



Application of Karpman's Drama Triangle in Character Development of Contemporary Nigerian Films: A Study of Blood Sisters and Gangs of Lagos

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Abstract- This study investigated the application of Karpman's Drama Triangle in character development in films of the present times in Nigeria with Blood Sisters (2022) and Gangs of Lagos (2023) as the two films studied. New Nollywood has produced increasingly mature narratives that have created complex characters with psychologically motivated actions and relationships that revolve around conflict, making the Karpman Drama Triangle an apt device to analyse their character development. The study aimed to find out how the three roles (Victim, Rescuer, Persecutor) influence scriptwriting and character development in modern Nigerian storytelling. A qualitative approach was taken, and had thematic content analysis. The two films were intentionally chosen because they had a continuous conflict and a role shift in the main characters. It is found that the character of the lead actors can oscillate between the three roles in reaction to betrayal, violence, loyalty and survival, and that this is not just a function of individual psychology, but also a function of Nigerian cultural and social expectations. It concludes that the Drama Triangle, although from the Western context, is applicable in Nigerian narrative context and serves as an instrument for script writers, directors and film scholars to create psychologically realistic characters.

Keywords- The Drama Triangle theory of Karpman, Character development, Contemporary Nigerian films, Blood Sisters, and Gangs of Lagos



I. Introduction

Nigerian film industry is popularly known as Nollywood and one of the largest and influential film industry in the world. Streaming platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video have expanded the international reach of Nigeria's films and spurred production quality, storytelling and character development. According to Ezepeue (2020), New Nollywood has changed the approach of the industry from producing low budget “videos” to creating professional productions that can be released on an international level.

Character development is an essential part of film as it drives plot and influences the interpretation of a story. According to Chatman (1978), audiences can understand a character's actions, intentions, and problems by means of character development. Although stereotypical characters of good and evil dominated Nollywood movies in the past, today's Nollywood has adopted a more complex approach by incorporating characters that are psychologically nuanced, and evolve through the course of a movie. This study is based on the Drama Triangle Theory formulated by Stephen Karpman, who believed that interpersonal conflict is a conflict that involves three roles: the Victim, the Persecutor and the Rescuer. The theory suggests that each person has a tendency to adopt one of these roles as needed, and provides a framework for studying and understanding character dynamics and interactions in film stories.

The study deals with the two recent Nollywood movies Blood Sisters (2022) and Gangs of Lagos (2023) constructed around the themes of friendship, betrayal, violence, loyalty, survival, and power. It's the primary characters that are constantly moving between Karpman's three roles of conflict, creating and moving the story forward. The psychological theory for character development has not been much explored in the context of Nollywood even though the cultural and industrial aspect of Nollywood has been studied tremendously.

1. Significance of the Study

This research work will focus on how the characters have been constructed in Blood Sisters and Gangs of Lagos by using the Drama Triangle theory by Karpman, which is part of the literature on Nollywood. For filmmakers, this is the psychological approach to thinking about character development and will be of interest to students studying Film Studies, Mass Communication, Theatre Arts and Psychology.



II. Conceptual Review

1. Concept of Drama Triangle Theory

Stephen Karpman (1968) developed Drama Triangle Theory to explain patterns of interaction in interpersonal conflict. Karpman recognizes three positions that people have in conflict; they are: Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor. These roles are not set in stone, as a person who is a Victim today can be a Persecutor the next day. Victim feels weak and wants to be supported by other people. The Rescuer attempts to save or assist the Victim, but this can result in rescuing the person instead of solving the issue for them, and create dependency instead of independence. The Persecutor looks down on, regulates or threatens people, blaming or attacking them. The theory is relevant to psychology, counselling, leadership, communication, media studies, and in conflict, the roles are often interchangeable, making interpersonal dynamics complicated. It can be used in film studies to show how characters interact with each other and progress from one role to another as demonstrated in *Blood Sisters* (2022) and *Gangs of Lagos* (2023).

2. Concept of Character Development

Character development is a change in, or a layering of, a character's personality, motives, feelings, and behavior throughout the course of a movie. It is a key part of a storyline as it tells what the character does to the audience and helps them to be emotionally involved in what the character experiences. Narrative films are all about characters, as they influence the plot and theme, Bordwell, Thompson and Smith (2020) state. Characters grow and change in response to conflict and experience, showing their strengths and weaknesses, values and development. The portrayal of characters in modern movie has gone beyond being completely black or white to realistic characters, and character-based storylines are now seen in New Nollywood. Filmmakers have increasingly been developing more complex characters, reflecting reality, as seen in the character shifts of the protagonists in *Blood Sisters* (2022) and *Gangs of Lagos* (2023)—characters driven by loyalty, betrayal, violence, and survival, as noted by Haynes (2016).

The concept of contemporary Nigerian films (New Nollywood) is under the discussion. New Nollywood, as the Nigerian films are called, is a significant change in the Nigerian film industry. The earlier era was characterized by low budget, direct-to-video films, while the current era of New Nollywood films is distinguished by professional filming, better sound design and complex storylines. Haynes (2016) has stated that all of these changes have taken Nollywood away from being a video industry to a well-known



global cinema that has begun to influence the international market. The digital technology and streaming services like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video have helped to speed up this change. According to Ezepue (2020), digital distribution has expanded the reach of Nigerian movies to a global audience and increased the opportunities to make more technically and artistically advanced films. Modern Nollywood deals with the concepts of corruption, gender roles, crime, identity, violence and social inequality, and it gives great emphasis on character driven story plots. According to Bordwell, Thompson and Smith (2020), multidimensional characters enhance the audience's engagement with the story because they make it look more realistic and emotionally captivating. Advanced storytelling, the development of characters and the attention on the pressing social issues of the society as seen in films like *Blood Sisters* (2022) and *Gangs of Lagos* (2023) can be used as a basis for analysing the character development in the selected films.

3. Concept of Conflict and Character Roles in Film Narratives

Conflict is essential to filmmaking as it creates plot, determines character actions and provides dramatic gravitas to a story. It happens when characters encounter problems in reaching their objectives and have to choose what they do which determines the path of the story. According to Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith (2020), a narrative film is a sequence of events which is connected in a causal manner, with conflict as the major force which influences character conduct and changes in the story. Conflict occurs between characters, within a character or between a character and society or environment; audiences gain insight into a character's disposition, morals, emotions, and relationships through conflict. In a more recent study, Brahman et al. (2021) and Frermann et al. (2023) point out that the role of character interaction and role change in interpreting stories is an important one. In modern Nollywood movies, characters often find themselves in situations of moral dilemmas – such as corruption, betrayal, violence, loyalty, and survival. Haynes (2016) and Ezepue (2020) both cite these themes as key to contemporary Nigerian cinema, and the industry's increased focus on character-driven stories. Conflict continually forces characters in the *Blood Sisters* (2022) and *Gangs of Lagos* (2023) to move among the roles of Victim, Rescuer, and Persecutor.



III. Theoretical Framework

1. Karpman's Drama Triangle Model

The Drama Triangle Model (STEPHEN KARPMAN 1968) describes the behaviour that takes place between human beings when they are in interpersonal conflict. The model is based on Transactional Analysis which separates three players – the Victim, the Rescuer and the Persecutor. These are not distinct roles, but rather individuals shift in and out of each one as conflict unfolds. The Victim feels helpless and is seeking assistance from others. The Rescuer tries to save or solve the Victim's issues and might unintentionally foster dependence instead of responsibility. The Persecutor is aggressive and criticizing in order to blame or intimidate others. One of the great advantages of the theory is its explanation of the changes in roles that occur when the Rescuer's life is unappreciated, and when the Victim turns outwards to become a Persecutor. This shifting between roles is one of Hay's reasons for interpersonal conflict to be ongoing (2009). The Drama Triangle is widely used in psychology and counselling, leadership and communication and in film analysis to understand the relationships between characters and the conflicts that ensue. This research uses the theory to analyze the interaction between characters in *Blood Sisters* (2022) and *Gangs of Lagos* (2023).

2. Character Theory

Character Theory provides an understanding of the ways characters are developed and created in narrative texts. The characters are the heart of a story, according to Chatman (1978), because they drive the events in a story and help an audience understand the story through what characters do, say and how they interact with others. Characters may be classified as static and dynamic: static characters are more or less the same throughout a story, and dynamic characters change as a result of conflict and experience. Most modern films prefer characters that are dynamic rather than static, which means that they are more complex in their behaviour. Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith (2020) believe that narrative hinges on characters' reactions to and choices in conflict. One of the reasons it is applicable here is the concept of character theory, which is important to discuss as it helps explain the development of characters through conflict. In *Blood Sisters* (2022) and *Gangs of Lagos* (2023), the main characters' behaviour and psychology change dramatically as a result of betrayal, violence, loyalty, friendship and survival, which is very reminiscent of Karpman's idea of characters transforming from Victim to Persecutor to Rescuer. So the Drama Triangle Model is complemented by Character Theory in this study.



IV. Literature Review

In an observation and content analysis, the study carried out by Aniukwu (2019) on the effect of Nollywood film content on the character and leadership development of Nigerian children revealed that Nollywood films largely influenced the character and leadership development of the Nigerian children. In the study by Aniukwu (2019), observation and content analysis qualitative methods revealed that Nollywood films largely influenced the character and leadership development of the Nigerian children. The study used the purposive sampling technique with five children's films made in the Nollywood industry such as Jack and Jill, Cain and Abel, Obama: The Postmaster, Mafian Kids, and Tom and Jerry, which were selected based on George Gerbner's Cultivation Theory. The results indicated that most of the movies selected exhibited negative qualities like disobedience, violence, hatred, mischief and disrespect for authority, while only Mafian Kids featured positive family values.

Costume Design was looked at in a study on the costume design of Yolanda Okereke in Blood Sisters and how it affects the characterisation and storytelling in the film. The researcher employed a qualitative, descriptive and analytical design to interview the costume designer and used secondary sources in conjunction with the Affective Materialism Theory by Giuliana Bruno. The results indicated that costume design gave personality, social status, emotion, and cultural identity to communicate the story to the audience. The findings of the study can be applied here as costume design in Nollywood has a significant impact on character and visual narration, which is seen here as a part of character creation and visual narration along with roles of the characters followed by the Drama Triangle theory of Karpman.

In the selected Nigerian films, using a descriptive design and applying Multimodal Discourse Analysis based on the Visual Grammar Theory of Kress and van Leeuwen, Nurudeen (2024) investigated the conveyance of cultural significance in multimodal communication, in the films under study. Aníkúlápó and Elesin Oba were selected for the sample as their cultural importance and popularity. The findings revealed that elements of visual nature like costume, setting and symbol, have Nigerian cultural and historical connotations, while the language, proverbs, music, sound, facial expressions and body language are elements that add to the construction of characters and the messages.



Idyo (2025) analyzed the works of Gangs of Lagos as an expression of cultures and character development using the film, newspaper article, interview, review and social media comments. The Representation Theory of Stuart Hall combined with the thematic analysis and the semiotic analysis revealed that the representation of the Eyo masquerade and the Isale Eko people in the film were criticised for cultural misrepresentation.

Maureen (2023) assessed the representation of Lagos in certain Nollywood movies, drawing on a qualitative, descriptive sociological design and content analysis approach. The sample consisted of The Wedding Party, Hire a Man, and The Ghost and the Tout. The findings indicated that these films give a positive side of Lagos such as wealth, tourism, creativity and entrepreneurship and negative side such as poverty and social inequality and the researchers found that it would be better to represent the city in a balanced way. Here it is important for the ways in which characters are portrayed to communicate messages about society, as well as in parallel with the role dynamics found in Blood Sister and Gangs of Lagos through Karpman's Drama Triangle.

Balogun and Omoera (2025) used content analysis, observation, historical analysis, and a seven-participant focus group to analyse the depiction of the Eyo masquerade festival and the cultural identity of Lagos Island in the movie 'Gangs of Lagos. The study revealed that the movie distorts, demonises and portrays the Eyo festival as a festival of violence, crime and gang activities which has a negative impact on viewers understanding of the festival and on the Lagos culture, in general. This study is applicable here as it deals with the same issues of conflict, victimization, aggression and power struggle that are at the heart of the Drama Triangle, but does not directly address the psychological roles and character relationships explored in this study.

Drawing on Feminist Film Theory, Postcolonial Theory and Social Constructionism Theory, Aondover (n.d.) explored the position of Nollywood in empowering African women through a content analysis of secondary sources such as books, journals, newspapers, government papers and historical documents. The results revealed that the women in the modern-day Nollywood are becoming more powerful, strong, and influential that question the traditional notions and are responsible for social change. It is pertinent here because of the way that character roles and narration are employed to communicate social messages.

Using a qualitative content analysis based on Cultivation Theory, Osakpolor (2023) investigated the representation of women in modern Nollywood films and how far the



representation has improved. Isoken (2017) and King of Boys (2018) are female directed and female led films in the sample, both made during the 2017-2018 period. The results indicated that although women were portrayed as directors, both the films maintained the stereotypical patterns of women's dependency on men, objectification, silencing and punishment for women who aspire to be ambitious.

In Silent Scandal, Half of a Yellow Sun and King of Boys, Ilo (2025) has adopted a feminist approach, incorporating the male gaze, the female gaze, Nego-feminism, Snail-sense feminism and STIWA, to explore the portrayal of female characters within the Nollywood industry. The findings revealed that though the idea of patriarchy exists in the Nollywood films, the films released after 2000 portray women in various ways, a little more complex and influential which starts creating a room for development of the character and gender equality. In Nigeria, this is pertinent here since it discusses role, conflict, power and character interaction in the context of the Nigerian film.

Vitalis, Amadi and White (2024) used secondary data as well as the theories of Auteur Theory, Reflective-Projective Theory, and Cultivation Theory to analyse the role of directors in the construction of cultural identity, authenticity and ethnocentrism in the film industry of Southern Nigeria. The study revealed that the director is a cultural author whose decisions influence the perception of the audience about culture, gender and moral, and Nollywood also exists as a source of stereotype and a device for cultural survival and transformation. This study is applicable here in terms of the ways in which filmmakers create characters and the roles they give them, but with a focus on the directorial and cultural aspects in contrast to this study's focus on character interaction within the Drama Triangle.

With content and critical textual analysis of selected Nigerian films, Alamu (2010) examined narrative structures and storytelling technique in contemporary Nigerian film and how storytelling, theme and technique of the film influence the construction of characters and audience engagement. The study revealed that most Nigerian films address social problems like crime, family conflict, corruption and morality, and character construction is largely through conflict, relationship and narrative construction. This study is relevant to this because it helps us to understand the character roles and relationships in Blood Sisters and Gangs of Lagos in the Drama Triangle by Karpman.

Another study on cultural representation and ethnocentrism in Nollywood looked into how the agency of the director determines authenticity and cultural representations in



Nollywood films from the south of Nigeria, using secondary data from journal articles, books, archives, and newspapers, and analyzed under Auteur Theory, Reflective-Projective Theory, and Cultivation Theory. The study revealed that film makers have a significant influence on the portrayal and interpretation of characters and culture, which has an impact on the characters who enter into the Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor positions in Karpman's Drama Triangle.

V. Methodology

1. Research Design

The research design for this study was qualitative with content analysis methodology. This was the right method since it enabled the researchers to analyse the behavior, relationships and conflict portrayed by the characters in the selected films. A content analysis was used to identify the Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor roles, according to Karpman's theory of the Drama Triangle and their contribution to character development.

2. Population of the Study

The films studied were contemporary Nigerian movies that were produced in the era of the New Nollywood which is high production quality, strong story lines, complex characters and the representation of the current social concerns. Further, the population was characterized by films portraying conflict, power struggle, character transformation.

3. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Blood Sisters (2022) and Gangs of Lagos (2023) were intentionally chosen as two films. The purposive sampling technique was chosen due to the interpersonal conflict, character transformation, and role changes found in both films, which have been outlined in the context of Karpman's Drama Triangle Theory.

4. Sources of Data

Secondary data was used in the study. Primary sources were Blood Sisters (2022) and Gangs of Lagos (2023) themselves, and secondary sources were books, peer-reviewed journals, conference papers and academic publications.



5. Units of Analysis

Units of analysis included main characters, key scenes, dialogue, and interactions from the selected films focusing on when the Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor roles were apparent and when role shifts happened.

6. Data Collection

The data were gathered by repeated viewing of the selected movies. Observations during the viewing of key scenes, dialogue, character actions and interactions were noted, and literature was consulted to interpret the observations.

7. Data Analysis

Thematic content analysis was used to analyse data. Characters and scenes were analyzed for themes involving Karpman's Drama Triangle, Victim, Rescuer, and Persecutor, and the transitions between these roles.

8. Validity and Reliability

Selected films were watched several times for validity and the results were compared with the relevant literature on character and narrative development. To ensure reliability, consistency was maintained in the observation, note taking and the application of Karpman's Drama Triangle Theory during the analysis.

VI. Thematic Analysis

1. Objective One

To assess the effectiveness of Karpman's Drama Triangle roles (Persecutor, Victim and Rescuer) in improving script writing and character development in the Nigerian film industry (Nollywood).

Theme One: Changing Character in the Process of Change (Role Shift)

As the story evolves, Blood Sisters sees Sarah and Kemi take on different roles on the Drama Triangle. The initial film is strong with Sarah as a victim of Kola's abuse, but as things get worse, she begins to consider her own dependency and vulnerability and slowly regains her courage and self-respect. Meanwhile Kemi repeatedly intervenes to rescue Sarah—taking on the role of Rescuer, but thereby subjecting herself to fear, danger, and emotional stress. Throughout the story, both of them are also in the Persecutor position as they stand up to the people threatening them.



Lagos' gangs, Obalola and Gift, exhibit the same flux in their identities throughout the story. In the beginning, Obalola is a Victim of structural violence, poverty, and political manipulation, before becoming increasingly involved in gang activity and becoming a Persecutor. However, there are times when he wants to save those he cares for at the expense of being the Rescuer. The shift of roles here is a fluid one, which is a characteristic of violence and survival in the socio-political world depicted in the film. These results combined indicate that Karpman's Drama Triangle serves as a tool for writers to create multi-faceted characters who react in a believable manner to the challenges of the story's conflict, shifting the focus in character creation from absolute notions of good and bad, to more complex and engaging characters.

The setting of the story is the main force driving character development.

Another theme that has arisen out of the coding process is that interpersonal conflict is the main driving force behind character change. Whether developing a blood bond in Blood Sisters or a social bond in Gangs of Lagos, the core of the major role always involves an emotional, physical or social struggle. Conflict isn't just about advancing the story, it's about changing the characters' way of thinking, feeling and acting in the story. As characters face new experiences, they must make hard decisions which change the dynamics of their relationships with others and ultimately their role on the Drama Triangle.

Blood Sisters is a story about domestic violence, betrayal and survival as Sarah makes a series of tough moral choices. At first abused by Kola, she takes on the role of Victim but when the violence escalates she starts to question her own dependence and vulnerability, becoming more courageous and more full of self respect. Kemi's persistent desire to protect Sarah places her in the position of Rescuer but also adds to her own pain, fear and danger as the situation grows increasingly difficult, Kemi's role as Rescuer can also become Victimhood. In some places both women are also entangled in confrontations in which they are in the role of Persecutor. In Gangs of Lagos, political corruption, gang conflict, poverty become the central characters' identities, causing their central characters (Obalola) to constantly shift allegiances from Victim of structural violence to Persecutor and back to Victim of structural violence, and from Rescuer to Persecutor and back to Rescuer as they seek to protect their friends. In both movies, the characters are well grounded in realistic ways through sustained interpersonal conflict.



Theme Three: Psychological realism increases engagement with the audience.

The third theme is how the psychological realism enhances the level of audience participation, as people interact with characters in a manner that is similar to how they interact with one another in life, rather than as archetypes of hero and villain. Both movies feature characters defined by fear, trauma, loyalty, ambition, love, and survival, not by moral categories, and Karpman's descriptions of the movement between the roles, where the situation dictates, are quite similar.

This psychological realism is evident in *Blood Sisters'* character of Sarah. Kola's emotional manipulation, intimidation and physical abuse from the outset of the film immediately makes audiences feel for her and puts her in a vulnerable position, clearly identifying her as Victim. As the narrative goes on she finds herself becoming more resilient, and taking some hard decisions to help herself and Kemi, bringing her from the Defender to the Rescuer role and allowing the audience to applaud her resolve. However, some of her more sinister and spiteful moves are not clearly commendable, making her arc a bit more complicated to understand at times. Kemi's attempts to save Sarah put her in danger too, and cause her emotional pain. In *Gangs of Lagos*, Obalola is a complex figure whose character is determined by poverty, childhood trauma, political manipulation and the love of his community but who cannot be reduced to any one moral type. In this context, Karpman's Drama Triangle type scenario is a good model to develop the psychological nature of character and to reinforce screenwriting, as a whole, in modern Nollywood.

2. Objective Two

To add to film and media studies scholarship by investigating the use of Karpman's Drama Triangle as a theoretical model for character development in narrative texts that are non-western, in this case, Nigerian.

The theme "Adaptation of Karpman's Drama Triangle within the Nigerian cultural realities" was explored.

Despite its Western psychological origin, the thematic analysis reveals that Karpman's Drama Triangle is relevant to the stories told in Nigeria. These dynamics of Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor were first developed in transactional analysis, as a way of explaining interpersonal conflict, but they closely reflect the patterns that can be seen in Nollywood today, as is evident in *Blood Sisters* and *Gangs of Lagos*, which were analysed deductively. The psychology is not the only motivator for these shifts in role, however, but Nigerian society, culture and politics.



In *Blood Sisters*, the experiences of the characters as Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor are influenced by the cultural norms of Nigeria with regards to marriage and relationship. The victimisation of Sarah relates to the social pressure on women to preserve family honour, tolerate abuse and keep them in check, which extends her being treated as Victim and influences many of her later choices. The cultural values of community, loyalty and friendship are presented throughout Kemi's repeated actions to protect Sarah. *Gangs of Lagos* is similar to this dynamic with regards to the shift in roles between politics, poverty, street survival and community bonds – the dynamics are not driven by personal psychology but rather by obligations to family, community and circumstance. Inequality, social pressure and the need to survive, for example, motivate Obalola's transposition from roles. However, with the help of the local cultural context, Karpman's Drama Triangle can be considered as a potent tool for understanding character development in Nollywood.

Theme Five: Cultural Context stretches the understanding of psychological roles.

Another theme is the extension of the Victim/Rescuer/Persecutor roles beyond a psychological definition in Nigerian cultural values. The Drama Triangle focuses on interpersonal conflict in terms of individual patterns of behaviour, but the analysis of *Blood Sisters* and *Gangs of Lagos* reveals that the roles are culture and socially influenced in Nigeria. The role of the Persecutor, Victim or Rescuer occurs not only based on the character's individual psychology or emotion, but also based on communal and societal obligations.

Collectivist principles seem to be paramount in rescuing, rather than individual principles. Most rescue situations in the two films are defined by the notion of solidarity, loyalty and collectivism, as in the case of Kemi being willing to put herself at risk on multiple occasions to save Sarah in the film, which is indicative of a culture of loyalty and community, not a culture of individual empathy. Persecution goes beyond the individual and is a system of oppression and inequality. The victimization of Sarah is exacerbated by patriarchy, gender-based violence and power imbalance in *Blood Sisters*, and political corruption, poverty, gang violence and institutional weakness in *Gangs of Lagos*. Character formation is therefore argued to be an interplay between Victim, Rescuer, and Persecutor roles as they perform their duty to safeguard their communities, fulfill social obligations, and react to social pressures, thus making it a better idea to read the Karpman's Drama Triangle in conjunction with the Nigerian cultural values, family dynamics, and socio-political realities.



Theme Six: Contribution to African Film Scholarship

Another theme of this study is the contribution this study can make to African film and media scholarship. Previous research about *Blood Sisters* and *Gangs of Lagos* has focused primarily on gender roles, culture, politics, violence and social problems. This study contributes to this literature by applying a psychological perspective to the process of character construction in the two movies using Karpman's Drama Triangle. Deductive coding found the recurring roles of Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor is a clear way to follow the character change in both stories.

Because of this analysis, it is more appropriate to see character development as a response to the action of the story, but rather as a dynamic process that takes place in the midst of a relationship, and as such, is constantly influencing feelings and behaviours. Both movies have characters who, according to the situation and the state of their relationship, can play the Victim, Rescuer, and Persecutor roles, solving the behavior problems of the characters in a more complex manner than merely a hero versus villain conflict. The study also highlights the importance of an interdisciplinary approach using the psychological theory of Karpman and thematic analysis from the perspective of African film studies because it provides an interpretation that extends beyond cultural or sociological analysis to consider character motivation. It also shows that the western theory of psychology can be integrated into the African narrative without taking the place of the African understanding of narrative, but enriching it. In this context, the study urges the future researchers to consider the psychological, cultural and communication theory in concert for their study on the development of character in modern Nollywood.

VII. Summary of Findings

The study aimed to examine the character roles of *Blood Sisters* and *Gangs of Lagos* in relation to Karpman's drama triangle and to describe the drama triangle related to the characters of the two texts by applying the thematic content analysis method. The results reveal that the lead characters continuously cycle between the Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor roles, indicating that the roles played by the characters in the modern-day Bollywood films are not rigid. Conflict, based on violence, betrayal, political control, friendship, and survival, was the main force behind this movement and the psychological shift that goes along with it. The analysis also demonstrates the ability to use the Drama Triangle to develop multidimensional characters that develop throughout the script, making the audience more emotionally invested in the choices the characters



make because they feel them in a realistic manner rather than as a stereotype of a hero and villain. Last, but not least, the study concludes that the Drama Triangle is a model that is suitable for the Nigerian narratives if the cultural features of the country are considered; in Nigeria, family values, community responsibility, political circumstance and social norms will all have an impact on how and when characters assume and switch roles.

VIII. Conclusion

The present study finds that Karpman's Drama Triangle is a useful theoretical tool for the study of character development in modern Nigerian film. This ongoing interchange between the Victim, Rescuer and Persecutor is pivotal to the psychological realism of the main characters over the course of *Blood Sisters* and *Gangs of Lagos*. In both films, there are no set characters or villains, but rather characters that change based on circumstance, interaction and survival, both altering the movie's plot and making it more relatable for viewers.

The findings also illustrate that Karpman's theory, which is from the western psychology, has some relevance in a Nigerian cultural context. This places the study in the context of African film scholarship, where the psychological theory is read alongside the local cultural awareness to explain the behaviour of the characters and their development of the plot. The screenwriter, director, and producer benefits from this analysis in its practical application because it illustrates the importance of understanding the psychological roles dynamics in script writing and acting the characters.

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