

EMBRACING SOCIAL REFORMS THROUGH NOLLYWOOD FILMS: THE REALITY AND CONSEQUENCES OF DRUG ABUSE REVISITED



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Abstract

Drug abuse has become a significant public health concern in Nigeria, with devastating consequences for individuals and the society as a whole. This paper brings to the fore the power of Nollywood films in raising awareness about the reality and consequences of drug abuse. Nollywood films have a wide reach and influence, making them an effective medium for disseminating anti-drug abuse messages and fostering positive behavioural change. By incorporating compelling narratives, relatable characters and realistic portrayals of drug abuse related issues; Nollywood films can capture the attention of diverse audiences including vulnerable populations such as the youths. Drug abuse remains a pressing concern with devastating consequences. By leveraging the medium of film, Nigerian film makers can play a crucial role in raising awareness, educating the public and influencing societal attitudes towards drug abuse. This paper therefore contributed to the ongoing dialogue on the impact of Nollywood films in shaping societal perceptions and attitudes. It will equally provide insights into the effectiveness of Nollywood's portrayal of drug abuse highlighting a deeper understanding of the role that the film industry can play in embracing social reforms. Deploying the theories of technological determinism and social learning, this paper suggests roles that filmmakers can play towards promoting social reforms through movie content. This paper recommends among others the need to complement these films aimed at fighting the menace of drug abuse with public awareness campaigns and access to proper treatment and rehabilitation facilities to create a holistic approach in addressing drug abuse in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Drug Abuse, Nollywood films, Social Reforms, Societal attitudes.*

Introduction

Nollywood, Nigeria's vibrant film industry has long been recognized for its ability to entertain and captivate audiences with its diverse story telling. However,

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beyond the realm of entertainment, Nollywood has served as a platform for propagating social change (Okonkwo, 2023). With its massive popularity and widespread reach, Nollywood films possess the potential to address pressing social issues, raise awareness and promote reforms. One such critical concern that Nollywood has tackled is the menace of drug abuse, a pervasive problem that plagues communities and individuals across the nation. This paper delves into the realm of Nollywood's portrayal of drug abuse and the consequential impact it has on society and aims to explore the reality of drug abuse as depicted in Nollywood films highlighting the repercussions it carries for individuals, families and communities at large. By revisiting the issue, light is shed on the transformative potential of these films in shaping public opinion, driving policy changes and fostering a societal shift towards addressing drug abuse with compassion and understanding.

Nollywood is renowned for its ability to resonate with audiences, Nollywood has the unique power to connect with viewers on an emotional level thus establishing the necessity and ability to consciously induce positive reforms in its viewers. (Idoko, 2023). Through compelling narratives, vivid characters and relatable storylines, these films have the capacity to humanize the struggles of drug abuse, unravel its complex causes and depict its devastating consequences. By providing audiences with an intimate window into the lives of individuals affected by drug abuse, Nollywood film serve as a catalyst for empathy, encouraging viewers to confront the issue with heightened sensitivity. Furthermore, Nollywood's influence extends far beyond the confines of the cinema hall. With the advent of digital platforms and the increasing accessibility of Nollywood productions, these films carry the potential to shatter stereotypes, challenge stigmas and initiate conversations that normalize seeking help, treatment and support. (Okonkwo, 2023)

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the power of Nollywood films lies not only in their ability to portray the grim reality of drug abuse but also in their capacity to provide solutions and promote social reforms. By showcasing individuals who overcome addiction, highlighting social networks and emphasizing the significance of rehabilitation, Nollywood films become vehicles for hope and catalysts for change hence emphasizing the need for societal reforms on issues of public interest. (Idoko, 2023). Bamgbose (2018) asserts that through this lens, Nollywood serves as a platform to advocate for increased access to healthcare, educational initiatives and policies aimed at preventing drug abuse and supporting recovery. Nollywood films possess the extraordinary ability to embrace social reforms and when it comes to the harrowing issue of drug abuse, they can help reshape societal attitudes, challenge misconceptions and pave the way for a more compassionate and supportive environment. By revisiting the

reality and consequences of drug abuse through Nollywood lens, this study recognizes the transformative potential of these films in driving the awareness, initiating dialogue and inspiring tangible actions that can alleviate the burden of addiction and foster a healthier society.

Overview of Drug Abuse as a Prevalent Issue in Nigeria

Drug abuse which is a prevalent issue in Nigeria poses significant social, health and economic challenges. The country is grappling with the abuse and illicit trafficking of various substances including cannabis (marijuana), cocaine, heroine, methamphetamine and a range of prescription medications (Oshodi, Aina & Onajole, 2019). According to Bamgbose (2018), several factors contribute to the high rate of drug abuse in Nigeria including poverty, unemployment, peer pressure, societal norms and inadequate drug control measures. In his study, Bamgbose (2018) states that drug abuse affects individuals across different age groups, socio-economic backgrounds and geographical locations in Nigeria. Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) (2019), estimates that over 14.3 million Nigerians about 14% of the population engage in drug abuse with Cannabis being the most commonly abused drug in Nigeria. It is cultivated in several regions and widely consumed especially among the youths. The easy availability and low cost make it a popular choice among the users (Oshodi et al, 2019). The abuse of cannabis has been proven to lead to various physical and psychological health issues. Synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine, ecstasy and codeine-based cough syrups have gained significant popularity in recent years (Babalola & Babalola, 2015). These substances are often smuggled into the country and consumed by young individuals particularly in urban areas. The abuse of these drugs has again been proven to have severe health consequences and can lead to addiction (Eneh, Stanley & Egbuonu, 2014). Opioid abuse including the misuse of prescription painkillers like tramadol and codeine have equally risen dramatically in Nigeria (Bamgbose, 2018). These are easily accessible and their abuse poses a serious threat to public health. High doses or prolonged use can result to addiction, overdose and other health complications (Babalola & Babalola, 2015). Eneh et al, (2014) opine that drug abuse has wide ranging health implications including physical, mental and social consequences. Substance abuse can lead to cardiovascular problems, liver damage, respiratory issues, cognitive impairments and increased susceptibility to infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS. Additionally, drug abuse often contributes to criminal activities and social disintegration (Oshodi et al, 2019).

Again, According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime UNODC (2021), Nigeria serves as a transit hub for drug trafficking due to its strategic location between drug producing regions and consumer markets. International

drug cartels exploit the weak border control systems resulting in large quantities of drugs being smuggled through the country (National Institute on Drug Abuse NIDA, 2020). This illicit trade exacerbates drug abuse within Nigeria and fuels organized crime. The Nigerian government having recognized the gravity of the drug abuse problem is taking measures to address it. The NDLEA which is the primary agency responsible for drug control efforts including enforcement, rehabilitation and public education campaigns. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, limited treatment facilities and corruption hinder the effectiveness of these initiatives (Babalola & Babalola, 2015). Addressing drug abuse in Nigeria requires a comprehensive approach encompassing prevention, treatment, law enforcement and socio-economic interventions. Efforts should focus on raising awareness, providing accessible and affordable treatment facilities, strengthening law enforcement capabilities, promoting economic opportunities and addressing the root causes of drug abuse.

Influence of Media on Societal Perceptions and Behaviors

The influence of media on societal perceptions and behaviours is significant and far-reaching. Media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, influencing cultural norms and shaping individual and collective behaviors (Straubhaar, LaRose & Davenport, 2012). Media outlets including television, newspapers and online platforms have the power to shape public opinion by selecting and presenting information in a certain way. Media coverage of events, issues and individuals can influence how people perceive and interpret them, often leading to the formation of public opinions (Barrot, 2018). Media play crucial roles in setting the public agenda by determining which topics and issues receive attention and prominence. By emphasizing certain stories and neglecting others, media outlets can influence the public's perception of what is important and worthy of discussion (Afolabi, 2018). Furthermore, media representations can contribute to the creation and reinforcement of stereotypes and biases (Idoko, 2023). Through the portrayal of certain groups, communities or individuals, media can shape societal perceptions, reinforce existing prejudices and perpetuate stereotypes based on factors such as gender, race, ethnicity or social class (Ogbe and Ayodele, 2020). Again, media often depicts and promotes certain behaviors, lifestyles and values which can influence social norms and shape individual and collective behaviours. For instance, the portrayal of violence, substance abuse or unhealthy body images in media can influence people's perceptions of what is acceptable or desirable. Media can have a significant impact on political processes and outcomes. Through news coverage, political campaigns and opinion pieces, media can influence public opinion, voter behavior and even election results. They also play a critical role in holding governments and

institutions accountable by investigating and exposing wrongdoing or corruption (Aluko and Odu, 2022).

Oshodi *et al* (2019) in their study asserts that in relation to the influence of media on societal perceptions and behaviors on drug abuse, the media's framing and portrayal of drug abuse can heavily influence public perceptions. They stated that media often times sensationalize drug-related stories, focusing on the negative aspects and dramatic events. This framing can lead to a distorted perception of drug abuse as a widespread and unavoidable problem, potentially increasing fear and stigma associated with drug users. Media representations often create stereotypes and stigmatize individuals struggling with drug addiction (Babalola & Babalola, 2015). These portrayals can perpetuate negative stereotypes such as the 'Junkie' or 'criminal' image which can further marginalize and dehumanize people with addiction issues. Stigmatization can hinder efforts for effective drug policy, prevention and treatment by creating barriers to seeking help and support. It has also been observed that media sometimes glamorizes drug use particularly in movies, TV shows, music and celebrity culture. This glamorization can create a perception that drug use is acceptable, cool or even desirable especially among young and impressionable audiences. Such depictions can lead to increased curiosity, experimentation and potential initiation of drug abuse. However, if the media frequently focuses on drug-related stories or crises, it can shape public perception of drug abuse as a pressing concern, potentially leading to increased support for policies, prevention efforts or changes in societal attitudes. Media campaigns and public service announcements can play a vital role in disseminating information, encouraging dialogue and shaping positive attitudes toward drug abuse prevention and treatment (Eneh, et al, 2014). It serves as an educational tool by raising awareness about the dangers of drug abuse, providing accurate information and promoting prevention strategies.

The Power of Storytelling and its Potential for Creating Awareness

Storytelling is a powerful tool for creating awareness and engaging audiences. It has been used for centuries to pass down knowledge, share experiences and inspire action. Stories have the ability to captivate and connect with people on an emotional level, making them more likely to remember and internalize messages being conveyed (Barrot, 2018). According to Aluko & Odu, (2022), one of the key strengths of storytelling is its ability to simplify complex issues and make them relatable. Whether it's addressing social, environmental, economic or political topics, stories can break down abstract concepts into personal narratives that resonate with individuals. By presenting characters and situations that audiences can empathize with, storytelling can bridge gaps in understanding and

foster empathy and compassion (Ogbe & Ayodele, 2020). Again, stories have a unique way of transcending cultural, linguistic and geographical barriers. They can be told in various forms such as oral traditions, books, movies or even social media posts. This versatility allows stories to reach diverse audiences, allowing for a broader dissemination of information and ideas (Oguamanam, 2021).

Afolabi (2018) further opines that storytelling has the power to inspire action and drive positive change. He is of the opinion that when a story effectively communicates the challenges and consequences of certain issues, it can motivate people to take action, whether it is donating to a cause, changing their behavior or advocating for policy changes. Stories can ignite emotions, spark conversations and mobilize communities around a common cause.

In recent times, various movements and campaigns have harnessed the power of storytelling to raise awareness about important issues. For instance, movements like '*MeToo and Black lives matter*' have used personal narratives to shed light on gender-based violence and racial injustice, respectively. These stories have not only created awareness but have also empowered individuals to share their own experiences and demand change. Therefore, storytelling is a potent tool for creating awareness because it has the ability to simplify complex issues, foster empathy, transcend barriers and inspire action (Odunlami, 2022). By leveraging the power of storytelling, individuals and organizations through Nollywood can bring attention to salient topics like drug abuse and drive positive change in society.

Nollywood Films as a Medium for Social Reforms

Nollywood films originating from Nigeria's vibrant film industry have played a significant role in addressing social issues and promoting reforms in the Nigerian society (Oguamanam, 2021). As a powerful medium of storytelling, Nollywood films have the ability to reach and engage large audiences, making them an effective tool for driving social change. Nollywood have contributed to social reforms through:

1. **Tackling Cultural norms and traditions:** Nollywood films have addressed deeply ingrained cultural norms and traditions that perpetuate harmful practices such as gender inequality, child marriage, widowhood practices, female genital mutilation and domestic violence. By depicting the negative consequences of these practices and presenting alternative narratives, the films have challenged societal norms and sparked conversations around these issues.
2. **Human Rights Advocacy:** Nollywood films have shed light on various human right abuses and injustices prevalent in the Nigerian society. They have tackled subjects like corruption, police brutality, electoral fraud and

religious conflicts. By bringing these issues to the forefront and raising awareness, Nollywood films have played a role in mobilizing public opinion and advocating for change.

3. **Health and Social issues:** Nollywood has addressed public health concerns such as HIV/AIDS, Malaria and maternal mortality. These films often educate viewers about preventive measures, debunk myths and encourage positive behavior change. Additionally, Nollywood films have tackled social issues like poverty, education and youth empowerment, highlighting the need for social and economic reforms.
4. **Promoting Dialogue and Awareness:** Nollywood films provide a platform for open discussions on sensitive topics. They prompt conversations within families, communities and even policy making circles. By presenting diverse perspectives and narratives, these films encourage critical thinking and promote understanding leading to a more inclusive society.
5. **Changing Stereotypes and Promoting Inclusivity:** Nollywood has challenged stereotypes and prejudices against marginalized groups including women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. By portraying diverse characters in lead roles and highlighting their struggles, achievements and contributions, Nollywood films promote inclusivity and challenge discriminatory attitudes.

It is however important to note that while Nollywood films have made significant contributions to social reforms, challenges remain. Issues such as low production quality, limited funding and lack of industry regulations can impact the effectiveness of these films. Nevertheless, as the popularity and reach of Nollywood continues to grow, film makers are increasingly leveraging on this medium to address social issues and drive positive change in the Nigerian society (Odunlami, 2022)

Themes, Narratives and Portrayals of Drug abuse in Nollywood Films

Drug abuse is a prevalent social issue worldwide and Nollywood film industry has also explored this theme in various films (Bamgbose, 2018). Themes according to Aluko and Odu (2022) refer to the underlying ideas or messages explored in a piece of literature, film or any other form of storytelling. When it comes to drug abuse, themes can include addiction, the consequences of substance abuse, the struggles of recovery, the impact on relationships and society and the exploration of the human psyche and its vulnerabilities. Narratives on the other hand as stated by Okonkwo, (2023) refer to the way a story is structured and presented to the consumption of an audience. They encompass the plot, characters, setting and events that unfold. In the context of drug abuse, narratives

can vary widely depending on the intentions of the storyteller. They further stated that narratives can focus on the journey of an individual struggling with addiction, the impact of drugs on a community or the efforts of law enforcement to combat drug related crimes, among other possibilities. Narratives can be fictional or based on real-life experiences, and they can be presented in a linear or non-linear manner (Idoko, 2023). Portrayals refer to how drug abuse is depicted or represented in a particular work. This includes the portrayal of characters that use drugs, the consequences they face and the overall depiction of drug abuse in the story. Portrayals can range from realistic and nuanced to sensationalized or stigmatizing, depending on the intentions and perspectives of the creators (Ogbe and Ayodele, 2020). It's important to note that the way drug abuse is portrayed can have a significant impact on how the audience perceives and understands the issue. While Nollywood films have addressed drug abuse in different ways, it is important to note that the portrayal and narratives surrounding drug abuse can vary from film to film. The portrayal of drug abuse in media and storytelling can have various purposes, including raising awareness, provoking discussion, challenging stereotypes or simply providing entertainment. However, it is crucial to approach these portrayals critically and be mindful of their potential influence on public perceptions and attitudes towards drug abuse. Some common themes, narratives and portrayals of drug abuse are;

1. **Warning Against Consequences:** Many Nollywood films use drug abuse as a cautionary tale, emphasizing the negative consequences that come with it. The focus often is on the detrimental effects on individuals, families and society as a whole. These films typically highlight the downfall of characters who engage in drug abuse showcasing the physical and psychological deterioration that results from addiction.
2. **Youths and Peer Pressure:** Nollywood films often depict drug abuse as a consequence of peer pressure, particularly among young people. These narratives explore how vulnerable individuals can fall into drug addiction due to the influence of their friends or the desire to fit in with a particular social group. The films highlight the importance of making the right choices and resisting negative influences.
3. **Drug Trafficking and Crime:** Some Nollywood films delve into the dark world of drug trafficking and the associated criminal activities. These narratives often revolve around characters involved in smuggling drugs, portraying the dangers, violence and legal consequences they face. The films aim to shed light on the nefarious side of drug abuse and raise awareness about the criminal networks involved.
4. **Redemption and Recovery:** While many films focus on the negative aspects of drug abuse, some Nollywood productions also explore the journey of

redemption and recovery. These narratives depict characters who struggle with addiction but eventually find the strength to overcome their substance abuse problems. These stories offer hope and emphasize the importance of support systems, rehabilitation and personal growth.

5. **Cultural and Societal Factors:** Some Nollywood films examine the influence of cultural and societal factors on drug abuse. They may highlight the pressures faced by individuals in certain environments or explore the link between drug abuse and socioeconomic factors such as poverty or unemployment. These narratives seek to address the root causes of addiction and promote a broader understanding of the issue.

However, the portrayal of drug abuse in Nollywood films is not uniform across all productions. Different filmmakers may approach the topic from varying perspectives, resulting in a range of narratives and portrayals. Additionally, the industry has evolved overtime and newer films may offer nuanced and diverse representations of drug abuse.

Brief Analysis of Some Popular Nollywood Films that address Drug abuse

The Nigerian film industry Nollywood has produced a number of films that address the issue of drug abuse. These films play a crucial role in raising awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse, promoting prevention and encouraging rehabilitation. Some of the popular Nollywood films that tackle drug abuse are;

1. **Black November (2012):** Directed by Jeta Amata a popular Nollywood director, this film tells the story a Niger Delta community affected by the destructive consequence of oil exploitation, including drug abuse. The film highlights how drug addiction fuels violence and corruption in the region and the devastating impact it has on individuals, families and communities.
2. **Finding Mercy (2013):** Directed by Desmond Elliot, this film addresses the issue of substance abuse and its impact on family relationships. It follows the story of a young woman struggling with addiction and her family's efforts to help her recover. 'Finding Mercy' explores the themes of love, forgiveness and redemption while providing insights into the challenges faced by individuals and their families dealing with addiction.
3. **Dibia (2015):** Directed by Tchidi Chikere, Dibia sheds light on the world of drug trafficking and abuse. The film portrays the consequences faced by individuals who get involved in the drug trade, focusing on the moral and social dilemmas they encounter. It emphasizes the importance of making responsible choices and avoiding the temptation of quick money through illegal means.

4. **Code of Silence (2015):** Directed by Emem Isong, this film delves into the world of drug abuse and addiction within the Nigerian society. It revolves around a successful business man whose life takes a dramatic turn when his son becomes addicted to drugs. 'Code of Silence' examines the social stigma associated with drug abuse and the need for collective action to combat this problem.
5. **Lost Maiden (2019):** Directed by Ugezu J.Ugezu, this film portrays the dangers of drug abuse in a rural community. It revolves around a young girl who falls into drug addiction and the subsequent challenges she faces. 'Lost Maiden' highlights the importance of education, awareness and community involvement in preventing drug abuse among vulnerable individuals.

These films provide valuable narratives that aim to educate, raise awareness and advocate for change in attitudes and behaviors regarding drug abuse. They often depict the consequences of addiction, the struggles faced by individuals and their loved ones and the importance of seeking help and rehabilitation. By addressing this important social issue, Nollywood films contribute to the ongoing dialogue on drug abuse prevention and intervention in Nigeria and beyond.

Theoretical Framework

Technological Determinism Theory

Nollywood films can play a significant role in raising awareness, promoting dialogue and influencing public opinion. Technological Determinism theory as propounded by Marshall McLuhan (1960) is the theory that suggests that technology is the primary driver of social, cultural and economic change. According to this perspective, technological developments shape and influence various aspects of society, including politics, communication and even individual behavior. However, analyzing this phenomenon through the lens of technological determinism theory provides further insights into the potential impact of Nollywood films on social reform efforts. Technological determinism theory suggests that technology drives social change and shapes society's values, norms and behaviors. In the case of Nollywood films, they can be considered a form of technology that influences the cultural landscape and societal perceptions (Odunlami, 2022). When Nollywood addresses the topic of drug abuse, it has the potential to shape public understanding and reactions to this issue. Nollywood films which can be viewed through various technological and digital platforms can depict the reality of drug abuse by portraying its consequences on individuals, families and communities. The power of storytelling in films allows audiences to empathize with characters and recognize the far reaching consequences of drug

abuse, potentially leading to a stronger collective will for social reform (Okonkwo, 2023). However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations and potential consequences of relying solely on Nollywood films for social reforms. Technological determinism theory suggests that technology is not neutral and can reinforce existing power structures and dominant ideologies. In the case of Nollywood films addressing drug abuse, there is a risk of oversimplifying the issue, perpetuating stereotypes or promoting stigmatization of individual's struggling with substance abuse. Overall while technological determinism offers insights into the influence of technology on society, it is important to note that human agency, cultural values, economic systems and political structures also play significant roles in shaping technology and its impact on society.

Social Learning Theory

The Social learning theory developed by Albert Bandura (1977) posits that individuals learn through observation, imitation and modeling. Applying this theory to Nollywood films, we can understand how characters' behaviors and their consequences can influence viewers' attitudes, beliefs and subsequent actions related to drug abuse. These films depict the challenges faced by individuals, families and communities affected by drug abuse and they can serve as cautionary tales for viewers. Through the Social Learning theory, Nollywood films can influence viewers' attitudes towards drug abuse and encourage positive behavioral changes. By showcasing characters who overcame addiction seeks help or rejects drugs altogether, these films can inspire viewers to make healthier choices and avoid the pitfalls of substance abuse. Nollywood films anchored on the Social Learning theory can be effective tools in promoting social reforms and addressing the issue of drug abuse. By revisiting the realities and consequences of drug abuse through storytelling, these films have the potential to raise awareness and influence attitudes. The Social Learning Theory assumes that individuals passively absorb behaviors by observing others (Cherry, 2017). However, it overlooks the complex array of factors that contribute the drug abuse such as individual dispositions, social and economic circumstances and psychological factors. By simplifying the learning process, the theory may not fully capture the complexities of drug abuse and its causes. Again, the Social Learning theory places a strong emphasis on observational learning as the primary source of behavior acquisition. However, it tends to downplay the significance of other factors such as personal experiences, genetic predispositions and individual decision-making processes. Drug abuse is a multi-faceted issue that cannot be solely attributed to observational learning, as it is influenced by various internal and external factors.

Conclusion

Nollywood films can be a powerful tool to address societal issues, including the reality and consequences of drug abuse. By leveraging the wide reach and influence of Nollywood, filmmakers have the potential to raise awareness, educate and stimulate conversations about this crucial issue and can depict the harsh realities of drug abuse, showcasing its negative effects on individuals, families and communities. One of the key advantages of using Nollywood films as a medium for social reform is their popularity and accessibility (Oguamanam, 2021). Nollywood being the second largest film industry in the world has its films reaching millions of viewers across Nigeria and beyond (Idoko, 2023). Therefore by incorporating messages about the reality and consequences of drug abuse in these films, filmmakers can effectively reach a broad audience and have a significant impact on public opinion and behavior. Nollywood films have a unique ability to connect with viewers emotionally, making them a powerful tool for empathy building and understanding the complex factors that contribute to drug abuse. By portraying relatable characters and realistic situations, film makers can help audiences recognize the root causes of drug abuse such as poverty, peer pressure or lack of education and support systems. These films can also highlight the personal struggles and challenges faced by individuals battling addiction, fostering compassion and encouraging society to adopt a more empathetic approach.

Suggestions

The following suggestions were proffered in this paper;

1. Nollywood filmmakers should ensure that the films on social reforms for drug abuse present a realistic portrayal of drug abuse, its causes and consequences and also endeavor to incorporate accurate information about the different types of drugs, their effects on individuals and communities and the challenges faced by addicts and their families.
2. Incorporating educational elements into films to inform viewers about the dangers of drug abuse is highly recommended to inform viewers about the dangers of drug abuse, the signs of addiction and available support systems. Resources such as helplines and treatment centres should also be incorporated in films to promote awareness and encourage seeking help.
3. Nollywood filmmakers should explore the journey of rehabilitation and recovery in their films showing the challenges and triumphs of individuals seeking to overcome addiction and to highlight the importance of support systems, therapy and reintegration into the society to provide hope and inspiration to viewers.

4. Relevant drug related government agencies should be encouraged to partner with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and experts in the field of drug abuse prevention and rehabilitation to ensure accurate information, guidance and support on drug related issues.
5. Government should extend the impact beyond using film to raise awareness by also organizing grass root campaigns and community outreach programs aimed at tackling drug related issues in the society. Films should be used as a starting point for dialogues and workshops targeted at preventing drug abuse and supporting those affected.
6. Relevant stakeholders should encourage ongoing dialogue and engagement through various social media platforms, online forums and interactive screenings. This would help facilitate conversations between experts and affected individuals to deepen understanding, address questions and foster empathy.

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