

**STREET CULTURE AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED
HOLLYWOOD AND NOLLYWOOD FILMS**

**ADESIYAN Rebecca Uduakobong
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ABSTRACT

In contemporary society, the problem of street culture has been a recurring issue. Some Children or adults leave their homes to live in harsh conditions on the street, thereby imbibing behaviours which qualify as street culture. Several studies have examined street culture from the perspective of gangsterism, violence and music as represented in written texts with little attention paid to films. This study investigated street culture in Nollywood and Hollywood films and its impacts on the character of the actors and actresses in the selected films with a view to highlighting its implications for contemporary society.

The study adopted the content analytical method in interrogating the selected films. A purposive sampling technique was used to select a total of twelve films comprising six Nollywood and six Hollywood films. The films were subjected to content and qualitative analysis to explore the elements of street culture in them. The study adopted Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory and Sarris' Auteur Theory as the framework for analysis.

Findings revealed that street urchins are victims of poor parenting, economic hardships, poverty, peer pressure, absence of a father figure, poor societal values, the death of a parent, neglect, abandonment, physical and emotional abuse and violence as portrayed in the selected films. The study found that the consequences of these factors on street urchins include maladaptive behaviours, indiscriminate sexual practice, substance abuse, prostitution, stealing, and pickpocketing. Further findings revealed that filmmakers deployed different narrative patterns to elucidate how the characters develop in the films. In addition, young people who engage in street vices in Hollywood and Nollywood films are labelled differently in the films. In Hollywood, they are referred to as 'homeless youths' or 'homeless children', but in Nollywood, they are called 'street children' or 'children in the street'. It was revealed that in both Hollywood and Nollywood films, the absence of a father figure in a child's life is detrimental to the character development of the child. Another major finding is that the plot structure revealed a pattern in which some of the characters in the Nollywood and Hollywood films went unpunished and prospered from their corrupt practices. This has implications for the propagation of values in any society.

The study concluded that the influence of street culture made the characters engage in maladaptive behaviours due to the failure of caregivers to fulfil their responsibilities towards them. The study, therefore, recommended that parents should not shirk their duties towards their children and should provide enabling environments through which the children can feel safe and repose confidence in them. Also, every adult should help train children in their parents' absence. The Government should censor the quality of films produced to make them avenues for correcting societal ills and promoting right values in adults and children.

Keywords: Character Development, Hollywood, Nollywood, Street Culture

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