

**AN EXAMINATION ON THE ROLE OF DOCUMENTARY FILM IN CREATING
BEHAVIORAL CHANGE**

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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION,
FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY. IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B. A) DEGREE IN MASS COMMUNICATION**

JUNE, 2026
DECLARATION

This project is based on a study undertaken by me, in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts under the Supervision of PROF. AMBROSE UCHENUNU All ideas are the products of my personal research where the views of others were used, they were duly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was written and submitted by me, VICTOR SOMTOCHUKWU ONWUEGBUZIE, ART2201331 to the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.

Prof. A. O. Uchenunu
Project supervisor

date

Dr. D. O. Ekharefo
Ag. Head of Department

date

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty for his guidance, strength, protection and wisdom during the period of this study.

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ABSTRACT

A Documentary film has become a veritable tool in the broadcasting industry, used to propagate and sensitise society towards social issues that must be understood and/or changed. As such this research studied how documentary films foster behavioural change in University of Benin students of Mass Communication Department. Its objectives were to assess the audience reception of documentary film, examine the awareness-creating capability of documentary films on social issues, to what extent documentary films have influence viewers attitudes on social issues and to ascertain if documentary film foster behavioural change among audiences. Survey research design was adopted and data collected using questionnaires and in depth interview. Findings established that documentary films made social issues understandable and have the capacity to expose audience to social problems they knew nothing about. Documentary film influences viewers' attitudes and perceptions on social issues by helping them understand problems through various perspectives and the study also showed that documentary films can foster behavioral change among audience, and sensitize society towards social responsibility. The study concludes that Documentary films are persuasive channels of communication that can affect attitudes, increase knowledge and instigate favorable behaviors among its viewers. As such, documentary films addressing social issues should be produced more frequently and distributed through appropriate media channels to sensitize society.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Visual media currently plays a profound role in forming public awareness, attitude and behavior. Among the different types of visual media, documentary films has gained its prominence as a medium for communication to inform, educate and inspire audience. Documentaries, by portraying reality, facts and lived experiences through narrative in film, allow audience to mentally and emotionally engage with them. Through visual storytelling, documentary films provide opportunities to explore societal issues, reevaluate norms and reflect on individual perceptions.

The popularity of documentary films for its power to promote social awareness and behavioral change has been a major area for academic study. It successfully uses moving images,

narrative voice and evidence to effectively transfer information to the viewers in an engaging and persuasive manner. This allows audience to experience the issues on an emotional level leading to the process of introspection and behavioral change in them. In many situations, documentaries have a strong impact on audience awareness because they have been able to present issues which they are normally not exposed to thus prompting them to react positively and responsively.

Within Nigerian society, documentary films are increasingly being recognized as potent tools for social awareness and behavioral modification. Cultural identities, problems of the society and histories that influence daily life and activities are usually addressed by Nigerian documentary films. By projecting reality and demonstrating factual evidence through storytelling, documentary film enables the viewers to re-examine the prevailing social realities and their involvement in them. It is argued that documentary films play an important role in social awareness and cultural preservation within Nigeria thus contributing to promotion and sustainability of indigenous practice against degradation from modernity (Ibrahim Ahmadu & Joshua, 2016).

The impact of documentary film becomes more pronounced in light of rapid social and cultural transformation in Nigeria. Nigeria is an African country with culturally rich traditional way of life and values, passed on over generations, by way of oral transmission, communal activities and institutions. In contrast, Globalization, rapid technology advancement, migration, urbanization and proliferation of digital media, are steadily affecting and reshaping the dynamics of social values and engagement with culture (Olatunji and Okoli, 2013). These trends have produced some observable and considerable change on the behaviour of the young generation

Globally, the widening spread of global communication and digital networks exposes Nigerian youth to numerous foreign cultures that affect their attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors

(Adebayo, 2019) and at the same time, the infiltration of foreign media through satellite, internet and other forms of communication technology has contributed to the fading out of certain traditions of culture in the society, (Inyang, 2017). As more youth increasingly watch foreign movies; it is a cause for concern that the values of indigenous traditions would continue to wane away. Urbanization further aggravated the societal changes. The displacement of population from the rural areas to cities had changed relationships, weakening the fabric of family ties and traditional systems, and new social patterns of interaction formed among inhabitants of urban areas. Urban migration has become a growing feature of most cities in Nigeria, for example in Uyo, with consequences on behavior patterns of dwellers and values of their culture. Against this changing socio-cultural dynamics, communication channels like documentaries are important to help create awareness of such phenomena and initiate thoughtful evaluation on values of tradition and personal values

Through compelling narratives based on facts about social life, cultural heritages, communities, documentaries can provoke a viewer to think critically about society; Ogheneruemu (2015) noted that Documentary films can indeed raise viewer's consciousness towards social issues with facts leading to thoughtful reflection. Visual storytelling is important in creating connection and emotions within viewers thereby fostering evaluation of viewer's beliefs/behavior in relation to social issues. Visual stories through portraying the human side effects of problems such as, environmental degradation, political and social injustice and poverty compel audience to act responsibly to bring change.

It can be asserted that the medium of cinema has since its inception been known for entertainment, education and inspiration. In relation to this, documentary films, which portray reality in a persuasive and educational manner, take a unique position, by bringing a range of

stories to a platform where marginalized communities can share their own experiences, highlight the plight of their situations and call for public change. On issues of cultural preservation, political revolution, human rights and environmental conservation, the documentary films are effective in stirring emotional response, instigating thoughtful deliberation, prompting behavioral alteration in audience through depiction of narrative supplemented with proof of fact, allowing for not just audience awareness but critical thought into personal involvement in such issues. Despite its financial limitations, ethical issues and stiff competition from mass media; documentary films remain an integral tool for awareness and behavior change. They raise awareness, foster empathy and stimulate discussion in a society in continuous transition, while offering solutions by encouraging evaluation and promoting change through thoughtful reflections.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Though documentary films have been acclaimed for their ability to sensitize people to issues around them and influence them to be socially responsible, empirical research on the impact on behavioral change of viewing documentaries has not been explored enough in the Nigerian context. People expect that watching documentary films will influence how people think and behave positively on social issues. However, this does not guarantee the extent to which they will bring about significant behavioral change among the viewer.

Studies on film industry in Nigeria has concentrated more on feature films (Nollywood movies) while documentaries have been relatively unexplored in terms of its influence on social issues. This is why there is insufficient knowledge on the effectiveness of documentary films in its advocacy of issues and influencing behaviors.

As this is largely not explored enough in the Nigeria environment, there is much doubt if the documentary films influence people's behavior or simply inform them. One is thus not able to confirm the effectiveness of documentary films as influencing vehicles to changing social attitudes and issues.

It is in this light that this study seeks to look at the impact of documentaries on behavioral change among audiences.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study seeks to:

1. To examine the degree of awareness of audience to documentary films.
2. To measure the extent to which Documentary films create about social issues among viewers
3. To examine how documentary film influence audience attitudes and perception towards social issues
4. To determine whether documentary films contribute to behavioral change among viewers

1.4 Research questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. What is the level of exposure of audiences to documentary films?
2. To what extent do documentary films create awareness about social issues among viewers?
3. How do documentary films influence viewers' attitudes and perceptions towards social issues?
4. Do documentary films contribute to behavioural change among view

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is significant because it contributes to the understanding of how documentary films function as tools for social awareness and behavioural change. In contemporary society where visual media plays an important role in shaping public opinion, understanding the impact of documentary films can provide valuable insights into how media content influences audience attitudes and behaviour. The study will be beneficial to filmmakers, particularly documentary producers, by providing insights into how documentary storytelling can be used more effectively to influence social awareness and encourage positive behavioural change. By understanding the ways in which audiences respond to documentary narratives, filmmakers can develop more impactful productions that address societal challenges. The study will also be useful to scholars and students in the field of mass communication, film studies, and media studies. It will contribute to existing academic literature by expanding knowledge on the relationship between documentary films and behavioural influence, particularly within the Nigerian context where research on documentary filmmaking remains relatively limited. The findings of this study may be valuable to policymakers, educators, and social advocates who utilise media as tools for public enlightenment and social development. Documentary films can serve as important communication channels for addressing social issues, promoting cultural awareness, and encouraging responsible behaviour among members of society. In succinct summation, the study will provide a reference point for future researchers who may wish to conduct further investigations on documentary filmmaking, media influence, and behavioural change.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study examines the role of documentary films in creating behavioural change among Mass Communication students of the University of Benin. It focuses on how exposure to

documentary films influences students' awareness, attitudes, and responses to social issues. It is limited to Mass Communication students of the University of Benin and assesses the relationship between documentary film viewership and behavioural change, particularly in relation to social awareness and attitude formation.

1.7 Operational definition of term

For the purpose of clarity and proper understanding within the context of this study, the following terms are defined operationally

Documentary Film: A non-fiction film that presents factual information about real-life events, people, social issues, or environments with the aim of informing, educating, or raising awareness among viewers.

Behavioural Change: A modification or transformation in an individual's attitudes, perceptions, or actions that occurs as a result of exposure to new information, experiences, or persuasive communication.

3. **Awareness:** The level of knowledge or understanding that individuals possess about a particular social issue or subject after being exposed to relevant information.

4. **Perception:** The way individuals interpret, understand, and form opinions about social issues based on the information they receive.

5. **Audience:** The group of individuals who watch or are exposed to documentary films and interpret the messages communicated through them.

6. **Social Issues:** Problems or challenges that affect individuals and communities within society, such as environmental concerns, cultural decline, public health issues, or social injustice.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of Documentary Film

Documentary can be seen as a presentation of reality that involves real life events, real people and real situations. It has to do with the use of pictures, sound, visuals, and text to pass on its message. If it lacks any of these things, then it can't be said to be a documentary. A documentary must possess all of these features. Documentaries are usually meant to carry out the functions of informing people, educating people, and creating awareness about issues always occurring in the society. No wonder in Nigeria context, Ekwuazi (1991) views it as a non-fiction medium for education and information dissemination. Documentary film is generally defined as a non-fiction motion picture created to document reality, primarily for instructions, education and maintenance of historical records, rather than pure entertainment, documentaries adopt journalistic and pedagogical purposes such as, the presentation of real event, people or issues to inform and the keep the viewers engaged. Nichols (2017), defines documentary film as a cinematic practice and mode of reception that engages with the historical world through the representation of real people, or social actors, rather than factual narratives. This approach, often characterized as a creative treatment of actuality, involves a distinct point of view designed to present a persuasive argument or perspective on reality.

The concept of documentary as a “Creative treatment of actuality” was first introduced by Grierson (1933), and it remains the foundation of having an understanding of the genre. This idea suggests that while documentaries focus on dealing with real-life events, they are creatively designed and structured to communicate meaning and evoke emotional or intellectual responses from the audience. Renov (2004) goes further to argue that documentary film carries out multiple

functions, including recording, revealing, persuading, and expressing, all of these which adds up to its impact on audiences.

It is imperative to know that documentary film has rapidly become a central focus of study within the media and cultural space. The genre stands out for its unique ability to integrate historical records with modern issues, ranging from morality, beliefs and the way people are represented. As noted in the documentary film literature, documentary films go far beyond portraying reality; they also galvanize and encourage the audience to question the nature of truth and interpretation, since what one sees as reality may be interpreted differently by another. This points to the fact that Documentary films are inherently subjective in nature. Documentary film has transmogrified beyond its western traditions to include a broad range of global perspectives that challenge earlier views about how the genre came about and developed. The rise of digital technologies has greatly influenced the way documentaries are produced, making it easier to manipulate images and raising questions about their authenticity and reliability.

2.1.2 Historical Development of Documentary Film

Documentary film was very related to travelogues, exploration films, and scientific recordings. Before the first world war, these films were highly popular as they exposed audiences to unfamiliar cultures and environments that they weren't conversant with. These early representations were consistently shaped by colonial ideologies, as filmmakers from Europe and North America made a visual portrayal of other parts of the world through biased stereotypical lenses. The history of documentary started from the early days of cinema itself. According to Michael Chanan, early cinema was originally documentary in nature because the first films produced by the Lumière brothers in 1895 focused on real-life events and everyday activities

instead of telling fictional stories. These early films, which were known as “actualities,” showed pieces of real life events as they happened. In doing so, they illustrated what has been described as the “Seizure of physical reality,” and this helped in laying the groundwork for documentary film making as a way of representing the real world.

The 1920s was an important period in the development of documentary film because film makers started trying out new ways. During this time a type of film known as “city symphony” began to appear, which focused on showing life in the city in a more different and creative way. Filmmakers like Dziga Vertov and Walther Ruttmann made use of montage techniques to arrange different shots in order to create meaning, instead of following the normal storytelling ways. These films helped documentary to develop its own visual style by focusing on movement, rhythm and how space is shown instead of just telling a straight story.

Around that time, documentary started to be seen as a real type of film. The word “documentary” became popular because of John Grierson in the late 1920s when he talked about Robert Flaherty’s film *Moana* and said it had documentary value. From there, documentary started becoming its own kind of film. Grierson also said documentary should teach people and show real life in a simple way, and he called it “creative treatment of actuality.”

In the 1930s, documentary kept growing. Grierson and other people made films that talked about society and social problems, especially through groups like the GPO Film Unit. Some other filmmakers also used documentaries to talk about politics and criticize society. So documentary became something people used to talk about real issues.

When sound was brought into film, it helped but also caused problems. It made films much better, but it was difficult to record sound outside. Because of this, a lot of documentaries made use of Voice-over narration, sometimes called “Voice of God,” to explain what was

happening. It made the film sound too serious, but some filmmakers still tried different ways to use sound.

Following World War II, documentary changed again. Filmmakers began to make use of old videos to show past events, like in *Night and Fog* by Alain Resnais. Some documentaries also became more personal, where filmmakers added their own thoughts

In the 1960s, new cameras and sound equipment made things very easier. Filmmakers could now record real events as they happened. Styles like *cinéma vérité* and *Direct Cinema* started, and they showed real-life events in a more natural way. Later, documentaries became more popular and were used all over the world by different countries in different ways.

2.1.3 Characteristics and Forms of Documentary Film

Problems or challenges that affect individuals and communities within society, such as environmental concerns, cultural decline, public health issues, or social injustice.

Documentary film is often described as a representation of reality, but in practice it is much more complex than simply recording real-life events. One of the most important characteristics of documentary film lies in its ability to present the historical world through sounds and images that appear authentic and believable. As explained by Bill Nichols, documentary relies on the strong relationship between images and what they represent, creating a sense of trust between the filmmaker and the audience. However, this trust is not absolute, as even documentary images can be manipulated, especially with the advancement of digital technology. This means that documentary is not a pure reflection of reality but a constructed version of it.

It depends on real people, who are referred to as social actors, these individuals do not perform scripted roles but present their lived experiences, which adds credibility and emotional

depth to the narrative. Documentary films usually involve the use of interviews, testimonies, and real-life footage to back up their claims. Interviews, most especially, serve as a major instrument through which different angles of perspectives are brought together to form a coherent narrative, allowing the filmmaker to shape meaning through the arrangement of voices and evidence.

Documentary films are usually built around a particular message the filmmaker is trying to pass. Unlike fictional films that depend a lot on storylines and character development, documentaries are not really focused on telling a story in that same way. Instead, they are arranged in a more logical way to present ideas. According to Bill Nichols, documentary films are not held together by normal storytelling but by what he calls an “informing logic,” which means that different scenes and pieces of information are connected together to support a particular argument. Documentary films have some unique features and methods that differentiate them from other types of media. Some of these techniques include the voice-over narration, the use of old footage, filming in real locations, and recording real-life sound as it occurs. Voice-over narration, which is called the “voice of God,” is often used to explain and make the audience have an understanding of what is going on and direct the audience so they can understand better. This kind of narration usually sounds very serious and authoritative, making the information look true and reliable. But not all documentaries make use of this method, because some filmmakers prefer to leave things more open so that viewers can think and interpret things by themselves.

A lot of documentary filmmakers focus on topics that people need to pay attention to, like inequality, injustice, and human rights. They use film as a means of speaking to the public, trying to inform, convince, and make people think deeply. As Bill Nichols explains, documentary

filmmakers usually deal with issues that are not just about facts but also need interpretation, values, and personal judgment.

Mode and forms of documentary

The forms and modes of documentary film have been discussed a lot in film studies as different ways of showing and understanding reality, not just recording it as it is. Documentary film does not follow one fixed style. It changes depending on what the filmmaker wants to achieve and the situation in which the film is made. Stella Bruzzi (2006) says documentary is not just a clear or direct window into reality, but something shaped by actions, choices, and interpretation, while Patricia Aufderheide (2007) adds that documentaries are always made with a purpose, whether to inform, persuade, or make people think. All of these ideas show that documentary forms are not rigid categories, but flexible ways of portraying reality. One usual way documentaries are produced is through arranged storytelling where the filmmaker carries the audience step by step through an idea or argument. This usually involves voice-over narration, expert opinions, and selected visuals that help explain the topic clearly. It can also be called “The voice of God” narration, whereby the person involved with the VO is authoritative.

Some documentaries try to be more natural by following events as they occur, without interference, and narration from the filmmaker, it aims for an objective, raw, and authentic representation of the subject in their natural environment. This style is often linked to observational filmmaking. Dave Saunders (2010) explains that this became possible because of better and lighter filming equipment that allowed filmmakers to move around more easily.

Another form of documentary is the participatory documentary where the filmmaker becomes part of the story instead of staying hidden. In this case, the filmmaker talks with

subjects through interviews and conversations, and sometimes even appears in the film. Alisa Lebow (2012) posits that this makes the film feel more personal and close to real life because the audience sees direct interaction.

Sometimes documentary films go a step further by making viewers think about how what they are watching was actually put together. Instead of acting like everything is just raw truth, this kind of approach shows that there is a process behind it. It makes people aware that choices were made during filming and editing. Bill Nichols (2017) says this particular kind of documentary exceeds the normal expectation people have about documentaries being authentically factual by revealing how the message is shaped. Brian Winston (2008) also points out that this approach challenges the idea that documentaries always show the full truth. This makes documentary more than just portraying reality, it becomes a way of thinking about how that reality is created.

There are also documentary styles that entirely shift away from explanation and put so much focus on feeling, mood and personal experience. Instead of trying to prove a point, poetic documentary make use of images, sound, and mood to pass a message. Bill Nichols (2017) describes the poetic mode as one that pays more attention to visuals, rhythm, and tone rather than clear arguments, and sometimes presents things in a scattered or abstract way. One thing about poetic documentary is that it lacks in-depth explanation as to what the content in the documentary is all about. Closely linked to this is the performative style, which focuses more on personal stories and how individuals experience things. It sets out the motif behind a documentary.

2.2 Documentary Film as a Tool for Information and Education

Because documentaries are based on events and experiences in reality, they have been traditionally accepted as a potent medium for imparting information and knowledge. While fictional films have traditionally focused on the purposes of entertainment, documentaries are made with the intention to inform viewers and to extend their knowledge and understanding of subjects and, at times, to challenge viewers' existing beliefs (Pisters, 2020). In time, academics have proven that documentaries not only present facts but integrate facts with empathy, which allows viewers to grasp and process the message even more readily. Documentaries have also evolved with the emergence of digital technologies and, in doing so, have branched into new forms and expanded their scope for audience participation and interaction (Nash, 2018).

One of the benefits of documentaries is the ability to simplify complex information so that it can be clearly understood without losing its essence. Controversial subjects such as global warming, the prevalence of poverty, health-related issues and conflict become accessible when viewed through the lenses of reality as lived by some people.

Documentaries also provide much-needed visibility to matters and populations who are commonly overlooked by the mass media, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of how other people in the world might live, as well as highlighting hidden societal ills (Winston, 2008)

Documentaries enhance critical thinking and deep learning. It should be mentioned that documentaries do not present neutral representations as they incorporate the filmmaker's viewpoint when selecting and sequencing what is seen.

2.2.1 Documentary Film and Social Awareness

Documentaries are an awareness-building form of filmmaking, and their importance grows with society's increasing dependency on visual mediums to grasp real-world concerns. Rather than being fictional, they feature and examine the lives and realities of people, real

circumstances, or situations, which effectively draw people's attention to problems they would otherwise be unaware of and connect individuals more intimately to social realities making awareness feel more immediate (Kuhn, 2013). Documentaries also do more than inform the audience; by incorporating visual and narrative elements, they further help viewers understand the reasons behind certain issues and the implications of events. Unlike passively watching a fictional story. Documentaries also help in the development of critical thinking, as they present different perspectives, promoting interpretation, question and discussion among viewers. According to Hall (1980) audiences always interpret any text according to their own experience of the world, making documentaries ideal for sparking discussion and creating varied perspectives on a certain subject, and with increasing access on different platforms around the globe, diverse populations from different walks of life can watch the same content and raise their awareness regarding issues beyond their vicinity. Documentaries are still highly effective in building awareness and initiating discussion that can gradually alter one's conception on the subject or event and affect people's attitudes and behaviors as mass media determines what people focus on and consider of importance (McCombs, 2004).

2.2.2 Concept of Behavioural Change

The term behavior is defined as an individual's actions or reactions to his/her surroundings. Behavior is based on social interactions and the surrounding environments; it represents patterns of thought, emotion, and action. According to Lev Vygotsky (1978), "behavior" is developed through social interaction. The developmental environment includes the family, community, and society. It seems clear that behavior is shaped by one's experiences, environment, and social context. Further, changes may occur as a result of new knowledge and/or information.

Behavioral change is the process of modifying attitudes, behaviors, and perspectives of individuals due to the experiences and knowledge acquired during the course of time. For example, Albert Bandura (2001) states that people can learn from each other by observing them perform behaviors and the results of those behaviors. As a result, this illustrates that behavior can be changed by both direct experience with the environment, and by indirect means through observation of others. Specifically, people can observe and learn about other's behavior through media content, i.e., television programs (documentary films).

These theoretical foundations, Icek Ajzen (1991), through the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), demonstrates that behavior is guided by an individual's intentions. These intentions develop because of an individual's attitude towards performing the behavior, perceived social norms regarding performance of the behavior, and perceived control of performance. Thus, according to TPB, behavioral change is a slow and deliberate process based upon cognitive deliberation.

Kurt Lewin has described behavioral change as occurring in three sequential phases: unfreeze, change, refreeze. Documentaries can serve as stimuli to begin the first phase of behavioral change by increasing awareness and encouraging individuals to think differently about previously held beliefs. A key factor for initiating behavioral change is awareness. People are more likely to change once they have been introduced to new information or experiences that challenge their pre-existing perspective. Documentaries support this process by portraying real life situations, thereby raising audience awareness and inspiring reflection

Social influences play a large part in behavioral change. People are influenced by the expectations and behaviors of other people around them. When documentaries stimulate public debate and generate shared knowledge among people, it creates a framework for changing social

perceptions, which encourages people to modify their behaviour. The research and theories of Albert Bandura, Icek Ajzen, and Kurt Lewin demonstrate that behavior emerges in an evolutionary manner through various layers.

2.3 Media Influence on Audience Behaviour

The media effect on how people behave has been discussed a lot of times in communication studies. Over time, many scholars have come to understand that media is not just something that shares information, but something that can really influence how people think, feel, and even act. In our world today, a lot of people are often exposed to different types of media like television, radio, and social media, and because of this frequent exposure, the effect of media on behaviour has become even stronger.

Mass media is one of the main places people get information from, and as a result of this, it has a strong influence on how people see things and how they behave. The media does not only give people knowledge, it can also affect real-life decisions and actions. For example, the kind of information people get from the media can influence things like political choices, public opinions, and even social behaviours. This shows that media influence goes beyond just learning new things, it can actually shape how people behave in society.

One way the media affects behaviour is through how it influences what people believe. Most people put so much dependency on the media to have an understanding of what is happening around them, so the kind of things they come across or listen to everyday can gradually influence their reasoning. When a person is frequently exposed to a particular type of content repeatedly, it can start to form their beliefs, even if they don't suddenly become aware of

it. Some studies also provide us with an explanation that the media does not only dish out information but can also influence people by the way the message is presented.

2.3.1 Documentary Films and Social or Behavioural Transformation

There is no doubt that nowadays documentaries are not only used for disseminating information but have a tremendous power over how individuals think, feel, and ultimately behave based on how the story is told and how reality is constructed to the viewer. Similarly, Shyngyssova et al. (2025) explain that particularly a documentary that imitates the characteristics of investigative journalism is a guidance for the audience to understand the social issues presented as the film brings about an organized presentation of the matter.

One way the documentaries contribute to behavioral changes is through knowledge and attitude changes. Mubangizi et al. (2022) suggest that through viewing documentary films about family planning, knowledge levels increased and some misconceptions changed which influenced people's intentions and discussion.

Through Stimulus-Organism-Response Model, the change of behaviors could be explained through media exposure. The stimulus is the documentary film that affects the organism or viewer in their mental and emotional level, and then behavior is a response. This implies that change happens in many layers and not only one.

Simultaneously, research studies suggest that media exposure may not always result in long-term behavioral changes although it can generate new knowledge and perceptions (Majesty & Irwanto, 2025). The gap between awareness and action remains a persistent issue that while people know certain things, they do not translate their awareness into action due to factors like motivation, social factors, structural or economic constraints.

On the other hand, documentary films are most effective when combined with various approaches. Shyngyssova et al. (2025) state that documentaries are more effective as part of a wider campaign that may trigger more participation and deliberation. Therefore, documentaries might be only the spark to change in a broader approach toward changing people's behavior.

2.3.2 Audience Perception and Interpretation of Documentary Content

People don't just settle down, watch a documentary, and accept everything exactly the way it is presented. What they understand from it usually depends on who they are, the existing knowledge they already have, and how they view things within their surroundings. Two different people can watch the same documentary and still walk away with completely different ideas about it.

Some documentaries tend to feel more real than others, and a big part of that comes from how they are put together. The way the story is arranged can make people believe what they are seeing without really stopping to question it. Patricia Aufderheide (2007) explains that people usually trust documentaries because they are connected to real event.

Emotions also matter a lot when it comes to how people understand documentaries. Once a film connects with someone emotionally, it becomes easier for them to accept the message it is trying to pass. Sonia Livingstone (2004) says that understanding does not only emanate from knowledge, but also from how people feel and respond psychologically. This shows understanding is not created only in the mind, but also through emotions, and those emotions can strongly influence how people tend to interpret the content they consume.

The environment where an individual comes from can really affect the way they understand documentary film. People from different cultures or backgrounds don't always see

things the same way, even if they are watching the same film. For example, when a person from the rural area and a person from the urban area are brought together to watch a documentary film; when asked what they understand from the film they both watched, you'll come to a realization that the both individuals have a different perspective from the documentary film they consumed together.

Digital platforms have also changed how audiences interpret documentary films. People now discuss, question, and share their opinions about documentaries online, which influences how meaning spreads. Henry Jenkins (2006) explains that media culture is participatory, meaning audience actively engaged with and reshapes media content. This shows that documentary interpretation is now more social and interactive than before.

Understanding documentary content is not just about watching a film but about how viewers process, question, and interpret what they see. This makes documentary film a shared space between filmmaker and audience, where meaning is continuously shaped and reshaped through interpretation.

2.3.3 Documentary Film and Cultural or Social Advocacy

Documentaries, being deeply intertwined with social issues and everyday life, have the power to make viewers more aware of various problems through realistic portrayals. With that real element, social problems seem closer and can establish empathy with audiences and hence develop their attitudes toward the issue and seriousness toward it. Nash (2020) suggests that a moral engagement is constructed through documentary films through authentic lived experiences. More than just providing an intimate and individual perspective on social issues and communities, films on the marginalized are increasingly popular and can contribute to

deconstructing existing stereotypes and building up a more nuanced understanding about some particular group of communities, like the underrepresented groups in colonial states.

On top of producing public awareness and representation, documentaries can influence audience behaviour through emotive and realist narratives. By showing audiences the real people with real effects and consequences, this message can be better internalized. Health documentaries are shown to have better effects than information only based texts in health preventative actions (Howell, 2022). In most cases, viewers will remember the stories, real voices of real people and lived experience more and thus believe it.

Documentaries also can make audiences re-think their beliefs with the presentation of unseen and unfamiliar views. The advancement of digital platforms allows documentaries to access wider and more diversified audiences and makes social issues more globalised. Simultaneously, it creates participatory media culture.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Theories according to Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwam-Uwaoma (2016), is a set of assumptions, propositions or accepted facts that attempts to provide plausible or rational explanation of cause and effect relationships among a group of observed phenomena.

This study was anchored on three theories: Social learning theory, cultivation theory and uses and gratification theory.

2.2.1 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory was developed by Albert Bandura (1977), and it provides an explanation as to how individuals learn behaviours by observing others. According to this theory,

people do not need to experience something personally before they learn from it. Instead, they can learn simply by observing the actions, attitudes, and outcomes of others, most especially when those actions appear rewarding or meaningful.

In documentary films, this theory helps explain how viewers may adopt behaviours they observe on screen. When documentaries present real-life situations, such as environmental responsibility, health practices, or social activism, viewers may begin to imitate these behaviours after watching them. For example, a documentary showing the consequences of drug abuse or the benefits of healthy living can influence viewers to adjust their own lifestyle choices. This happens because the audience identifies with the people in the film and sees their experiences as real and relatable.

Social Learning Theory is relevant to this study because it explains how documentary films can serve as models for behaviour. When viewers observe actions and their outcomes in documentaries, they may internalize those behaviours and apply them in real life.

2.2.2 Cultivation Theory

Cultivation Theory was developed by George Gerbner (1976). The theory majorly centers on how long-term exposure to media content influences the way people perceive or view reality. It suggests that repeated viewing of certain messages gradually builds a particular understanding of the world.

What matters here is not just exposure, but consistency. A viewer who regularly watches documentaries about corruption, for instance, may begin to see corruption as a dominant feature of society.

Another thing that comes in is how documentaries influence what people worry about, how serious they think the issue is and what direction their attention and response goes. When viewers are constantly exposed to documentaries on climate change, health crises, or social injustice, they may begin to see these issues as more urgent. Studies on environmental communication show that repeated exposure to climate-related media content increases perceived seriousness of the issue (Hart & Feldman, 2016).

2.2.3 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and Gratifications Theory was developed by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch (1974). The theory explains that people actively choose the media they consume based on their needs and interests.

What becomes important here is motivation. People do not watch documentaries by accident. Someone who chooses to watch a documentary about business, health, or social issues is already interested in that area. That interest affects how deeply they engage with the content.

Engagement also matters. When viewers feel that a documentary is useful or relevant to them, they are more likely to stay attentive and think about it afterward. What this is trying to say is that documentaries that connect with viewers' personal goals or concerns are more likely to influence them.

2.5 Empirical Review

A study by Rachel Howell (2014) examined how climate change documentaries influence audience attitudes and behaviour. The study used survey data from individuals who had been exposed to environmental documentary content. The findings showed that although the

documentaries initially increased concern, motivation, and willingness to act, these effects did not persist over time. It was also observed that behavioural intentions expressed by participants did not always translate into actual action. This suggests that while documentary films can raise awareness and temporarily influence attitudes, their ability to produce long-term behavioural change may be limited without continuous engagement or reinforcement.

Research by Majestya and Irwanto (2025) looked at the impact of environmental films on awareness and behaviour concerning the food system. Pre-test and post-test survey design was implemented to test audiences' changing attitudes after viewing the environmental documentary content. The results concluded that the participants' awareness and knowledge on the environmental issue have increased after viewing the film. Findings concluded that both films helped to raise the awareness and knowledge of audiences about the food system issues and sustainability topics but had no impact on participants' dietary habits. It was concluded that there was no direct association between pre-test and post-test results.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Preamble

This chapter focuses on the research methodology of this study. Therefore, it explains the research design, population of the study, sample size, sampling techniques, instrument for data collection, method of administration of research instrument, validity of the research instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a survey research design complemented by in-depth interviews to examine the role of documentary films in creating behavioural change among students. The survey design is considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect data from a relatively large number of respondents and to analyse patterns relating to exposure to documentary films, audience perception, and behavioural responses.

Survey research is widely used in communication studies as it allows for the systematic collection of data from a sample population in order to describe and explain social phenomena. According to Okwechime (2013), survey research involves studying a portion of a population to determine relationships among variables such as attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions.

In addition to the survey, in-depth interviews are majorly used to provide deeper insights into how documentary films influence students' thinking and behaviour. This qualitative method

allows the researcher to explore personal experiences, emotional engagement, and interpretative processes that may not be fully captured through questionnaires. The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches ensures a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of this study consists of all undergraduate students in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Media and Communication Studies, University of Benin, spanning across 100 level, 200 level, 300 level, and 400 level.

These students are selected as the population because they are actively exposed to various forms of media content, including documentary films, both within and outside academic settings. As media students, they are also more likely to engage critically with audio-visual content, making them suitable for examining the influence of documentary films on behavioural change.

The population of the study consists of all Mass Communication students from 100 to 400 level in the University of Benin, with an estimated population of 1,200 students, ensuring that diverse perspectives are captured.

This allows the researcher to compare responses across different academic levels and to determine whether exposure to documentary films influences behavioural change differently among students at various stages of their academic journey.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size for this study is determined to ensure adequate representation of the population while maintaining feasibility in terms of time, cost, and accessibility.

Using a standard sampling approach such as Cozby (2004), a population within a moderate range typically requires a sample size that can adequately represent the characteristics of the population at a ± 5 per cent precision level. Based on this guideline, a sample size of approximately 150 respondents is considered appropriate for this study.

Out of this sample:

140 respondents will complete the questionnaire

10 respondents will participate in in-depth interviews

The respondents will be distributed across the four levels (100–400 levels) to ensure balanced representation.

3.4 Sampling Technique

This study employs a combination of simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques.

The simple random sampling technique will be used to select respondents for the questionnaire. This method ensures that every student within the population has an equal chance of being selected, thereby reducing bias and increasing the reliability of the findings.

The purposive sampling technique will be used to select participants for the in-depth interviews. This allows the researcher to deliberately choose students who have experience watching documentary films and can provide meaningful insights into how such films influence their attitudes and behaviours.

The combination of these sampling techniques ensures that both general patterns and detailed perspectives are captured in the study.

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The instruments used for data collection in this study are:

Structured Questionnaire

In-depth Interview Guide

The questionnaire consists of both closed-ended and open-ended questions designed to collect quantitative data on:

Frequency of exposure to documentary films

Types of documentary content viewed

Perceived impact on knowledge and awareness

Influence on attitudes and behaviour

The interview guide is designed to obtain qualitative data from selected respondents. It includes questions that explore:

Personal experiences with documentary films

Emotional reactions to documentary content

Perceived influence on behavioural change

These instruments are considered appropriate because they allow for the collection of both measurable data and detailed personal insights, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

3.6 Method of Administration of the Research Instrument

The research instruments will be administered personally by the researcher.

Copies of the questionnaire will be distributed directly to selected students within the Department of Mass Communication, University of Benin. The researcher will also retrieve the completed questionnaires personally to ensure a high response rate and proper handling of data.

The in-depth interviews will be conducted through face-to-face interactions or virtual platforms, depending on the availability of respondents. This approach allows for flexibility and ensures that respondents can express their views comfortably.

Where necessary, the researcher will provide clarification to respondents to ensure that the questions are properly understood.

3.7 Validity of Instruments

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument measures what it is intended to measure.

To ensure validity, the research instruments will undergo content and face validation. Copies of the questionnaire and interview guide will be submitted to experts in Mass Communication and research methodology for review. These experts will assess:

Relevance of the items

Clarity of language

Appropriateness of structure

Alignment with research objectives

Corrections and suggestions provided by the experts will be incorporated to improve the quality of the instruments before final administration.

3.8 Reliability of Instruments

Reliability refers to the consistency and dependability of a research instrument.

To establish reliability, the split-half method will be used. This involves dividing the questionnaire into two sections and testing the consistency of responses between them.

The results will be analysed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or above will be considered acceptable for this study. A coefficient within this range indicates that the instrument is reliable and suitable for data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR

In this chapter, statistical data collected from respondents were collated, classified, and presented in the simplest form to make the key feature of the study easily grasped and interpreted.

Table 1: Number of Questionnaire Distributed

Variables	Respondents	Percentage %
Questionnaire Retrieved	140	100
Questionnaire not Retrieved	—	-
Total	140	100

Source: Field survey, 2026.

From the table above, a total of 140 copies of questionnaire were distributed to Mass Communication students of the University of Benin. All 140 copies were retrieved successfully.

Table 2: Respondent Gender

Variables	Respondents	Percentage %
Male	53	38%
Female	87	62%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

From the table above, the majority of the respondents representing 62% of the total respondents were female, while 38% were males.

Table 3: Respondent Age

Variables	Respondent	Percentage%
15-19	39	28%
20-24	84	60%
25 and above	17	12%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

The data on table 3 shows the age brackets of the respondents. The majority of the respondents were within the age bracket of 20–24 years representing 60%.

Table 4: Respondent Level

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
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100	48	34%
200	22	16%
300	7	5%
400	63	45%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 4 presents the level of the respondents who responded to the questionnaire. Out of 140 respondents, 400 level students representing 45% were the majority.

Table 5: Do you watch documentary films?

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Yes	56	40%
No	84	60%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

The table above shows that the majority of the respondents representing 60% do not watch documentary films, while 40% indicated that they watch documentary films.

SECTION B: PSYCHOLOGICAL DATA

Table 6: How Often do you watch documentary films

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
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very often	16	11%
often	32	23%
Occasionally	17	12%
Rarely	33	24%
Never	42	30%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 6 represents how often respondents watch documentary films. According to the table, 30% of the respondents indicated that they never watch documentary films, while 24% rarely watch them.

Table 7: Through which platform do you usually watch documentary films?

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Television	9	6%
Social media	78	56%
Netflix	11	8%
None	42	30%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

The table above reveals that the majority of the respondents representing 56% watch documentary films through social media platforms.

Table 8: What type of documentary films do you watch?

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Social Issues(environment)	65	46%
Politics	12	9%
Cultural	21	15%
None	42	30%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 8 shows the type of documentary films mostly watched by respondents. The majority of the respondents representing 46% indicated that they watch documentaries related to social issues and the environment.

Table 9: Documentary films help me understand social problems better.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	36	26%
Agree	59	42%
Undecided	42	30%
Disagree	3	2%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

The table above shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that documentary films help them understand social problems better.

Table 10: Documentary film exposes me to issues I was not previously aware of.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	67	48%
Agree	31	22%
Undecided	42	30%
Disagree	-	-
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 10 reveals that documentary films expose respondents to issues they were not previously aware of, as the majority of respondents strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 11: Documentary films influence how I think about social issues.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	59	42%
Agree	32	23%
Undecided	42	30%
Disagree	7	5%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 11 shows respondents' views on whether documentary films influence how they think about social issues. The majority of the respondents representing 42% strongly agreed that documentary films influence their thoughts about social issues.

Table 12: Documentary films make me more concerned about societal problems.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	31	22%
2 Agree	43	31%
Undecided	42	30%
Disagree	24	17%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

The table above reveals that the majority of the respondents agreed that documentary films make them more concerned about societal problems.

Table 13: After watching documentaries, I see social issues from new perspectives.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	81	58%
Agree	17	12%
Undecided	42	30%
Disagree	—	—
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 13 shows that the majority of the respondents representing 58% strongly agreed that documentary films help them see social issues from new perspectives.

Table 14: Documentary films influence my personal behaviour.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	3%
Agree	53	38%
Undecided	42	30%
Disagree	41	29%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

The table above shows that many respondents agreed that documentary films influence their personal behaviour, although some respondents disagreed with the statement.

Table 15: I have changed my behaviour after watching a documentary.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Yes	59	42%
No	32	23%
Undecided	49	35%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 15 reveals that the majority of the respondents representing 42% agreed that they have changed their behaviour after watching documentary films.

Table 16: Documentary films motivate me to take action on social issues.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	21	15%
Agree	59	42%
Undecided	42	30%
Disagree	18	13%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field survey, 2026

The table above shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that documentary films motivate them to take action on social issues.

Table 17: I share or discuss documentary content with others after watching.

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
Yes	42	30%
No	56	40%
Undecided	42	30%

Total	140	100%
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Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 17 shows that the majority of the respondents representing 40% do not share or discuss documentary content with others after watching.

4.2 Discussion of Findings:

The information obtained from the questionnaire was used to provide answers to the five research questions that were presented in order to make sure that the study's objectives were met. Tables in Section B, in addition to Section A, which deals with the biographical information of the respondents, aimed to provide answers to the five research questions based on information gathered and compiled from the responses given by the respondents to the questionnaire's elements.

4.2.1 Research Question One: What is the level of exposure of audiences to documentary films?

The findings from Table 6, 7 and 8 illustrate that the extent of the respondents' exposure to documentary films is low. Some respondents have a high degree of exposure in the sense of viewing documentary films many times, but majority do rarely or never watch documentary films. Other important results from the findings indicate that most of the respondents get to access to documentary films via social media and majority watch social documentaries and environmental documentaries.

4.2.2 Research Question Two: To what extent do documentary films create awareness about social issues among viewers?

The findings of Table 9 and 10 found that documentary films are effective in increasing viewers' awareness on social issues. Majority of the respondents are in agreement that documentary films help them to be aware and understand more on problems and social issues that they were never aware of before.

4.2.3 Research Question Three: How do documentary films influence viewers' attitudes and perceptions towards social issues?

The data collected from Table 11, 12 and 13 have also indicated that documentary films affect viewers' attitudes and perceptions toward social issues. The results show that majority of respondents concur that documentaries have affected their ways of thinking about social problems and had helped them view problems from a different perspective. In addition, documentary films provide audiences with increased concern over social problems existing in society.

4.2.4 Research Question Four: Do documentary films contribute to behavioral change among viewers?

From the findings of Tables 14, 15, 16 and 17, documentary films do have a part to play in behavior change on viewers. Most of the respondents believed that documentary films influence their individual behavior and encourage them to act on societal problems. However, from the findings of Table 17, most of the respondents rarely share and communicate about documentary films with other people after watching a documentary film. This shows that although

documentary films may have influence on viewers individually, the social interaction and discourse it creates among respondents are rather minimal.

4.3 Analysis of indepth interview

Besides questionnaire taken to respondent, in-depth interview was carried out to 10 students of Mass communication Department, University of Benin so as to get an in-depth opinion on the part of the documentary films in generating behaviour change.

According to the interview, a greater majority of the interviewees feel that documentaries are an effective tool in generating awareness of social issues in the sense that it exposes the audience to reality and provides them with facts about the social issues in question. The respondents asserted that it helps to widen their knowledge on social issues and changing the way they see things concerning their society.

In the course of the interview, one of the respondents stressed that a documentary expose viewer to realities which they will not find in their normal life and therefore creates empathy and consciousness. He pointed that documentaries which he watch about environmental pollution and human rights issue has actually made him know about issues affecting people and changing his disposition to issues that effect the society at large.

Despite these views, there were also a minority of respondents who were of the opinion that behavioral change depends on the subject of discussion and how much the viewer chooses to accept certain facts exposed to him by the documentary. According to them, some people do not readily accept every issue that is been presented in a documentary.

In a broad sense, findings from the interview support findings from the questionnaire, showing that the creation of awareness, development of attitude and eventual behavior change among individuals are possible through documentary films.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 Summary

The aim of the study was to examine the influence of documentary films on behaviour change amongst the students of University of Benin, Mass Communication Department. Specifically, the study aimed at examining the level to which documentary films affect the knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of the audience towards social issues.

The study showed that social media is the primary channel through which the respondents consume documentary films. The study revealed that the respondents encounter documentary films occasionally, while social and environment related documentaries are predominantly viewed.

Findings showed that documentaries create an awareness and understanding on certain issues that the viewing public were previously not aware of. In addition, the study found that documentary films do mold the thinking pattern and influence individual perception towards societal problems in multiple directions.

The study revealed that documentary films bring about behavioral change in a certain reasonable proportion of its audience. While many respondents believe that they can be moved to do something about social problems through documentaries and individual behaviors could be influenced, it however came out in the study that few respondents still cannot ascertain the level at which documentaries bring about change and are unable to identify the level to which their behaviors have been influenced by documentary films as media influence varies from person to

person. The study confirmed that documentary films do serve as important means of raising public consciousness, provide social education, affect perception and bring about change.

5.2 Summery Of Findings

Based on the analysis of this study, it was deduced that:

1. Respondents consumes documentary content mainly through social media
2. Many people are not exposed to documentary films
3. Documentary films influences viewers attitude and perception towards societal problems
4. Documentary films helps viewers understand social issues from a new perspective
5. Documentary films contribute to behavioural change among audiences to a moderate extent

5.3 Conclusion

In the research, it investigates the impact of documentary film in bringing about behavior change in students of the University of Benin. On the findings, it can be concluded that documentary films have various positive impact such as they inform, educate, and persuade an audience about an issue of public interest.

The research shows that documentaries do change people's behavior, attitude and level of concern about issues within society and how they view them, however it could be seen that level of change is dependent upon each individual, but overall documentaries bring about change.

From all the above we conclude that documentary films are not just movies or entertainment for viewers but vital medium for social change, persuasion and for informing the world at large.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, there are several examinations designed to advance understanding and offer solutions to issues. Given this information and the need to provide reliable data for this study, the researcher deemed capable and required to offer the following suggestions:

1. The documentary producers should strive to produce social awareness documentaries that address relevant social problems and bring about positive behavioral change in the society.
2. The media organizations and educational institutions should instill in the habit of documentary viewing among students and youth as a way of bringing about awareness and criticality.
3. The governmental and NGOs should take advantage of the medium of documentaries to bring about enlightenment in their programs and campaigns.
4. The documentaries should be made available and easily accessible to all with the help of television stations, social media sites, streaming services and in schools.
5. The documentary filmmakers should endeavor to make their documentaries much more realistic and relationistic to sustain viewer interests.
6. Enlightenment on the importance and influence of documentaries as agents for social transformation and behavior change should be increased.

5.5 Suggestions for further studies:

The researcher proposes that further research could be done in an educational bid to broaden the scope of this research. Further study/research which could be conducted are:

1. The effects of documentary film contents on the political awareness of youths in Nigeria.
2. The role of documentary films on promoting environmental sustainability and the consciousness of climate change in Nigeria.
3. Comparative analysis of documentary film and fiction films in influencing audience behavior.

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APPENDIX

Department of Mass Communication
University Of Benin,
Benin City,
Nigeria.

Dear Respondent,

REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF ITEM IN QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is **VICTOR SOMTOCHUKWU ONWUEGBUZIE**, a student from the aforementioned department/institution. I am carrying out research on **AN EXAMINATION OF DOCUMENTARY FILM IN CREATING BEHAVIORAL CHANGE**. This research is conducted as part of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communication. The researcher has thoughtfully chosen you to participate in this study to contribute valuable and

reliable data. The research adheres strictly to ethical guidelines, ensuring the anonymity of all respondents. Any information you provide will be used exclusively for academic purposes. I appreciate you for your anticipated support.

Instruction:

Please tick () the option that best represents your opinion. All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and used for academic purposes only.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Gender:

Male []

Female []

2. Age:

15–19 []

20–24 []

25 and above []

3. Level of Study:

100 Level []

200 Level []

300 Level []

400 Level []

4. Do you watch documentary films?

Yes []

No []

SECTION B: MAIN QUESTIONS

Research Question 1: Level of Exposure

5. How often do you watch documentary films?

Very often []

Often []

Occasionally []

Rarely []

Never []

6. Through which platform do you mostly watch documentary films?

Television []

YouTube []

Streaming platforms (Netflix, etc.) []

Social media []

Others (please specify) _____

7. What type of documentary films do you watch most?

Social issues []

Environmental []

Cultural []

Political []

Others _____

Research Question 2: Awareness Creation

8. Documentary films increase my awareness of social issues.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

9. Documentary films expose me to issues I was not previously aware of.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

10. Documentary films help me understand social problems better.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

Research Question 3: Attitudes and Perception

11. Documentary films influence how I think about social issues.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

12. Documentary films make me more concerned about societal problems.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

After watching documentaries, I see social issues from new perspectives.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

Research Question 4: Behavioural Change

13.Documentary films influence my personal behaviour.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

14.I have changed my behaviour after watching a documentary.

Yes []

No []

15.Documentary films motivate me to take action on social issues.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

16. I share or discuss documentary content with others after watching.

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Undecided []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

Open-Ended Question (Very Important)

17. In what ways have documentary films influenced your thoughts or behaviour?

