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LITERARY ARTISTIC REPRESENTATION OF INDOCTRINATION AND
INDUCEMENT AS RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES IN INSURGENCY IN
SELECTED NIGERIAN FILMS

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Abstract

This paper examines how four Nollywood films (*The Delivery Boy*, *The Milk Maid*, *Eagle Wings*, and *Boycott*) portray the indoctrination and inducement tactics used for insurgent recruitment. Applying a qualitative methodology anchored on New Criticism theory to the selected films, this depiction reveals the manipulative methods, such as indoctrination and inducement, used by insurgent leaders to maintain control, emphasising the tragic outcomes of such practices. The work finds that insurgency recruiters employ a two-pronged strategy: promising celestial rewards to establish the sect's superiority, and offering financial incentives to secure the recruits' allegiance. The paper concludes that beyond rhetoric, these visual portrayals of the insurgents' recruitment tactics offer critical insights into the global framework of insurgency literature by providing valuable intelligence for counterinsurgency efforts, and strengthening government policies which are designed to curb the spread of these groups and their activities across postcolonial Africa.

Keywords: New Criticism, insurgency, up movies, indoctrination, inducement.

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Introduction

Contemporary insurgency movements across the globe increasingly rely on complex recruitment mechanisms that extend beyond conventional military conscription, employing psychological manipulation and ideological conditioning to expand their operational capacity. The prevalent insurgency landscape in Nigeria, particularly the Boko Haram phenomenon, exemplifies how extremist organisations systematically exploit socio-economic vulnerabilities and religious sentiments to recruit combatants and supporters. Literature and cinema have emerged as powerful media for examining these intricate recruitment dynamics, offering distinct perspectives on how insurgent groups orchestrate their human resource acquisition strategies. Nollywood, Nigeria's prolific film industry, has particularly demonstrated remarkable capacity in translating these complex socio-political realities into compelling artistic narratives that illuminate the psychological and ideological dimensions of insurgent recruitment. Contemporary artistic productions utilise sophisticated narrative structures and symbolic representations to decode the intricate processes through which extremist movements successfully mobilise individuals for their operational frameworks (Ribadu 57).

The proliferation of insurgent activities in Nigeria has generated substantial scholarly discourse, yet limited attention has been devoted to examining how artistic representations capture the subtleties of recruitment strategies employed by these groups. While existing research has extensively documented the operational aspects of insurgency, there remains a significant gap in understanding how literary and cinematic portrayals contribute to public comprehension of recruitment methodologies specifically. The complex interplay between indoctrination processes and inducement mechanisms within insurgent organisations demands analytical approaches that transcend conventional political science frameworks. Contemporary artistic works, particularly those emerging from Nollywood, present unique opportunities to explore recruitment dynamics through aesthetic media that reveal psychological and ideological dimensions often overlooked in traditional academic discourse.

This study seeks to accomplish three primary objectives. First, it aims to analyse how contemporary Nollywood films employ metaphorical representations to illuminate the psychological dimensions of insurgent indoctrination processes. Second, the research endeavours to examine the symbolic portrayal of material inducement strategies within selected cinematic narratives and their effectiveness in depicting recruitment mechanisms. Third, the investigation explores how hyperbolic artistic techniques function to enhance audience understanding of the complex relationship between religious fanaticism and insurgent recruitment methodologies.

The scope of this study encompasses four Nollywood productions on insurgent recruitment strategies released between 2010 and 2024 – *The Delivery Boy*, *The Milk Maid*, *Eagle Wings*, and *Boycott*. The research argues that contemporary Nollywood cinema employs complex literary and artistic techniques to transform intricate insurgent recruitment strategies into accessible aesthetic experiences, thereby contributing to public understanding of how indoctrination and inducement mechanisms function as primary tools for extremist organisational expansion.

Contemporary Nollywood films employ advanced literary and cinematic techniques—such as metaphor, symbolism, irony, and hyperbole—to transform the complex recruitment strategies of insurgent groups, particularly those grounded in indoctrination and inducement, into accessible aesthetic narratives that enhance public understanding of extremist expansion in postcolonial Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this paper is New Criticism, a formalist critical approach that emerged in the early twentieth century and dominated Anglo-American literary studies from the 1930s through the 1960s. New Criticism focuses on the literary work as a self-contained, autonomous entity, whose meaning is determined by the interaction of its linguistic and literary elements, rather than by reference to external factors such as authorial intention, historical context, or reader response (Leitch et al. 1053). This approach privileges close textual analysis and the internal coherence of the work itself, making it particularly suitable for examining how Nollywood films deploy specific artistic devices to represent insurgent recruitment strategies.

M.H. Abrams defines New Criticism as "a type of formalist literary criticism that reached its height in the 1940s and 1950s and that received its name from John Crowe Ransom's *The New Criticism* (1941)" (225). Abrams further explains that New Critics "conceive a poem to be a self-sufficient object, or else an object that becomes complete in the reader's experience without reference to the poet's life and intentions, or to the world of reality that lies outside the poem itself" (225-226). This emphasis on textual autonomy allows for rigorous examination of how cinematic narratives construct meaning through their intrinsic formal properties.

Similarly, C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon characterise New Criticism as an approach that "emphasises the work as autonomous, independent of author, of moral and social concerns, of historical or biographical reference, and of traditional definitions of beauty, universality, and truth" (330). They note that New Critics "concentrate on explication de texte" and employ "the methodology of close reading," examining "the ambiguities, paradoxes, ironies, and tensions that constitute the work's meaning" (330-331). This methodology proves invaluable for analysing the complex presentations and rhetorical strategies embedded within insurgency-themed films.

Jade Swann et al. describe New Criticism as "a close-reading approach that focuses solely on the text to uncover deep meanings through analysis of language, structure, and literary devices, without considering external factors." This definition emanates from the scholarly contributions of several foundational literary theorists whose work established the principles and practices of New Critical methodology.

John Crowe Ransom, considered the founding figure of New Criticism, avers that "the new criticism, which I propose to call ontological criticism, regards a poem as a concrete object... The poem, if it be a good one, is always a little drama of meanings, and the criticism should be correspondingly attentive and painstaking" (329). Ransom's conceptualisation of the literary work as an ontological entity – possessing

its own mode of being – establishes the foundation for treating films as independent aesthetic objects worthy of meticulous formal analysis.

Cleanth Brooks, another prominent New Critic, goes further to note that "the poem is not the same as its paraphrase; a paraphrase of a poem is always a poor thing, always an oversimplification, and a distortion of the original meaning" (33). Brooks's concept of the "heresy of paraphrase" underscores the notion that meaning in literary and cinematic texts resides not merely in propositional content but in the complex interplay of form and content, language and structure. For the present study, this principle suggests that the meaning of insurgent recruitment strategies in Nollywood films cannot be reduced to a simple summary but must be understood through careful attention to how metaphor, symbolism, irony, and other devices function within the narrative fabric.

This view is supported by W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley, who opine that one must ask "how the poem is an object of its own, not what it means according to the author, but what it means in itself" (3). Their articulation of the "intentional fallacy" – the error of judging a literary work by reference to authorial intention – and the "affective fallacy" – the error of confusing the work with its psychological effects on the reader – reinforces the New Critical insistence on textual objectivity. Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language defines the intentional fallacy as "the error of judging a literary work by trying to assess the author's intention rather than the actual achievement of the work" (733), while the affective fallacy represents "the error of evaluating a poem by its effects – especially its emotional effects – upon the reader" (734).

Similarly, Robert Penn Warren declares that "New Criticism insists that the meaning of a text must be found within the text itself, independent of historical context, authorial intent, or reader response" (45). Warren's formulation builds upon several key New Critical concepts that strengthen this approach's capacity to repudiate consideration of historical and biographical contexts in favour of intrinsic formal analysis. These concepts include the intentional fallacy, the affective fallacy, the heresy of paraphrase, the objective correlative, and the ambiguity of the text.

T.S. Eliot's concept of the "objective correlative," though predating the formal establishment of New Criticism, significantly influenced New Critical practice. Eliot defines it as "a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked" (48). This principle proves particularly relevant when examining how Nollywood films employ concrete visual and narrative elements to evoke the psychological dimensions of indoctrination without explicit authorial commentary.

William Empson's exploration of ambiguity further enriches the New Critical theory. Empson argues that "any verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language" constitutes ambiguity, and such ambiguity "adds some nuance to the direct statement of prose" (1). For film analysis, this attention to multiple simultaneous meanings enables sophisticated readings of

how cinematic texts represent the complex, often contradictory appeals of insurgent recruitment.

Despite the analytical power of New Criticism, some scholars have challenged its deliberate exclusion of contextual considerations. Terry Eagleton critiques New Criticism's formalism, arguing that "the poem or novel came to be seen as a self-enclosed object, mysteriously intact in its own being" and that this approach "conveniently disposed of literature's awkward tendency to implicate itself in social and historical reality" (47). Similarly, Fredric Jameson contends that "the convenient working distinction between cultural texts that are social and political and those that are not becomes something worse than an error: namely, a symptom and a reinforcement of the reification and privatisation of contemporary life" (20). These critics argue for the significance of interpreting texts within their cultural, social, and political milieu to fully appreciate their meanings.

While these critiques possess validity for certain types of cultural analysis, the present study's focus on the intrinsic formal properties of cinematic representation—specifically how literary and artistic devices function to convey recruitment strategies—justifies the New Critical approach. The methodology enables precise identification of metaphor, symbolism, irony, hyperbole, and other devices that constitute the films' aesthetic strategies for representing indoctrination and inducement. Moreover, by bracketing questions of authorial intention and historical context, New Criticism allows the films themselves to speak, revealing how their formal structures create meaning that can be systematically analysed and interpreted.

For the purpose of this study, New Criticism provides a rigorous methodological framework for examining how *The Delivery Boy*, *Eagle Wings*, *The Milk Maid*, and *Boycott* employ specific literary and cinematic techniques to illuminate insurgent recruitment mechanisms. The close reading methodology central to New Criticism enables detailed attention to dialogue, symbolism, narrative structure, and rhetorical devices, thereby revealing how these films transform complex sociopolitical realities into accessible aesthetic experiences. This approach acknowledges that while historical and social contexts inform the creation and reception of these films, their artistic power and cultural significance reside fundamentally in their formal achievements as autonomous works of cinematic art.

Review of Related Literature

Recruitment plays a very practical role within insurgency since the insurgent groups rely heavily on manipulating individuals ideologically and psychologically to boost their manpower strength for strategic operations. Indoctrination, as an essential tool of radicalisation, engages persuasive religious and ideological teachings to convince abductees or sympathisers of the need for a new path. The persuasive speeches manipulatively depict the insurgent leaders as divine messengers and present acts of violence against the "enemies" of God as sacred duties and holy wars. Inductees, whether as foot soldiers or suicide bombers, are convinced that their actions earn God's approval and a place in paradise. Inducement, a tactical endeavour of insurgents manifests diversely. The insurgent leaders adopt financial inducement, materialism, promise of power coupled with exploitative cajolery to sway the people's

decision. These aestheticised portrayals of indoctrination and inducement in some insurgent Nollywood films have also gained scholarly attention. Hamza Tukur Ribadu affirms that Boko Haram's recruitment methods encompass indoctrination, forceful conscription, and inducement (57). The deliberate detailing of these manipulative elements draws attention to their significance in insurgent recruitment dynamism. According to Austin Long, "insurgency is the use of political and military means by irregular forces to change an existing political order. These forces typically mingle with civilians to the forces defending the political order" (546).

Their deceptive mingling, overtly displayed through the demonstration of love and affection diverts the attention of the vulnerable populace from their ulterior motive. Janet Lewis, in her book *How Insurgency Begins*, avers that "In an attempt to induce civilians to keep their secrets from the government, nascent rebels use early attacks and rumours to influence civilians' perceptions of their capabilities and righteousness"(n.p). Ibraheem Bahiss et al infer that "to exercise control, armed groups apply a variety of practices, including different types of violence, dispute resolution, taxation, regulation of movement, access to aid and services, and social strictures"(7). The insurgents deploy these means to attract, intimidate and coerce the unsuspecting victims. In the same vein, the United Nations Organisation (UNO) draws attention to the most vulnerable group in the recruitment regimen:

Children are more easily intimidated and far easier to control, both physically and mentally, than adults. Children are more inclined to quickly show loyalty to authority figures and are especially susceptible to following the beliefs and behaviours of those they love and respect, an element that is especially relevant when families are involved in the recruitment process. The groups, who strive to ensure their future survival, may see the use of children as an "investment in the future generation". Tactically, "Children, particularly girls, are increasingly being used as spies, for delivering messages..."(United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 19)

The movie, *The Delivery Boy*, supports this claim through the character Amir who is adopted as a son by an insurgent leader, Mallam Sadam, but later trained as a suicide bomber. Mallam Sadam's incestuous advances, interpreted as love by the innocent Amir, serve as the catalyst that lures Amir into insurgency. As observed by BBC Africa Security Correspondent, Tomi Oladipo: "Boko Haram has relied on stealth to keep its insurgency alive in the face of government offensives. Over the years, the ability of the jihadists to blend into local communities, or to conceal themselves in the vast terrains of the region, has aided their campaign of violence"(qtd in *BBC Monitoring*). This statement by the BBC Monitoring group gives clear credence to the subtle nature of insurgent recruitment strategies. The emphasis in this paper, however, is not on the sociological expostulation of these strategies but on Nollywood's deployment of literary artistic elements such as metaphor, irony, and hyperbole in the exploration of the manipulative tactics of insurgency recruitment.

Methodology

This study utilises a qualitative content analysis approach to explore the depiction of insurgency in contemporary Nollywood films, following the recommendations on

qualitative research outlined by Young (4) as well as Hsieh and Shannon (1278). Employing a purposive sampling strategy, four films featuring themes of insurgency, terrorism or violence from the past decade were selected. The four movies chosen for in-depth analysis of insurgent recruitment methods are: *The Delivery Boy*, *The Milk Maid*, *Eagle Wings* and *Boycott*.

A systematic coding process was developed to mark and categorise significant scenes, dialogues, plot points, and artistic devices. For example, specific film excerpts are marked with a code indicating the movie episode and timestamp, such as (*Boycott* E2 1:22:05). The analysis involves breaking down the films into thematic sections, grouping similar content, and transcribing key dialogues. Artistic elements like metaphor and symbolism were also examined for their contribution to the central themes.

Analysis and Discussion

Recruitment plays a very practical role within insurgency, especially as the insurgent groups heavily rely on manipulating individuals ideologically and psychologically to boost their manpower strength for combat and other operations. This section therefore, deploys literary devices to examine how the strategies of indoctrination and inducement serve as significant elements in understanding insurgent recruitment dynamism.

Artistic Portrayal of Indoctrination as an Insurgent Recruitment Strategy

Indoctrination, as an essential tool of radicalisation, engages persuasive religious and ideological teachings to convince abductees or sympathisers of the need for a new path. The persuasive speeches manipulatively depict their leaders as divine messengers and present acts of violence against the "enemies" of God as sacred duties and holy wars. Inductees, whether as foot soldiers or suicide bombers, are convinced that their actions earn God's approval and a place in paradise.

The film *The Delivery Boy* focuses on the core doctrines of insurgents' ideology and the trigger of rebellion against the ideology within the Nigerian context. The dialogue between Kazeem and Amir (inductees), reveals some of the doctrinal focus of insurgents and the rebellion that emanates from epiphanic discovery.

Excerpt 1Up

Kazeem: You are not fighting a holy war, who are you fighting for?

Amir: This war is mine and I will not stop until Mallam Sadan falls.

Kazeem: Mallam Sadan is our father, how can the servant of God be your enemy? Amir: Mallam Sadan doesn't serve God. He serves himself.

Kazeem: You dishonour God with your words.

Amir: God will be dishonouring himself, if he chose a filthy mouthpiece like Mallam Sadan.

Kazeem: The Quran is the only mouthpiece of God.

Amir: But to us, Mallam Sadan is the mouthpiece of the Quran. He taught us all that we believe. We killed people because he called them infidels...
Mallam Sadan is not a true Muslim (*The Delivery Boy* 45:28)

This dialogue is rich with symbolism that drives its central conflict—rebellion against hypocritical manipulations. Mallam Sadan is not just a person; he symbolises the ideological authority that shapes both characters' beliefs and morality. To Amir, however, he represents hypocrisy and corruption, a self-serving leader who distorts the truth for personal gain; while the Quran is a powerful symbol of divine purity and truth. For Kazeem, the Quran is an untouchable source of faith, and Mallam Sadan, as the "mouthpiece of the Quran," becomes an extension of this divine authority. These opposing symbols create a sharp contrast between Amir's growing disillusionment and Kazeem's unwavering faith.

Irony plays a significant role in deepening the tension. Amir, once a devout follower, now openly rebels against the very man who taught him his beliefs. This situational irony reveals the reversal of roles: Mallam Sadan, the spiritual guide, is now the betrayer, while Amir represents the voice of truth and reason. Verbal irony also stands out in Amir's provocative statement, "God will be dishonouring himself if he chose a filthy mouthpiece like Mallam Sadan." The simile reflects the incongruity responsible for Amir's revolt and rebellion. Similarly, while Kazeem reveres Mallam Sadan as a divine servant, Amir's disdain reveals a deep-seated mistrust of human authority over faith, further challenging Kazeem's beliefs and the doctrinal focus of insurgents.

The dialogue also uses juxtaposition to highlight the differences between Kazeem and Amir. Kazeem represents blind faith and loyalty, refusing to question the authority of Mallam Sadan despite his shortcomings. Amir, in contrast, embodies reason and rebellion, questioning not only Mallam Sadan's legitimacy but also the morality of their shared past. Rhetorical questions add to the tension, especially in Kazeem's opening lines, "How can the servant of God be your enemy?" This question implies that Amir's stance is inconceivable since Kazeem views religious authority as inherently good. Amir's response, however, reframes the narrative by challenging the assumption that Mallam Sadan truly serves God.

Antithesis is another key element that adds complexity to Amir's argument. Asserting that Mallam Sadan is both a teacher of faith and a false Muslim creates an inherent contradiction. The antithesis reflects Amir's inner conflict and the acute tension of reconciling faith with human imperfection. Also, Amir's declarations, "We killed people because he called them infidels," lays bare the devastating consequences of blind obedience and "This war is mine, and I will not stop until Mallam Sadan falls," suggests a rebellion not just against his father but also against the oppressive structures Mallam Sadan represents. This statement, energised by Amir's emotional disclosures, prepares the ground for a climactic conflict capable of reshaping both their faith and family ties. The dialogue illustrates the force of indoctrination in creating mechanical, unquestioning followers whose loyalty can be disrupted only by deeply personal grievances. It also employs foreshadowing that anticipates an unavoidable confrontation.

The Milkmaid skillfully presents indoctrination as an enthralling but compelling task,

demanding insurgents' unwavering commitment to the agendum of continuity which is achieved in this movie through the establishment of an insurgent institution for training suicide bombers. Zainab, one of the trainers groomed by insurgents, offers an insight into the ideological inclinations of insurgency through the lengthy cajolery below:

Excerpt 2

Zainab: Of course, you do not have to go on the mission if you do not want to, only the sacrifices willingly offered are acceptable to God. But it seems to me that this life is always unfair to us women. The men rule everything, although we are no less intelligent than they. Their privileges will continue in the afterlife because of the glory they achieve through jihad. Does that seem fair to you? it is not. And we know that God is just. So, it stands to reason that our role as women cannot be only to cry and keep the household in the absence of men. No. We are to be full participants in the fight. We are capable as they, if not more. And it's not hard at all. You just press the button and the next instant, you are at the gate of paradise. While the rest of us continue to suffer down here. Think about it. You will be given the privilege of recommending seventy (70) others to join you there and God himself must honour your recommendation. I hope you will remember me. (*The Milkmaid* 1:10: 23)

Zainab's indoctrination strategy employs various rhetorical devices. She starts by using the politeness strategy, "Of course" to soften the tone and make the message more appealing. She also includes a rhetorical concession, acknowledging the listener's autonomy by saying, "You do not have to go on the mission if you do not want to" while still encouraging participation. She uses aporia in, "It seems to me" to make the women share her perspective, and pathos to make them feel the perceived injustice and unfairness faced by women.

Zainab reinforces her argument with antithetical statements such as "men rule everything," "we are no less intelligent than they," and "their privileges will continue in the afterlife," to indicate the contrast between men and women's experiences. She uses this contrast to expose the perceived injustice, stimulate critical thinking about the disparities and encourage women to question the status quo. She poses the rhetorical question, "does that seem fair to you?" to strengthen her appeal to the emotions of the women, invite them to consider the perceived injustice and share her perspective.

She also uses the enthymeme "God is just... So, it stands to reason that our role as women cannot be only to cry and keep the household" as ethos to invoke the principle of God's justice and create a convincing argument for women to believe and accept her line of reasoning. To further her persuasion, Zainab uses anaphora as logos to punctuate the women's capabilities and roles by repeatedly stating, "We are to be full participants in the fight. We are as capable as they, if not more." This serves to stress the importance of women's involvement, challenge them to recognise their potential, and encourage them to take action. In other words, Zainab's speech presents and encourages blissful martyrdom.

The excerpt below from *Eagle Wings* reveals the inner struggle of a dedicated insurgent who suddenly discovers that he has been misled and manipulated, finding himself committed to a cause he does not fully comprehend. Zango's confusion arises from the contradictions and uncertainty surrounding his identity as an insurgent, leading him to question everything, including his own beliefs and actions. This uncertainty creates emotional turmoil, making him more open to change and potentially prompting him to reconsider his allegiances.

Excerpt 3

General: what is this? what is happening?

2i/c(Zango)... you made many of our fighters die in the battlefield. You made us kill people for no reason! For an ideology we know nothing about. Now, I don't even know who I'm fighting or the reason why I'm fighting, I don't know. Am I fighting for God? No! Am I fighting for Politicians? Is it you Korinjo that I'm fighting for? or I'm fighting for the food I will eat tomorrow? Korinjo, I want you to answer me now! (*Eagle Wings* 1:39:03)

Zango's emotional outburst sheds light on areas of vulnerability insurgent leaders explore in their indoctrination bid: gullibility, ignorance and confusion. The irony in the statement, "You made us kill people for no reason! For an ideology we know nothing about," showcases a lack of personal thinking and blind allegiance to leadership, portraying him as a mindless "zombie." Zango's use of aporia in "Now, I don't even know who I'm fighting or the reason why I'm fighting," reflects his incredulity and deep ignorance about the purpose and enemy of their fight and following orders without questioning the morality or justification of such actions. His series of rhetorical questions such as "What is happening?" and "Am I fighting for God or Politicians?" indicate his confusion and frustration, and evoke empathy for his sense of betrayal and demand for answers. The religious and political allusions to "God" and "Politicians" reveal Zango's emotional conflict, evoking a sense of his disillusionment. He is conflicted at the realisation that his supposed spiritual, selfless and sacrificial allegiance might not have been to God but to the self-serving, worldly motivations and interests of his leader and politicians. Again, Zango's dilemma exposes most inductees' blind commitment to a cause they know little about.

Artistic Portrayal of Inducement as a Recruitment Strategy

Inducement, a tactical endeavour of insurgents, manifests diversely. It manifests as monetary, material or might inducements. The film, *The Delivery Boy*, presents monetary incentives as the catalyst for recruitment. The challenge of feeding many mouths propels Sister Dorcas' easy manipulation and submission. This form of inducement demonstrates the tendency of material allurements to sway even the most stoic souls towards a negative course.

Excerpt 4

Amir: So you know! why are you working for them?

Dorcas: When I started this place, I started it to help children. But when I ended up having to feed fifty kids with only enough money to feed twenty

of them, what was I supposed to do? or do you think it is the Indomie and Bournvita that celebrities bring that run this place? Do you? All they wanted were the older boys no one would adopt. At least they gave you meaning for your life.

Amir: Do you know what they do?

Dorcas: But if you have to give one of your children to the devil, in order to save the rest, wouldn't you? Wouldn't you do it? Joseph, if I don't do this, they will no longer support the Orphanage. I can't let that happen! I can't do this to the other kids (*The Delivery Boy* 32: 31).

Dorcas's passionate plea to Amir reveals the desperate reality of the orphanage's struggles. She deploys emotional appeal to justify her controversial decision. The rhetorical questions "Do you think it is the Indomie and Bournvita that celebrities bring that run this place?" and "Wouldn't you do the same?" draw Amir's attention to the inadequacy of celebrities' donations alone to sustain the orphanage as she desperately solicits his understanding and support. Her assertion, "I started it to help children...I ended up having to feed fifty kids with only enough money to feed twenty of them," is an ironic hyperbole which creates a vivid image of the crisis to justify the necessity of her choice of trading off some of her wards to insurgency for sustenance.

Dorcas uses hyperbole when she alludes to the malevolent option of "give one of your children to the devil" as a necessary evil. Again, the critical dilemma reinforcing her argument that accepting the offer is the only way to save the orphanage establishes her ethos as a caring but desperate individual willing to make tough decisions even if it casts doubt on her moral standing. The emotional tone and language, such as "give you meaning for your life" and "I can't do this to the other kids," is a strategic use of emotional manipulation appealing to Amir's compassion and creating an empathetic connection to induce Amir to consider the issue from the perspectives of the orphanage's children, potentially swaying his opinion. Also, by presenting herself as a guardian willing to make difficult choices, Dorcas justifies her acceptance of inducement in exchange for giving out older children to the course of insurgency despite Amir's objections. In other words, the literary elements demonstrate how insurgent leaders explore the vulnerability of some individuals to achieve their goal of recruitment.

Excerpt 5

Council Member: (*pointing to Zainab but addressing Dangana*) You were right about her. She is destined for great things, perhaps, even the place on the council that should have been yours. (*The Milkmaid* 1:53:55).

This excerpt contains literary elements that deepen the emotional and narrative complexity of the scene. One key element is situational irony which emerges from the contrast between the praise directed at Zainab and the implied failure of Dangana. In stating that Zainab might take the council seat that "should have been" Dangana's, the Council Member implies Dangana's loss while celebrating Zainab's potential. This situational irony creates tension as it stresses the shifting power dynamics between

the two characters, evoking both admiration for Zainab's rise and pity for Dangana's displacement.

At the same time, the statement is rich in foreshadowing as the phrase "destined for great things" points at Zainab's future achievements and her eventual ascension to a leadership role. By suggesting that she might claim the seat once meant for Dangana, the Council Member not only builds anticipation but also lays the groundwork for potential conflict or reconciliation. This subtle prediction heightens the suspense, encouraging the audience to question how these characters' fates will unfold and how Dangana will respond to this implied challenge. Another significant element is the use of indirect address, where the Council Member points to Zainab but speaks to Dangana. This rhetorical choice creates a hidden tension within the dialogue. The eulogizing of Zainab in Dangana's presence is the Council Member's tactics of forcing Dangana to confront his perceived failure indirectly, making the moment more emotionally charged. Simultaneously, Zainab receiving implicit validation further emphasises the shifting swing of respect and authority among the three characters.

The emotional impact of the statement lies in its ability to create tension and provoke reflection. Juxtaposing Zainab's potential with Dangana's missed opportunity in the dialogue invites a mix of admiration, regret and perhaps envy. This complexity enriches the characters' development, sustains the audience's interest on their portrayal and upholds the evolving contest between Zainab and Dangana.

The inducement strategy deployed in *The Delivery Boy* is financial enticement. The goal is to recruit young men to boost the ranks of the Danladian insurgent group. Inuwa entices Yusuf who submits because his daughter, Jummai, needs medical treatment which he cannot afford. Here, Yusuf explicitly describes how the handouts psychologically impact and keep them, the inductees, subjugated.

Excerpt 6

Yusuf: They brainwash us, they pay our families in exchange for our lives. They tell us that our lives are meaningless to us. They take advantage of our conditions and buy us over (*Boy* 1:28:48).

This excerpt from Yusuf's outburst foregrounds the systematic exploitation and psychological manipulation inflicted on victims of insurgency. The anaphoric repetition of "they" establishes the collective dominance of the insurgent leaders, pinpointing their deliberate erasure of individual will and casting the victims as subdued and powerless. The parallel sentence structure signals the cyclical nature of this oppression, while the accusatory tone conveys Yusuf's bitterness and anguish. Emotionally charged expressions such as "brainwash," "meaningless," and "take advantage" intensify the sense of brutality and evoke strong pathos. The metaphor "buy us over" further exposes the commodification of human life and the deep-seated dehumanisation inherent in the insurgents' system of control. The declaration "They tell us that our lives are meaningless to us" functions simultaneously as hyperbole and irony: the exaggeration works to erode the victims' sense of worth, while the irony reveals the contradiction in declaring these lives valueless even as they are exploited for strategic gain. Likewise, the assertion "They pay our families in exchange for our

lives” evokes a Faustian bargain, illustrating how individuals – cornered by poverty, manipulation, and coercion – are compelled to exchange their lives for meagre compensation to their families. This morally bankrupt transaction reflects the enduring theme of sacrificing the sacred for deceptive and insufficient reward. Collectively, these literary and rhetorical elements craft powerful psychological imagery that exposes the moral violence of insurgent exploitation and the imbalance of power that sustains it.

Conclusion

This paper sets out to examine indoctrination and inducement as insurgency recruitment strategies in Nollywood movies. The work shows that insurgent recruitment strategies are versatile, employing symbolism and other tropes to engage indoctrination and inducements, thereby drawing attention to the desperate drive and control in the insurgent groups. The findings reveal that indoctrination serves to manipulate individuals into viewing the insurgent ideology as superior, often promising celestial rewards to gain loyalty. Similarly, financial and material inducements are employed to solidify allegiance among the populace, enticing recruits to remain committed to the cause. Together, these recruitment techniques highlight the manipulative tactics deployed by insurgent leaders to maintain control and heighten the tragic outcomes that often accompany such recruitment practices.

The study shows that Nollywood movies go beyond entertainment and information to serving as artistic tools for romanticising insurgency and shaping public perceptions of the extremism of the group. The study also adds to the existing literature on New Criticism and insurgency in global literature. The implication of these portrayals of recruitment methods provides counterinsurgency units and the government with the tools for understanding the recruitment ideologies and objectives of insurgency groups, in order to curb and eradicate their growth in the postcolonial African region.

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