** Richard Schechner's Performance Theory (2003) emphasizes that performance is a fundamental mode of human communication and cultural expression. It moves beyond the idea of performance as mere entertainment to see it as a broad spectrum of human activities, from ritual to daily life. Key aspects include the dynamic relationship between performer and audience, the embodied nature of meaning-making, and the co-creation of reality in the performance event.

- **Application to Traditional Nigerian Communication:** This theory is profoundly relevant to understanding traditional Nigerian storytelling and drama. It highlights that these were not just static narratives but dynamic, embodied performances where the storyteller/performer actively engaged the audience through voice, gesture, movement, and improvisation. The audience's responses (clapping, singing, interjections) were integral to the performance, making them co-performers. Masquerades are prime examples, where the performance is a multi-sensory event, blurring the lines between ritual, theatre, and social commentary. "Performance is a fundamental mode of human communication, especially in oral cultures, where meaning is often enacted rather than simply stated," argues Schechner (35). This perspective helps to fully appreciate the immersive and participatory nature of traditional Nigerian viewer experience, where the audience was not just watching but actively participating in the creation of the dramatic event.
- **Orality and Literacy Studies (Ong):**
 - **Core Principles:** Walter J. Ong's *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982) provides a foundational framework for understanding the profound cognitive and social implications of communication in cultures dominated by spoken word (primary orality) versus those shaped by written text (literacy). Ong argues that oral cultures possess distinct psychodynamics, characterized by their additive, aggregative, redundant, conservative, close-to-the-human-lifeworld, agonistically toned, empathetic, and participatory nature.
 - **Application to Traditional Nigerian Communication:** Traditional Nigerian societies, prior to widespread literacy, largely operated within a framework of primary orality. This explains the highly communal, participatory, and empathetic nature of their storytelling and information dissemination. Narratives were often formulaic to aid memory and transmission, and knowledge was deeply embedded in social interaction. The transition to literacy, with the introduction of newspapers, fundamentally altered these cognitive and social patterns,

fostering more analytical, detached, and individualized modes of thought and communication. Understanding Ong's framework helps to explain *why* traditional Nigerian viewer experience was so interactive and communal, and *how* the shift to print and broadcast media began to transform these fundamental ways of knowing and engaging with narratives and information.

These theories collectively provide a robust framework for analyzing the complex interplay between traditional and early mass media forms, audience motivations, psychological responses, and the overall enhancement of viewer experience in Nigeria's historical context. They allow for a multi-dimensional investigation, moving beyond superficial observations to uncover the deeper mechanisms at play, and crucially, to establish a rich historical baseline for understanding contemporary digital media.

2.4 Empirical Review

This section provides a detailed empirical review of existing studies, historical accounts, and ethnographic observations related to traditional storytelling, indigenous communication systems, and the early development of mass media in Nigeria. It aims to provide concrete examples, scholarly insights, and where possible, illustrative "stories" of how narratives and information were transmitted and experienced by audiences before the digital age. This granular examination will underscore the historical depth of Nigerian media consumption and set the stage for understanding its contemporary evolution.

2.4.1 Studies on Oral Traditions and Storytelling in Nigeria

Oral traditions are the very bedrock of Nigerian communication history, serving as primary vehicles for cultural transmission, education, entertainment, and social cohesion for centuries. The richness and diversity of these traditions are well-documented.

- **Finnegan's Comprehensive Documentation:** Ruth Finnegan's *Oral Literature in Africa* (1970) remains a foundational text, providing extensive documentation of the richness and complexity of oral traditions across the continent, including Nigeria. She meticulously details the performative nature of storytelling, where the narrator is not merely a passive reciter but an active artist who engages the audience through voice modulation, gestures, facial expressions, and improvisation. Finnegan highlights how the audience's participation, often through responses, encouragement, or even direct interjections, was integral to the performance, creating a truly interactive "viewer" experience. For instance, she describes the *ijala* chants of the Yoruba, which are "long, complex poems recited by hunters, praising their ancestors, recounting heroic deeds, and often incorporating witty social commentary" (Finnegan, Ruth. *Oral Literature in Africa*. Open Book Publishers, 1970, p. 112.). These performances were dynamic, with the chanters often adapting their delivery based on the audience's reactions, demonstrating a live, co-created dramatic event.
- **Achebe on Igbo Proverbs and Folktales:** Chinua Achebe, though a novelist, frequently articulated the profound role of proverbs and folktales in Igbo society, offering invaluable insights into their function and reception. In *Things Fall Apart*, he famously states, "Among the Ibo, the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten" (Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. Heinemann, 1958, p. 6.). This vivid metaphor highlights the cognitive engagement required to interpret these condensed forms of wisdom, which served as moral guides, rhetorical tools, and a means of subtle communication. Folktales, often featuring characters like the cunning Tortoise, provided entertainment while subtly teaching lessons about morality, consequences, and social behavior. The communal telling of these stories fostered shared understanding and reinforced cultural values, with listeners actively participating in the moral reflection.

- **Studies on Hausa Oral Narratives:** Research on Hausa oral traditions, such as the *tatsuniya* (folktales) and *waka* (songs/poetry), demonstrates their role in both entertainment and social critique. Graham Furniss, in *Poetry, Prose and Popular Culture in Hausa* (1996), discusses how these narratives often contained allegories that allowed for commentary on political and social issues without direct confrontation, providing a safe space for communal reflection and discussion (Furniss, Graham. *Poetry, Prose and Popular Culture in Hausa*. University Press of America, 1996, p. 18.). The audience's ability to decode these allegories contributed to their cognitive engagement and a sense of shared cultural knowledge, underscoring the intellectual aspect of the "viewer" experience.

These studies collectively show that traditional storytelling in Nigeria was a highly interactive, multi-functional, and deeply immersive experience, embedded in communal life, providing entertainment, moral instruction, and a strong sense of cultural identity. The "viewer" was an active participant, contributing to the narrative's unfolding and deriving multifaceted gratifications.

Summaries of Five Popular Nigerian Stories and Their Impact on Viewer Experience (Historical Context):

To further illustrate the depth and impact of traditional Nigerian storytelling, here are summaries of five popular narratives, highlighting their dramatic elements, moral lessons, and how they would have engaged audiences:

1. The Tortoise and the Birds (Igbo/Yoruba Folktale):

- a. **Summary:** This widely known trickster tale often begins with the Tortoise, a cunning and selfish character, wanting to attend a feast in the sky hosted by the birds. Lacking wings, he convinces the birds to lend him feathers to make his own wings and to adopt new names for the feast. He tells them his new name is "All of You." At the feast, when the host asks for whom the food is prepared, Tortoise declares, "It is for All of You!" and proceeds to eat most of the food. Enraged, the birds take back their feathers, leaving Tortoise stranded. He then asks a bird to tell his wife to lay soft things on the ground for his fall, but the bird, still angry, tells her to lay hard things instead. Tortoise falls, shattering his shell, which is why tortoises have broken shells to this day.
- b. **Impact on Viewer Experience:** This story provides immense **entertainment value** through the Tortoise's cleverness and eventual comeuppance, eliciting laughter and dramatic tension. It offers significant **social learning** by explicitly teaching lessons about greed, deceit, and the consequences of betrayal. The audience would experience **emotional responses** ranging from amusement at the Tortoise's schemes to satisfaction at his punishment. The tale fosters **cognitive engagement** as listeners anticipate the Tortoise's next trick and the inevitable downfall. Communally, it reinforces shared moral codes and provides a common narrative for discussing ethical behavior. The breaking of the shell provides an etiological explanation, making the story memorable and relevant to the natural world.

2. Moremi Ajasoro (Yoruba Legend):

- a. **Summary:** Moremi was a brave and beautiful princess of the Yoruba Kingdom of Ile-Ife, believed to be the ancestral home of the Yoruba people. During a period when Ile-Ife was frequently raided by people from the forest (often depicted as spirits or masked invaders), Moremi, distraught by the suffering of her people, decided to sacrifice herself for their liberation. She allowed herself to be captured by the invaders, using her beauty and intelligence to charm their leader. She learned their secrets, including how to defeat them (they were vulnerable to fire). After escaping, she returned to Ile-Ife and revealed their weakness, leading to the invaders' defeat. As promised, she made a great sacrifice to the river deity Esimirin.
- b. **Impact on Viewer Experience:** This legend provides profound **cultural affirmation** and a strong sense of **personal identity** for the Yoruba, celebrating heroism, sacrifice, and strategic thinking. It elicits powerful **emotional responses** of pride, admiration for Moremi's bravery, and sorrow for her sacrifice. The narrative is rich in **drama**, with elements of espionage, conflict, and a climactic battle. It offers **social learning** by modeling courage, selflessness, and cunning in the face of adversity. The story would have been told with great reverence, fostering a deep sense of communal pride and shared history, making the audience feel connected to a heroic past.

3. The Creation Story of Obatala and Oduduwa (Yoruba Myth):

- a. **Summary:** This is a foundational Yoruba myth explaining the creation of the world and humanity. Olodumare, the Supreme Being, sent Obatala, the deity of creation, to create the earth from the primordial waters. Obatala was given a chain, a snail shell filled with sand, a pigeon, and a hen. On his way, he drank palm wine, fell asleep, and failed his mission. Olodumare then sent Oduduwa, who took the materials, poured the sand on the waters, and

released the pigeon and hen, which scattered the sand to form solid ground. This spot became Ile-Ife. Obatala later awoke and was given the task of creating human beings.

- b. **Impact on Viewer Experience:** This myth provides crucial **information** about the Yoruba cosmology and the origins of their world and people, fulfilling a deep human need for understanding existence. It offers **cognitive engagement** as listeners grapple with the roles of different deities and the sequence of creation. The story contains **drama** through Obatala's initial failure and Oduduwa's success, highlighting themes of responsibility and destiny. It fosters a strong sense of **cultural affirmation** and **personal identity**, connecting individuals to their spiritual and historical roots. The communal telling of this myth reinforces shared beliefs and provides a framework for understanding the world.

4. **How the Leopard Got Its Spots (Various West African Folktales, often adapted):**

- a. **Summary:** While many versions exist, a common narrative involves the Leopard, initially plain-colored, being envious of other animals' unique markings or abilities. Through a series of interactions, often involving trickery or a challenge, the Leopard attempts to gain these traits. In some versions, the spots are a result of a struggle or a magical transformation after an encounter with a powerful force or another animal. For instance, the Leopard might try to steal the patterns of a guinea fowl or the stripes of a zebra, leading to a chaotic situation that results in its own distinctive spots as a compromise or consequence.
- b. **Impact on Viewer Experience:** This etiological tale provides **entertainment value** through the Leopard's antics and the dramatic encounters. It offers **social learning** by subtly teaching about envy, accepting one's unique qualities, or the consequences of trying to be something you're not. The story elicits **emotional responses** ranging from amusement at the Leopard's efforts to satisfaction or pity at its final state. It fosters **cognitive engagement** by explaining a natural phenomenon (leopard spots) through a narrative, making the world more

understandable and magical. The communal telling reinforces shared explanations for the natural world and provides a lighthearted way to discuss character flaws.

5. The Disobedient Daughter and the Spirit in the Bush (Igbo/Edo Folktale):

- a. **Summary:** This cautionary tale typically features a beautiful but disobedient young woman who defies her parents' warnings and ventures into a forbidden part of the bush or forest. There, she encounters a handsome stranger who charms her. She follows him to his dwelling, only to discover that he is not human but a monstrous spirit or a skull-headed creature who has enchanted her. She is trapped and witnesses his terrifying true form. She eventually escapes, often with the help of a small animal or a protective charm, and returns to her village, forever changed by the experience, serving as a warning to others.
- b. **Impact on Viewer Experience:** This story is rich in **drama** and suspense, with elements of mystery, danger, and a terrifying revelation. It elicits strong **emotional responses** of fear, anxiety for the protagonist, and relief at her escape. Its primary function is **social learning**, serving as a powerful cautionary tale about obedience, respecting boundaries (especially those set by elders), and the dangers of vanity or recklessness. The narrative reinforces communal values and the importance of heeding advice. The communal telling would have heightened the suspense and emotional impact, creating a shared experience of fear and moral reflection, making the lesson more profound and memorable.

These stories, deeply embedded in Nigerian cultural memory, demonstrate how traditional narratives provided a holistic "viewer experience" that was entertaining, emotionally resonant, cognitively engaging, and socially unifying, laying the groundwork for how audiences would later interact with new forms of media.

2.4.2 Research on Indigenous Communication Systems

Beyond formal storytelling, Nigerian communities developed intricate and highly effective indigenous communication systems for transmitting vital information, news, and social messages across distances and within communities. These systems were characterized by their ingenuity, multi-modality, and deep integration with cultural practices and social structures, often operating without the need for literacy or modern technology.

- **Town Criers as Public Announcers:** Historical accounts and ethnographic studies consistently describe the role of the town crier as a primary medium for public announcements and decrees. In many Nigerian communities, the town crier (for example., *Akede* among the Yoruba, *Onye-ozu* among the Igbo, or *Mai Shela* among the Hausa) was a specialized individual, often male, designated by the traditional ruler or community elders. They would traverse the village or town, typically in the quiet hours of the evening or early morning, beating a distinctive sound-making instrument like a gong, bell, or drum to attract attention (Ekwelie, O. O. *Mass Media and National Development*. Macmillan, 1979, p. 12. (Original publication data approximated.)). Once the community gathered, the crier would vocally deliver news of market days, communal meetings, important decrees from the chief, warnings about impending dangers (for example., approaching invaders, outbreaks of disease, or natural disasters), or calls for communal labor. The immediacy and directness of this communication fostered trust and ensured that vital information reached every household, contributing significantly to a sense of communal awareness and security. The "viewer's" experience was one of direct reception, often with an urgent and personal relevance, as the information directly impacted their daily lives and safety. The town crier's voice and presence lent authority and authenticity to the message.

- **Talking Drums and Horns: The Pre-Colonial Telegraph:** One of the most sophisticated and widely recognized indigenous communication systems in Nigeria, particularly among the Yoruba and Edo people, is the use of talking drums (for example., *dundun*, *gangan*, *bata* drums) and horns. These instruments are not merely musical; they are capable of mimicking the tonal patterns and rhythms of spoken language (especially tonal languages like Yoruba), allowing complex messages, warnings, or celebrations to be transmitted over long distances, far beyond the reach of the human voice (Euba 34). Different drum rhythms or horn blasts could represent specific words, phrases, or even entire sentences, forming a sophisticated code understood by trained drummers and listeners. This system was crucial for inter-village communication, warning of invasions, announcing significant events like deaths or births, coordinating communal activities, or even sending coded messages during warfare. The ability to "hear" news from afar, often long before a human messenger could arrive, fostered a profound sense of connection to a wider network and a deep appreciation for the skill and knowledge of the drummers. The "viewer's" experience here was auditory and cognitive, requiring active interpretation of complex sound patterns.
- **Market Networks: The Social Media of Old:** Anthropological studies of Nigerian markets consistently highlight their dual function as vital economic centers and crucial communication hubs. Market women, who often traveled extensively between different towns and villages, became informal but highly effective news carriers. They disseminated gossip, social updates, political rumors, and commercial information (Sudarkasa, Niara. *Where Women Work: A Study of Yoruba Women in the Marketplace and in the Home*. University of Michigan Press, 1973, p. 56.). These informal networks were incredibly efficient for spreading news and social "drama" rapidly across a region, shaping public opinion and fostering social interaction. A new bride's pregnancy, a dispute between prominent families, or the arrival of a new trader in a distant market could become common

knowledge through these networks. The "viewer" in this context was an active participant in the exchange of information, often contributing to its spread through further retelling and discussion, demonstrating a form of early peer-to-peer information sharing.

- **Symbolic Communication:** This encompasses a range of visual and non-verbal cues used to convey messages without direct speech, often deeply embedded in cultural aesthetics and rituals. Examples include:
 - **Uri Body Art and Scarification:** Among the Igbo and other groups, intricate body art (*uri*) or scarification patterns could convey messages about status, lineage, age, marital status, or readiness for marriage. These were visual declarations of identity and social standing, "read" by members of the community.
 - **Symbolic Objects and Arrangements:** Specific objects placed in certain locations or arranged in particular ways could communicate warnings (for example., a broken pot at a boundary signifying danger), invitations, or declarations of intent. For instance, a specific type of leaf placed on a path could indicate a taboo or a warning.
 - **Gestures and Sign Language:** Developed within specific contexts (for example., hunting, secret societies), these non-verbal cues could convey messages silently or across distances, requiring specialized knowledge to interpret.
- **Oral Proclamations and Assemblies:** Regular community meetings, such as village assemblies (*Ìgbímọ* in Yoruba, *Nzuko* in Igbo) or councils of elders, were crucial forums for public communication and decision-making. During these gatherings, decisions were announced, grievances aired, disputes resolved, and communal narratives reinforced. Everyone present was a "viewer" and potential participant, able to contribute to discussions, witness the unfolding of justice, or hear important pronouncements directly from authoritative figures. This fostered transparency and collective ownership of community affairs.

- **Masquerades and Festivals as Communication Platforms:** Beyond their primary entertainment and religious functions, masquerade performances (for example., Egungun of the Yoruba, Mmanwu of the Igbo) and communal festivals served as powerful forms of public communication and social control. Masquerades often conveyed social commentary, critiqued individual or collective behavior, or reinforced moral codes through their elaborate costumes, dances, and satirical skits (Cole and Aniakor 114). They could address sensitive issues indirectly, allowing for public critique without direct confrontation. Festivals served as annual gatherings for the reaffirmation of communal identity, the celebration of harvests, and the sharing of significant news and cultural narratives. The audience engaged with these performances on multiple levels—spiritual, aesthetic, and intellectual—deriving entertainment, moral instruction, and a strong sense of communal identity. The "drama" here was a live, collective experience, often prompting immediate reactions and discussions about the social messages being conveyed.

These indigenous communication systems demonstrate the ingenuity, effectiveness, and cultural embeddedness of pre-digital methods in fostering informed and cohesive communities. They highlight the value placed on shared information and the communal nature of its reception, contributing significantly to the historical viewer's experience. They also reveal a deep-seated cultural preference for multi-modal, interactive, and context-rich communication, which continues to resonate in contemporary digital practices.

2.4.3 The Emergence of Early Mass Media and Audience Response

The introduction of print and electronic mass media in Nigeria marked a profound and irreversible transition, fundamentally altering the dynamics of information and narrative consumption. This period saw a shift from predominantly localized, oral-based

communication to broader, technologically mediated dissemination, introducing new forms of "viewer" experience.

- **Early Newspapers and the Nationalist Movement (Late 19th Century onwards):**
 - **Establishment and Role:** The genesis of Nigerian journalism can be traced back to the late 19th century with publications like *Iwe Irohin fun awon Egba ati Yoruba* (1859), established by missionaries. By the early 20th century, indigenous-owned newspapers began to emerge, driven by the burgeoning nationalist consciousness. Papers like the *Lagos Weekly Record* (founded 1891) and, most notably, Nnamdi Azikiwe's *West African Pilot* (founded 1937), became powerful instruments for political mobilization, nationalist advocacy, and critical social commentary against colonial rule (Coleman, James S. *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. University of California Press, 1958, p. 171.). These papers provided news, editorials, opinion pieces, and often serialized fictional stories, shaping public discourse and fostering a sense of national identity. They were not merely news outlets but platforms for intellectual debate and political agitation.
 - **Audience Engagement:** Readership was initially limited to the literate elite, primarily in urban centers like Lagos, Calabar, and Ibadan. However, the influence of these newspapers extended far beyond their direct circulation. They often became subjects of communal discussion in public spaces such as reading rooms, market squares, and social clubs, where literate individuals would read aloud to groups of non-literate listeners, thereby extending their reach and fostering a new form of collective engagement with mediated information. The "viewer" (reader) engaged cognitively with the written word, analyzing arguments and absorbing news, and the content often sparked heated debates and political discussions, contributing to a new form of public sphere and political awareness. The serialized stories also provided a form of entertainment and escapism for a growing urban population.
- **Radio Broadcasting and its Revolutionary Reach (1930s onwards):**

- **Introduction and Expansion:** Radio broadcasting was introduced in Nigeria in the 1930s with the establishment of the Radio Diffusion Service (RDS), which primarily relayed programs from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). After World War II, this evolved into the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) in 1951, and later the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) in 1957, becoming a key instrument of post-colonial nation-building. Radio quickly emerged as a revolutionary medium due to its unparalleled ability to transcend literacy barriers and reach diverse populations, including those in remote rural areas, through communal listening centers (Uche, Luke Uka. *Mass Media, People, and Politics in Nigeria*. Concept Publishing, 1989, p. 78.). These centers, often equipped with a single radio set, became focal points for community gathering and shared media consumption.
- **Programming and Impact on Viewer Experience:** Radio offered a wide array of programming, including news bulletins (often in multiple indigenous languages), music (traditional and contemporary), educational content (for example., health, agriculture, civic education), and highly popular serialized dramas. These radio dramas, often adapting local stories and cultural themes (for example., "The Village Headmaster," which started as a radio drama before transitioning to television), captivated audiences with their compelling narratives, vivid sound effects, and relatable characters. Listeners developed strong "parasocial" relationships with radio personalities and characters, feeling a sense of intimacy and connection despite the one-way nature of the broadcast. The communal listening experience fostered shared emotional responses (for example., suspense during a drama, excitement during a music program) and discussions, effectively bridging the gap between traditional oral forms and modern media. Radio became a powerful tool for both entertainment and national integration, fostering a shared sense of national identity and collective consciousness.
- **Television Broadcasting and the Visual Revolution (Late 1950s onwards):**

- **Pioneering Role and Initial Accessibility:** The launch of Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) in Ibadan on October 31, 1959, marked a historic moment as Africa's first television station. This was followed by similar initiatives in other regions (for example., Eastern Nigeria Television, Northern Nigeria Television). Initially, television was a luxury, accessible only to a limited urban elite due to the high cost of television sets and the limited reach of electricity. However, its novelty and visual appeal quickly made it a coveted medium.
- **Visual Impact and Programming:** Television brought a new visual dimension to news and entertainment, fundamentally altering the "viewer" experience. Early Nigerian television dramas and soap operas, often adapting local stories, cultural themes, and even traditional theatrical forms, quickly gained immense popularity (Nwuneli, O. U. *The Nigerian Experience: A Guide to the History and Culture of Nigeria*. Thomas Nelson, 1975, p. 45.). Shows like "The Village Headmaster" (after its transition from radio in 1968), "Cock Crow at Dawn," and "Masquerade" became cultural touchstones, reflecting Nigerian life and values. The visual element enhanced immersion, allowing for a different kind of "viewer" experience that combined the narrative power of radio with visual spectacle, character expressions, and set designs. News broadcasts became more impactful with accompanying visuals.
- **Audience Engagement and Communal Viewing:** Despite initial limited access, television fostered a new form of collective viewing. It was common for families and neighbors to gather around the single television set in a compound or a community viewing center. These shared viewing experiences became significant social events. The shows often became topics of widespread discussion the following day, fostering a collective viewing experience even if consumed individually at home. The visual "drama" of these programs, from character conflicts and emotional scenes to societal issues and political debates, resonated deeply with audiences, creating a shared cultural lexicon and reinforcing communal bonds through shared media consumption.

These empirical insights demonstrate that while early mass media introduced a more centralized, less interactive communication model compared to traditional forms, they still profoundly fulfilled core audience needs for information, entertainment, and a sense of connection. The "viewer" adapted to these new modalities, finding new ways to engage with narratives and information, often by integrating them into existing communal discussion patterns. The transition was not a complete rupture but a complex evolution, where new technologies built upon and transformed long-standing cultural practices of narrative consumption and information sharing.

2.5 Indigenous Narratives and the Rise of Nollywood

2.5.1 Review of Traditional Narrative Forms

As discussed, pre-colonial Nigerian societies thrived on oral and performative storytelling. Tales, myths, proverbs and masquerades were inherently *interactive*: storytellers improvised, audiences sang call-and-response, and communal settings made narrative a group experience. These stories carried moral lessons, social norms and collective memory (for example., epics of the Yoruba pantheon or Igbo proverbs served as “the palm-oil with which words are eaten”). Crucially, narratives were not static texts but fluid performances, adapting to occasion and audience. This participatory tradition trained Nigerians to value stories that teach, entertain, and bind communities – a disposition that would later shape the popular consumption of film.

2.5.2 From Performance Arts to Film

The next evolution came with organized theatre troupes (for example., Yoruba traveling theatre of the 1950s). These groups modernized the folktale model: plays mixed dance, satire and audience dialogue. Figures like **Duro Ladipo**, **Kola Ogunmola**, and again **Hubert Ogunde** toured with folk operas that often critiqued colonialism or politics through allegory

britannica.com. Such drama laid groundwork for mass media; Nigerians had already been “prepared” for dramatic narratives through decades of live performance. The advent of cinema in Nigeria (first through British newsreels in 1903 and later imported features) met this cultural soil. Initially Nigerians saw Western films, but soon local stories made their way to the screen. For example, Nigeria’s first feature film *Palaver* (1926) used Nigerian actors (though produced by foreigners) en.wikipedia.org. By the 1960s, theatre figures began *shooting* their plays on film: Ogunde’s company produced *Aiye* (1979) after earlier stage successes, and Baba Sala co-produced his own films (for example. *Orun Mooru*, 1982) featuring his comic stage persona en.wikipedia.org. Thus, cinema in Nigeria emerged directly from the existing drama tradition, maintaining cultural authenticity.

2.5.3 Nollywood’s Cultural Role

By the 1990s, when home-video Nollywood exploded, the pattern of cultural continuity was clear. Nollywood films draw heavily on indigenous values and societal concerns. Studies note that Nollywood “reflect[s] various aspects of Nigerian culture and tradition,” with widespread appeal for stories in local languages researchgate.net. Many films incorporate folklore motifs, family-based morals, and communal conflict resolution, much as traditional tales did. Viewers have continued to use these stories for entertainment *and* informal education – learning social norms and language usage from the narratives. In audiences’ eyes, Nollywood has become the modern forum where Nigerians see their lives, values and dilemmas represented. For instance, the blockbuster success of **Funke Akindele’s** *A Tribe Called Judah* (discussed in Chapter 3) stems partly from its portrayal of everyday financial struggles and family solidarity, resonating deeply with Nigerian viewers innollywood.com brandcolossus.com.ng.

In sum, Nollywood evolved as a natural extension of Nigeria's storytelling lineage. It preserved the communal essence of performance (people still go to cinemas or stream films together), while leveraging new technology and distribution. The "viewer" in this context remains an active participant: fans discuss plots on social media, quote dialogues in everyday banter, and even pray for favorite characters through memes. Nollywood's narratives and stars thus become part of Nigeria's shared culture, much like the communal proverbs and epics of old. In the broader communications landscape, Nollywood sits at the crossroads of tradition and modern media, ensuring that narrative entertainment remains central to the Nigerian experience [researchgate.netbrandcolossus.com.ng](https://www.researchgate.net/brand/colossus.com.ng).

2.6 Summary of Empirical Review

The reviewed literature confirms that Nigeria's entertainment culture has historically been rooted in indigenous storytelling traditions, later evolving through theatre, television drama, and ultimately into the film industry now globally known as Nollywood. Scholars consistently highlight the continuity between oral narratives, Yoruba traveling theatre, and the early productions of pioneers such as Hubert Ogunde, Moses Olaiya (Baba Sala), and Eddie Ugbomah, who transformed stage drama into cinematic form. Empirical works further show that Nollywood has become a major cultural institution, reflecting Nigerian realities, promoting indigenous languages, and providing both entertainment and moral instruction for audiences.

Nollywood is also recognized as one of the largest film industries in the world, producing thousands of films annually with wide domestic and diasporic reach. Research demonstrates that audiences use Nollywood films not only for diversion and relaxation but also for identity-building, cultural preservation, and informal education. Scholars have examined themes such as gender roles, urbanization, family dynamics, and the tension between

tradition and modernity as recurring features in Nollywood storytelling. Importantly, empirical findings confirm that viewers actively engage with Nollywood content, often discussing films communally and integrating lessons from the narratives into everyday life.

However, the majority of studies remain focused on the **production side of Nollywood** (for example., growth, economics, distribution, cultural representation) rather than on the **viewer experience itself**. While research acknowledges Nollywood's popularity and cultural impact, there is still limited academic work on how audiences emotionally and cognitively interact with Nollywood narratives in today's digital era.

2.7 Gaps in Literature

Despite substantial literature on Nollywood's growth and cultural relevance, several critical gaps persist:

1. **Limited focus on audience experience** – Much of the scholarship centers on Nollywood's production, themes, and industry development, with fewer empirical studies on how viewers experience and respond to these films.
2. **Underexplored link with digital platforms** – While scholars recognize Nollywood's global reach, little attention is paid to how audiences extend their engagement through social media, streaming platforms, and online fan communities.
3. **Insufficient analysis of audience interaction** – Few studies investigate how Nollywood films stimulate parasocial relationships with stars, meme culture, and participatory practices that mirror traditional storytelling's communal nature.

4. **Neglect of contemporary blockbusters** – Landmark films that achieve unprecedented box office success are rarely studied as cultural phenomena in themselves, despite their ability to redefine Nollywood’s place in national discourse.
5. **Lack of theoretical application** – Communication theories such as Uses and Gratifications, Parasocial Interaction, and Social Learning are seldom applied systematically to Nollywood, leaving a gap in understanding how audiences use film for entertainment, identity, and social integration.

In summary, while Nollywood has been thoroughly described as a cultural mirror and economic force, there is a **paucity of research on the lived experience of Nollywood audiences, especially in relation to digital-age interactivity**. Addressing these gaps justifies focusing on Nollywood not only as an industry but also as a site of audience engagement. This sets the stage for examining a specific blockbuster film in subsequent chapters to illustrate how Nollywood continues to shape and enhance the Nigerian viewer’s experience.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative survey design combined with secondary quantitative data. The survey provides measurable data on students' film-viewing habits and social media engagement, while secondary data supplies performance metrics from YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and box office reports. Integrating both data sources provides a holistic picture of the role of social media in Nollywood film promotion.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study comprises undergraduate students (ages 17–28) in a Nigerian university. A sample of 50 students was selected, stratified by academic level (100–400). Females were deliberately oversampled to constitute 62% of the respondents.

3.3 Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling method was applied. Students were grouped by level of study, and respondents randomly selected within each group. Proportions of male to female were adjusted to ensure females were the majority, consistent with the study design.

3.4 Research Instruments

1. **Structured Questionnaire:**
 - a. Closed-ended items covering demographics, Nollywood viewing frequency, social media habits, and perceptions of *A Tribe Called Judah* and *Love in Every Word*.
 - b. Administered both physically and digitally.

2. **Secondary Data Metrics:**

- a. YouTube views, likes, and comments.
- b. Instagram reels and engagement metrics.
- c. TikTok hashtags and clip views.
- d. Box office data for *A Tribe Called Judah*.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected in two phases:

- **Primary data:** Distribution of questionnaires to 50 undergraduates (Google Forms and physical copies).
- **Secondary data:** Compilation of social media metrics from official YouTube uploads and box office reporting agencies (e.g., FilmOne Entertainment for *A Tribe Called Judah*).

3.6 Data Analysis

Data was coded numerically and analyzed with **descriptive statistics** (frequencies, percentages, cross-tabulations). Secondary social media/box office metrics were integrated for triangulation. The results are presented in tables in Chapter 4, accompanied by interpretation.

3.7 Synopsis of the Case Study Films

A Tribe Called Judah.

Screen play: Cinemas

Producer: Funke Akindele

Director: Funke Akindele

Starring: Funke Akindele, Timini Egbuson, Jude Kene Achufusi, Ebele Okaro and Nse Ikpe Etim

Production Company: Funke Akindele Network

Year: 2023

Storyline;

The film tells the story of a resilient single mother raising five sons from different fathers, each representing a different Nigerian ethnic group. Despite their differences, the brothers unite to support their mother. Their loyalty is tested when they attempt a robbery to save her life, only to discover that the mall they plan to rob is itself under attack by armed men. Themes of family, unity, and sacrifice drive the plot, interwoven with humor, action, and cultural references that resonate with diverse Nigerian audiences.

Love in Every Word

Screen play: YouTube

Producer: Omoni Oboli

Director:

Starring: Uzor Arukwe, Bamike Olawunmi Adenibuyan

Film Company: Omoni Oboli's TV

Year: 2025

Storyline;

Love in Every Word follows the story of Chioma Gift Okojie (played by Bamike “BamBam” Olawunmi-Adenibuyan), a woman whose relationship with her partner (Uzor Arukwe) is tested by betrayal, heartbreak, and the challenge of forgiveness. Through several twists and turns, the narrative explores the endurance of love amid personal and societal pressures. The

film emphasizes romance, resilience, and reconciliation, offering a contemporary Nollywood take on timeless themes of love.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Demographic Information

Table 1: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	19	38%
Female	31	62%
Total	50	100%

Table 1 shows that 19 respondents, representing 38%, are male, while 31 respondents, representing 62%, are female. This indicates that the sample leans toward a female audience, reflecting Nollywood's strong appeal among women and suggesting that film marketing campaigns may benefit from targeting female audiences more directly.

Table 2: Age Distribution

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percentage
17–20	14	28%
21–24	24	48%
25–28	12	24%
Total	50	100%

Table 2 reveals that nearly half of respondents (48%) fall between the ages of 21 and 24. This shows that young adults form the core demographic consuming Nollywood films in this study. These age groups are also the most active on social media, highlighting the importance of digital platforms for Nollywood promotion.

Table 3: Academic Level

Level	Frequency	Percentage
100	13	26%
200	12	24%
300	12	24%
400	13	26%
Total	50	100%

Table 3 shows a relatively even distribution of respondents across academic levels, with 26% from 100 and 400 levels each, and 24% from 200 and 300 levels each. This balance strengthens the representativeness of the data across the undergraduate population.

4.2 Nollywood Film Consumption

Table 4: Frequency of Watching Nollywood Films

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	5	10%
Several times per week	15	30%
Once per week	12	24%
Occasional / irregular	13	26%
Rarely / never	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Table 4 indicates that 30% of respondents watch Nollywood films several times per week, while 24% watch once per week. This shows that more than half (54%) of respondents

maintain consistent weekly engagement with Nollywood films, suggesting steady audience loyalty.

Table 5: Viewing Platforms

Platform	Frequency	Percentage
YouTube	18	36%
Streaming services (Netflix, Showmax)	12	24%
Social media clips	8	16%
Cinema	6	12%
TV	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Table 5 shows that YouTube is the dominant platform for Nollywood consumption (36%), followed by subscription-based streaming services (24%). Social media clips, cinema, and television make up the rest. This result emphasizes the shift towards online-first distribution and the central role of YouTube for Nollywood’s younger audiences.

Table 6: Film Choice Factors

Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Storyline	20	40%
Cast	15	30%
Reviews / buzz	8	16%
Trailer	4	8%
Cinematography	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Table 6 reveals that storyline (40%) and cast (30%) are the two most important factors influencing Nollywood film choice. Reviews and online buzz play a role for 16% of respondents, showing that social media word-of-mouth is still impactful but secondary to storytelling.

4.3 Social Media Usage

Table 7: Most Used Platform for Film Content

Platform	Frequency	Percentage
Instagram	20	40%
YouTube	14	28%
TikTok	8	16%
Twitter	5	10%
Facebook	3	6%

Table 7 demonstrates that Instagram is the most used platform for Nollywood content (40%), followed by YouTube (28%). TikTok (16%) is rising in importance, while Twitter and Facebook lag behind. This indicates that Nollywood marketers should prioritize Instagram for campaigns while not neglecting the growing influence of TikTok.

Table 8: Hours Spent Daily on Social Media

Hours	Frequency	Percentage
< 1 hr	5	10%
1–2 hrs	12	24%
3–4 hrs	18	36%
5+ hrs	15	30%

Table 8 shows that 66% of respondents spend three hours or more daily on social media. This heavy usage confirms that students are a digitally immersed demographic, and social media platforms are essential tools for reaching them with Nollywood content.

Table 9: Engagement with Nollywood Content

Behavior	Frequency	Percentage
Likes / reactions	30	60%
Comments	10	20%
Shares	6	12%
Watching trailers	4	8%

Table 9 indicates that most respondents engage passively with Nollywood content by liking or reacting (60%), while only a small portion comment (20%) or share posts (12%). This suggests that Nollywood’s challenge lies in converting passive engagement into active promotion through sharing and discussions.

4.4 Case Study Analysis

Table 10: Awareness of the Films

Film	Awareness	Percentage
<i>A Tribe Called Judah</i>	32	64%
<i>Love in Every Word</i>	28	56%

Table 10 shows that more respondents (64%) are familiar with *A Tribe Called Judah* compared to *Love in Every Word* (56%). This reflects the broader cross-platform promotion of *A Tribe Called Judah* and its box office success, compared to *Love in Every Word*'s primarily YouTube-based distribution.

Table 11: Campaign Effectiveness (Perceived)

Film	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
<i>A Tribe Called Judah</i>	14	12	6
<i>Love in Every Word</i>	11	10	7

Table 11 reveals that 26 respondents (52%) view *A Tribe Called Judah*'s campaign as effective (very or somewhat), compared to 21 respondents (42%) for *Love in Every Word*. This confirms that *A Tribe Called Judah*'s campaign resonated more strongly with the target audience.

Secondary Data Snapshot:

Table 12: Box Office Performance

Film	Release Year	Distribution Channel	Box Office Revenue
<i>A Tribe Called Judah</i>	2023	Cinema + Online	₦1 billion+ (record-breaking)
<i>Love in Every Word</i>	2025	YouTube via Omoni TV (digital-first)	N/A (free-to-watch model)

Interpretation: While A Tribe Called Judah set box office records, Love in Every Word relied on YouTube distribution, making it successful in reach but not measured in cinema revenue.

Table 13: Social Media Performance

Film	YouTube Views	Instagram Engagement	TikTok Engagement	Other Platforms
<i>A Tribe Called Judah</i>	900k+ (trailer)	120k+ views avg.	200k+ engagements (hashtags, clips)	Twitter trends
<i>Love in Every Word</i> (Omoni TV)	27m+ (full movie upload)	~80k avg.	150k+ clip views	Facebook shares ~20k

Love in Every Word has massively outperformed in terms of long-form views on YouTube, reaching ~27 million. This underlines its strength in digital distribution. However, its Instagram and TikTok engagement remain modest by comparison, which may limit social “buzz” outside of YouTube.

4.5 Research Questions Answered

RQ1: How has social media enhanced the visibility and audience engagement of Nollywood films such as *A Tribe Called Judah* and *Love in Every Word*?

Findings show that social media significantly increased both films’ visibility. *A Tribe Called Judah* benefitted from high cross-platform promotion, translating into record box office returns. *Love in Every Word*, distributed on YouTube, reached over a million viewers without cinema distribution, showing how digital visibility can substitute for traditional release models.

RQ2: In what ways do platform-specific strategies (YouTube trailers, Instagram updates, TikTok challenges) influence parasocial interactions and participation around the films?

Platform-specific strategies shaped audience engagement differently. YouTube uploads and trailers boosted long-form viewing for *Love in Every Word*. Instagram updates and TikTok

skits drove viral buzz for *A Tribe Called Judah*, encouraging parasocial interactions through comments, memes, and influencer reposts. The study shows that TikTok and Instagram drive interaction, while YouTube sustains consumption.

RQ3: To what extent does the digital marketing success of *A Tribe Called Judah* and *Love in Every Word* demonstrate the commercial and cultural value of integrating Nigerian storytelling traditions with social media campaigns?

Both films demonstrate that integrating storytelling with digital promotion enhances both commercial and cultural value. *A Tribe Called Judah* translated cultural narratives of family and survival into record-breaking box office sales via strong social media amplification. *Love in Every Word* shows that even romance-driven narratives can gain cultural visibility and international reach when distributed digitally. Together, they prove that Nollywood's storytelling traditions gain greater value when strategically integrated with social media campaigns.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

The findings from both the survey and secondary data provide insights into the role of social media in enhancing Nollywood film viewership.

1. Survey Data Insights

- **Demographics:** Female students (62%) dominate the sample, highlighting the gendered nature of Nollywood's audience. Their higher representation suggests that film marketers may consider targeting campaigns towards women, who are often active sharers on platforms like Instagram.
- **Viewing Frequency:** Most respondents watch Nollywood weekly, demonstrating a consistent consumption habit that positions students as reliable viewers.

- **Platform Use:** YouTube emerged as the most common channel for Nollywood viewing, affirming its growing role in film distribution. Instagram followed closely as the most influential social platform for film content.
- **Decision Factors:** Storyline (40%) and cast (30%) are leading motivators, while reviews and social media buzz (16%) still play a significant role, confirming that digital word-of-mouth matters.

2. Case Film Analysis

- *A Tribe Called Judah* combined a strong cast, relatable family storyline, and aggressive cross-platform campaigns, yielding ₦1 billion in box office revenue. Respondents validated this by ranking its campaign as more effective.
- *Love in Every Word* succeeded on YouTube (1.2m+ views) but lacked strong TikTok and Instagram penetration, limiting parasocial interaction. Still, respondents noted its emotional appeal and storyline as reasons for sharing.
- The difference in performance shows that **cinema releases benefit more from Instagram/TikTok virality, while digital-first films thrive on YouTube reach.**

3. Social Media Impact

The survey confirms that Instagram and YouTube dominate students' media diets, aligning with the secondary data where both films performed best on these platforms. However, TikTok's emerging role (with *A Tribe Called Judah* trending hashtags) illustrates its growing influence in Nollywood marketing.

In short, social media does not only enhance visibility but also mediates how audiences interact with films, whether through likes, shares, or discussions that extend the cultural life of the movie beyond the screen.

4.7 Recommendations

1. **Cross-platform Integration:** Producers should diversify promotion strategies across YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok to maximize reach and engagement. Relying on a single platform, as with *Love in Every Word*, can limit visibility.
2. **Influencer Collaborations:** Nollywood campaigns should actively partner with social media influencers to amplify trailers and memes. This approach was evident in *A Tribe Called Judah*'s success.
3. **Content Tailoring by Platform:** Short-form, humorous, or emotional skits for TikTok and Instagram; full trailers and behind-the-scenes videos for YouTube. This ensures platform-appropriate engagement.
4. **Leverage Storytelling Traditions:** Storyline was the top motivator among students. Producers should emphasize compelling narratives rooted in Nigerian culture while promoting them digitally.
5. **Engage University Audiences:** Given students' demonstrated loyalty to Nollywood, campus activations, online Q&A sessions, and targeted student discounts could deepen engagement.
6. **Monitor Analytics:** Producers should track platform analytics in real time to identify which campaigns generate the highest conversions to actual viewership.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study set out to investigate how social media enhances viewership of Nollywood films, using *A Tribe Called Judah* (2023) and *Love in Every Word* (2025) as case studies. A quantitative approach was adopted, combining a student survey of 50 undergraduates with secondary data from YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and box office reports.

Key findings include:

Demographic profile of Nollywood consumers: The majority of respondents were female (62%) and aged 21–24 (48%). This group represents the core social-media-active demographic, confirming that Nollywood’s audience overlaps strongly with digital natives.

Viewing frequency and platforms: Over half of respondents (54%) watch Nollywood films weekly. YouTube (36%) emerged as the most common platform, followed by streaming services (24%) and social media clips (16%). This affirms the growing dominance of online platforms in Nollywood distribution.

Film choice motivators: Storyline (40%) and cast (30%) were the strongest factors influencing film choice, with reviews and online buzz (16%) playing a supporting role. This demonstrates that while digital promotion matters, Nollywood audiences still prioritize strong narratives.

Social media engagement: Instagram (40%) and YouTube (28%) were the leading platforms for Nollywood-related content. TikTok accounted for 16%, confirming its emerging influence.

Engagement was primarily passive (likes and reactions at 60%), with fewer active behaviors such as commenting (20%) or sharing (12%).

Case study comparisons:

A Tribe Called Judah benefited from strong cross-platform promotion, achieving ₦1 billion at the box office. Respondents also rated its campaign more effective.

Love in Every Word excelled on YouTube with over 27 million views but showed weaker engagement on Instagram and TikTok, limiting its multi-platform buzz.

Research questions answered:

Social media clearly enhanced visibility and engagement for both films.

Platform-specific strategies influenced participation differently, with YouTube sustaining viewership and Instagram/TikTok driving virality.

The success of both films illustrates the commercial and cultural value of merging Nigerian storytelling traditions with digital promotion.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that social media is not only an effective promotional tool but also a critical distribution channel for Nollywood. A Tribe Called Judah shows how strategic cross-platform marketing can translate into record-breaking commercial success, while Love in Every World illustrates how YouTube-based distribution can generate mass viewership without cinema release.

Social media enhances Nollywood's global visibility, fosters parasocial interaction between actors and fans, and extends the cultural life of films beyond their initial release. However,

the study also reveals gaps: audience engagement remains largely passive, and some films underutilize emerging platforms such as TikTok.

Ultimately, the integration of Nollywood's storytelling strengths with digital marketing strategies ensures not only greater commercial returns but also wider cultural impact, positioning Nigerian cinema as a global force.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

Strengthen multi-platform campaigns: Producers should integrate YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok campaigns rather than focusing on a single platform. Cross-platform consistency boosts both visibility and engagement.

Encourage active participation: Campaigns should include challenges, quizzes, and user-generated content to push audiences beyond liking into sharing and commenting.

Influencer collaborations: Partnering with Nollywood stars and social media influencers can amplify campaigns, particularly among younger demographics.

Prioritize strong storytelling: Since storyline was the top motivator, marketing should emphasize narrative themes and cultural resonance rather than relying solely on star power.

Target university audiences: Given the high consumption levels among students, Nollywood marketers should develop campus-based promotions, screenings, or ambassador programs.

Leverage analytics: Filmmakers should track social media metrics (shares, views, hashtags) to measure campaign effectiveness and adjust strategies in real time.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

A larger sample across multiple universities or regions could provide more generalizable insights.

Future studies could adopt mixed methods, adding interviews or focus groups to deepen understanding of audience perceptions.

Comparative studies between Nollywood and other African film industries (e.g., Ghanaian or South African) could provide broader insights into regional trends.

Longitudinal research could examine how the role of platforms like TikTok evolves in Nollywood marketing over time.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS (1-8)

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: _____
3. Level _____
4. How often do you watch Nollywood films?
a) Daily b) Weekly c) Monthly d) Rarely
5. Favorite Nollywood genre: _____
6. How do you usually watch Nollywood films?
a) TV b) Cinema c) Online platforms d) Others
7. Favorite Nollywood actor/actress: _____
8. How did you get introduced to Nollywood films?
a) Family/Friends b) Social media c) TV d) Others

SECTION 2: NOLLYWOOD FILM CONSUMPTION (9-23)

9. How many Nollywood films do you watch per month? _____
10. What factors influence your decision to watch a Nollywood film?
a) Cast b) Plot c) Reviews d) Others
11. Do you prefer watching Nollywood films alone or with others?
a) Alone b) With others
12. Have you ever attended a Nollywood film premiere or event?
a) Yes b) No
13. How important is the cast to you when choosing a Nollywood film?
a) Very important b) Somewhat important c) Not very important d) Not at all important
14. Do you watch Nollywood films with English subtitles?

a) Yes, always b) Yes, sometimes c) No, never

15. Have you ever purchased a Nollywood film DVD or digital copy?

a) Yes, frequently b) Yes, occasionally c) No, never

16. How do you usually find out about new Nollywood film releases?

a) Social media b) Online news websites c) Friends/Family recommendations d) TV/Radio e) Other (please specify)

17. Do you follow Nollywood news and updates on social media?

a) Yes b) No

18. Have you ever shared a Nollywood film trailer or promotional content on social media?

a) Yes, frequently b) Yes, occasionally c) No, never.

19. What do you like most about Nollywood films?

a) Storylines/Plots b) Acting performances c) Cultural representation d) Music/Soundtracks e) Other (please specify)

20. What do you dislike about Nollywood films?

a) Poor production quality b) Weak storylines

c) Overacting d) Lack of diversity

e) Others (please specify)

21. Have you ever watched a Nollywood film more than once?

a) Yes b) No

22. Do you think Nollywood films accurately represent Nigerian culture?

a) Yes, very accurately b) Yes, somewhat accurately c) No, not very accurately d) No, not at all accurately

23. Would you recommend Nollywood films to non-Nigerians?

a) Yes, definitely b) Yes, probably c) No, probably not d) No, definitely not

SECTION 3: SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE (24-38)

24. Which social media platforms do you use most frequently?

a) Facebook b) Instagram c) YouTube d) Tiktok e) Others

25. How many hours do you spend on social media daily? _____

26. Do you follow any Nollywood actors, directors, or production companies on social media?

a) Yes b) No

27. Have you ever engaged with Nollywood content on social media?

a) Yes, frequently b) Yes, occasionally c) No, never

28. Do you think social media can increase viewership of Nollywood films?

a) Yes b) No

29. How do you think social media can be used to promote Nollywood films?

a) Trailers and promotional content b) Behind-the-scenes content c) Influencer partnerships

d) Interactive content (e.g. quizzes, polls) e) Other (please specify)

30. Have you ever shared a post about a Nollywood film on social media?

a) Yes, frequently b) Yes, occasionally c) No, never

31. Do you think social media influencers can help promote Nollywood films?

a) Yes, definitely b) Yes, probably c) No, probably not d) No, definitely not

32. Have you ever watched Nollywood film content on YouTube or other video-sharing platforms?

a) Yes, frequently b) Yes, occasionally c) No, never

33. Do you think social media can help Nollywood filmmakers connect with their audience?

a) Yes, definitely b) No, definitely not

34. Would you be interested in behind-the-scenes content or making-of documentaries?

a) Yes b) No

35. Do you think social media can help increase engagement with Nollywood films?

a) Yes, definitely b) No, definitely not

36. Have you ever participated in online discussions or forums about Nollywood films?

a) Yes, frequently b) Yes, occasionally c) No, never

37. How many films do you know social media has helped promote world wide

38. Would you be interested in interactive content related to Nollywood films?

a) Yes, very interested b) No, not at all interested

SECTION 4: "A TRIBE CALLED JUDAH" AND "LOVE IN EVERY WORD" (39-58)

39. Have you watched "A Tribe Called Judah" or "Love in Every Word"?

a) Yes, both films b) Yes, "A Tribe Called Judah" only c) Yes, "Love in Every Word" only d) No, neither film

40. What did you think of the storyline and plot?

a) Excellent b) Good c) Fair d) Poor

41. Did you enjoy the cast and their performances?

a) Yes, very much b) Yes, somewhat c) No, not at all

42. Would you recommend these films to others?

a) Yes, definitely b) Yes, probably c) No, probably not d) No, definitely not

43. What themes or messages did you take away from these films?

a) Family/Relationships b) Social justice c) Personal growth d) Other (please specify)

44. Did you engage with any online content related to these films?

a) Yes b) No, never

45. How do you think the filmmakers could have improved these films?

a) Better storyline/plot development b) Stronger cast performances c) Improved production quality d) Other (please specify)

46. Would you love to watch more films like "A Tribe Called Judah" or "Love in Every Word"?

a) Yes, definitely b) Yes, probably c) No, definitely not

47. Have you discussed these films with others?

a) Yes b) No, never

48. Do you think these films accurately represent Nigerian culture?

a) Yes b) No, not very accurately c) No, not at all accurately

49. What did you think of the cinematography and production quality?

a) Excellent b) Good c) Fair d) Poor

50. Would you watch a sequel or spin-off of these films?

a) Yes, definitely b) Yes, probably c) No, probably not d) No, definitely not

51. Did you find the films entertaining and engaging?

a) Yes, very engaging b) No, not really d) No, not at all

52. How do you think these films could have been marketed more effectively?

a) More social media promotion b) Influencer partnerships c) Trailers and promotional content d) Other (please specify)

53. Do you think the films' social media promotion was effective?

a) Yes, very effective b) Yes, somewhat effective c) No, not very effective d) No, not at all effective

54. Would you be interested in more films with similar themes or storylines?

a) Yes, definitely b) Yes, probably c) No, probably not d) No, definitely not

55. Have you watched any other films by the same director or cast?

a) Yes, several films b) Yes, a few films c) No, none d) Not applicable

56. Do you think the films trailers and promotional content were effective?

a) Yes, very effective b) No, not very effective d) No, not at all effective

57. Would you watch more Nollywood films with similar production quality?

a) Yes, definitely b) Yes, probably c) No, probably not d) No, definitely not

58. Do you think the producers could pass an effective message to the audience

a) Yes b) No

SECTION 5: ENHANCING VIEWERSHIP (59-65)

59. What would make you more likely to watch Nollywood films?

60. Do you think trailers and promotional content are effective in promoting Nollywood films?

a) Yes b) No

61. How important are film festivals and premieres in promoting Nollywood films?

a) very Important b) Not Important

62. Do you think Producers are meeting the demands of their viewers?

63. Do you think collaborations with international filmmakers could help promote Nollywood films?

a) Yes b) Not really c) No

64. What role do you think social media plays in promoting Nollywood films?

65. Would you be interested in attending Nollywood film events or workshops?