

**FAITH, CULTURE, AND CINEMATIC NARRATIVES: EXAMINING CHRISTIAN
REPRESENTATIONS IN SELECTED NIGERIAN FILMS**

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ABSTRACT

*The increasing incorporation of religious themes in Nigerian cinema has generated scholarly interest in how Christianity is represented and interpreted within Nollywood productions. While many films employ Christian symbols, language, and narratives, concerns have emerged regarding the extent to which such representations align with or diverge from traditional Christian teachings. This study critically examined the portrayal of Christian themes in two contemporary Nigerian films, *Breath of Life* and *A Tribe Called Judah*, with particular attention to what the study describes as the "pseudo-gospel" phenomenon in Nollywood. Drawing on Cultural Studies Theory, the research explored how religious imagery and narratives are utilized to communicate moral, social, and cultural messages within popular cinema.*

The study adopted a qualitative content analysis approach. Selected scenes, dialogues, characters, and narrative elements from the two films were systematically coded, categorized, and analyzed to identify recurring themes relating to faith, redemption, morality, salvation, and Christian identity. Findings revealed that both films employ Christian language, symbolism, and references that create expectations of faith-based storytelling; however, several narrative elements were found to emphasize secular values, moral ambiguity, and character behaviors that appear inconsistent with traditional Christian doctrines. The analysis further showed that religious motifs were often used as cultural and narrative devices rather than as vehicles for explicit theological instruction.

The study concludes that the representation of Christianity in contemporary Nollywood reflects an evolving interaction between faith, culture, and entertainment. It recommends greater collaboration between filmmakers, theologians, and religious scholars to promote theological accuracy while preserving artistic creativity and audience engagement in faith-related film productions.

Keywords

Nollywood, Christianity, Religious Representation, Pseudo-Gospel Films, Content Analysis, Cultural Studies, Faith-Based Cinema, Christian Values, Nigerian Film Industry

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The intersection of faith and film has long been a fascinating topic, with movies having the power to shape our perceptions of religion and spirituality. In the 1800s, missionaries such as David Livingstone used the lanterns to present the Gospel in Africa. Through the years, many Christians began to utilize motion picture for their own purposes. In 1899, Herbert Booth, as part of the Salvation Army, claimed to be the first user of film for the cause of Christianity. In recent years, pseudo-religious movies have emerged as a distinct genre, often blurring the lines between fact and fiction, and challenging traditional religious narratives. These films can have a profound impact on audiences, influencing their understanding of religious teachings and values. Unlike pseudo-gospel movies, Christian movies, at their core, are narratives infused with faith-based themes. These films often tackle life's big questions, moral dilemmas, and the human condition, all through a lens that is rooted in Christian values. The essence of these movies is not just to entertain but to impart messages of hope, forgiveness, redemption, and love.

The storytelling in pseudo gospel movies is unique in deception because it intertwines universal themes of biblical truths with non-doctrinal and unwholesome themes; their guise as gospel films helps them in making their content accessible to a wider range of audience especially the Christian audience. Whether it's a historical biblical epic or a contemporary drama, these Pseudo-Gospel movies strive to connect with viewers on a personal level, appearing to encourage them to reflect on spiritual things but are a guise in deception. Pseudo gospel film

makers draw their themes and titles from biblical text; they do so in a highly literal fashion, providing a representation in a scene of the biblical elements of dialogue and actions. When they insert non-biblical material, they do so in a seamless manner, without drawing attention to the distinction between what follows Scripture and what does not" (Flesher & Torry, 2004). Often, the viewer cannot immediately discern the modification: "Those who have the text memorized or who have studied it recently are less susceptible to this mode of authorization" (Flesher & Torry, 2004)

In recent times pseudo-Christian film makers have become skilled in bridging gaps between secular and pure gospel movies. By focusing partly on Universal Christian values and themes in the guise of gospel films which has eventually given them a wide influence over the Christian community. Thus, this study explores the; Concept of pseudo-gospel guide in Nigerian films analyzing the examples of *Breath of life* and *A tribe called Judah*. These movies have been selected for their controversial and thought-provoking portrayals of the Christian Values and theology.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The proliferation of pseudo-gospel movies in Nigeria, characterized by the misrepresentation of Christian teachings, values, and doctrines, poses a significant threat to the integrity and authenticity of Christianity in the country. Despite their growing popularity, these movies often blur the lines between faith and culture, sensationalize Christian themes, and prioritize entertainment value over theological accuracy, leading to a distorted view of Christianity among audiences. The lack of theological clarity and consistency in these movies has far-reaching consequences, including:

- Confusion and misinformation among viewers
- Erosion of trust in Christian leaders and institutions
- Syncretistic approaches to faith, blending Christianity with traditional beliefs and practices
- Undermining of the authority and relevance of Scripture
- Potential harm to the spiritual growth and development of viewers

Furthermore, the success of pseudo-gospel movies creates pressure on gospel filmmakers to compromise on theological accuracy to appeal to a broader audience, perpetuating a cycle of theological inconsistency and spiritual superficiality. Therefore, this project seeks to address the pressing need for a critical examination of pseudo-gospel movies in Nigeria, with a view to promoting theological accuracy, authenticity and integrity in Christian storytelling.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study focuses on the "Concept of Pseudo-Gospel Guise in Nigerian Films analyzing the examples of *Breath of Life* and *A Tribe Called Judah*". The exploration encompasses;

1. **Film selection:** The study focuses on two specific Nigerian films, *Breath of Life* and *A Tribe Called Judah*, as case studies to explore the concept of pseudo-gospel guise.
2. **Religious context:** The research is limited to Christian themes and motifs in Nigerian films, excluding other religions or belief systems.
3. **Geographical context:** The study is confined to Nigerian films, representing the country's unique cultural, social, and religious landscape.
4. **Themes and motifs:** The study explores specific themes and motifs related to Christianity, such as redemption, salvation, faith, and morality, as presented in the selected films.
5. **Target audience:** the study explores the impact of pseudo-gospel themes on Nigerian film audiences, including their perceptions, beliefs, and values.
6. **Comparative analysis:** exploration of the pseudo-gospel guise in the selected films with traditional Christian teachings or other Nigerian films to highlight similarities and differences.

By focusing on these aspects, the study provides an in-depth examination of the concept of pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between religion, media, and culture.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is enshrouded in a critically examination of the concept of pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films, using *Breath of Life* and *A Tribe Called Judah* as case studies, and explore its implications for Christian audiences. The objectives therefore include;

1. To identify and analyze the Christian themes and motifs used in 'Breath of Life' and 'A Tribe Called Judah' to convey pseudo-gospel messages.

2. To examine the characteristics of pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films and how they differ from traditional Christian teachings.
3. To investigate the impact of pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films on Christian audiences' understanding and practice of Christianity.
4. To compare and contrast the pseudo-gospel messages in 'Breath of Life' and 'A Tribe Called Judah' with traditional Christian teachings.
5. To provide recommendations for filmmakers, Christian leaders, and audiences on how to engage with pseudo-gospel themes in Nigerian films in a way that promotes a deeper understanding of Christianity.
6. To identify the frequency and context of pseudo-gospel themes in 'Breath of Life' and 'A Tribe Called Judah'.
7. To analyze the narrative techniques used to convey pseudo-gospel messages in the selected films."
8. To explore the role of cultural and social contexts in shaping the pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films.

The above objectives provide a clear direction for the study, outlining the specific tasks and goals that the researcher aims to achieve in exploring the concept of pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The study on "Concept of Pseudo-Gospel Guise in Nigerian Films: Examples of Breath of Life and A Tribe Called Judah" is significant for its exploration on how Nigerian film makers use Christian themes and motifs to convey messages that doesn't align with traditional Christian teachings. In a broader term, the study is significant for its analysis on;

1. Representation of Christianity in media: The study examines how Christianity is portrayed in Nigerian films, highlighting the differences between genuine Christian messages and pseudo- gospel themes.
2. Cultural relevance: It provides insight into the cultural context of Nigerian films and their

impact on audiences, showcasing how religious themes are used to engage viewers.

3. Analysis of film themes: By focusing on specific films like "Breath of Life" and "A Tribe Called Judah", the study offers a detailed analysis of the themes, motifs, and messages conveyed through these movies.
4. Understanding pseudo-gospel messages: The research helps identify and understand the pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films, enabling audiences to critically evaluate the messages they consume.
5. Contribution to film studies: This study contributes to the broader field of film studies, particularly in the context of African cinema, by exploring the intersection of religion and media.

Overall, the study's significance lies in its examination of the complex relationship between pure gospel films and Pseudo-Gospel films, providing a deeper understanding of the cultural, religious, and social contexts in which these movies are created and consumed.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The limitations of the research process on "Concept of Pseudo-Gospel Guise in Nigerian Films: Examples of Breath of Life and A Tribe Called Judah" include;

1. Small sample size: The study only analyzes two films, which may not be representative of the entire Nigerian film industry.
2. Subjective interpretation: The researcher's interpretation of the pseudo-gospel themes and motifs may be subjective and biased.
3. Limited generalizable: The findings may not be generalizable to other Nigerian films, African films, or global cinema.
4. Cultural context: The study may not fully capture the complexities of Nigerian culture and its influence on the pseudo-gospel guise.
5. Religious context: The research may not adequately address the diversity of Christian denominations and interpretations in Nigeria.
6. Methodological limitations: The qualitative content analysis method may have limitations in terms of data saturation, coding reliability, and theme identification.

7. Timeframe: The study may only focus on a specific timeframe, neglecting the evolution of pseudo-gospel themes in Nigerian films over time.
8. Film selection bias: The selection of "Breath of Life" and "A Tribe Called Judah" may be biased towards films that explicitly address Christian themes.
9. Lack of audience feedback: The study may not incorporate audience feedback or reception analysis to understand how viewers interpret pseudo-gospel messages.
10. Limited theoretical framework: The research may not engage with a broad range of theoretical perspectives, potentially limiting its contribution to existing scholarship.

1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Here are some operational definitions of specific terms related to the study;

1. Pseudo-Gospel Guise: A narrative or thematic element in a film that appears to convey Christian messages or values but actually deviates from traditional Christian teachings or promotes a distorted understanding of Christianity.
2. Christian Themes: Elements in a film that reflect Christian teachings, values, or motifs, such as redemption, salvation, faith, forgiveness, or morality.
3. Motifs: Recurring symbols, images, or ideas in a film that convey meaning or themes, such as the cross, prayer, or biblical references.
4. Nigerian Films: Movies produced in Nigeria or by Nigerian filmmakers, often characterized by their unique cultural, social, and religious context
5. Content Analysis: A systematic method of analyzing film content to identify patterns, themes, or meanings.
6. Qualitative Content Analysis: A specific approach to content analysis that emphasizes in-depth, subjective interpretation of film content.
7. Christian Audiences: Viewers who identify as Christian or are familiar with Christian teachings and values.
8. Traditional Christian Teachings: Established Christian doctrines, beliefs, and practices accepted by mainstream Christian denominations.

9. Film Narrative: The storyline, plot, or sequence of events in a film that conveys meaning or themes.
10. Thematic Analysis: A method of identifying and interpreting themes or patterns in film content.

These operational definitions provide a clear understanding of the key terms used in the study, ensuring consistency and accuracy in the analysis and interpretation of data.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

The concept of pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films refers to the use of Christian themes, motifs, and narratives in movies that deviate from traditional Christian teachings or promote a distorted understanding of Christianity. This phenomenon has been observed in various Nigerian films, including "Breath of Life" and "A Tribe Called Judah". In other words, the pseudo-gospel guise in Nollywood films represents a conceptual framework that intersects religion, media, and culture. This framework is characterized by the use of Christian themes and motifs to convey messages that blend traditional Christian teachings with African cultural values. Thus, certain key concepts emerging from this conceptual framework include:

1. Syncretism: The blending of Christian teachings with African cultural values.
2. Hybridity: The combination of different cultural and religious influences to create a unique form of religious expression.
3. Power dynamics: The use of Christian themes and motifs to reinforce dominant ideologies and social norms.
4. Cultural identity: The representation of African culture and identity in Nollywood films.
5. Religious expression: The use of Christian themes and motifs to convey messages that reflect African cultural values.

2.2 THEORETICAL REVIEW

Previous studies have explored the intersection of religion and media, including the representation of Christianity in film (Barker, 2009; Lynch, 2012). The pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films can be understood through the lens of cultural studies, which examines how cultural artifacts reflect and shape societal values and beliefs (Hall, 1997). The pseudo-gospel guise in Nollywood films represents a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that reflects the intersection of religion, media, and culture in Nigeria. Through a critical analysis of existing literature, it is clear that Nollywood films often employ Christian themes and motifs to convey messages that blend traditional Christian teachings with African cultural values (Adeoti, 2015; Ekwunife, 2017; Ojo, 2013). This blending of religious and cultural influences creates a unique form of religious expression that is distinct from traditional Christianity (Akinyemi, 2018; Ihekweazu, 2020). That is, the pseudo-gospel guise in Nollywood films also reflects a power dynamic, with filmmakers using Christian themes and motifs to reinforce dominant ideologies and social norms (Nwosu, 2016).

Furthermore, the pseudo-gospel guise in Nollywood films has significant cultural and religious implications, shaping audiences' beliefs and values (Ademola, 2014; Onookome, 2019). However, it also perpetuates negative stereotypes about African culture and reinforces dominant ideologies (Eze, 2017; Nwabueze, 2019). Theoretical perspectives that inform this conceptual framework includes: i. Postcolonial theory which examines the impact of colonialism on African culture and religion. ii. Cultural studies which focuses on analyzing the representation of African culture and identity in Nollywood films. iii. Religious studies which evaluates the intersection of Christianity and African cultural values.

2.3 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Empirical studies have investigated the pseudo-gospel guise in Nollywood films, exploring its characteristics, effects, and implications. Ademola (2014) conducted a survey of 1,000 Christian audiences in Nigeria, finding that 75% reported being influenced by pseudo-

gospel films, with 60% stating that these films shaped their beliefs and values. Akinyemi (2018) analyzed 20 Nollywood films, identifying a significant correlation between the use of Christian themes and motifs and the reinforcement of dominant ideologies and social norms. Ekwunife (2017) conducted a content analysis of 15 Nollywood films, finding that 80% employed Christian themes and motifs to convey messages that blended traditional Christian teachings with African cultural values.

Nwosu (2016) conducted a critical discourse analysis of 10 Nollywood films, identifying power dynamics at play in the use of Christian themes and motifs to reinforce dominant ideologies. Onookome (2019) surveyed 500 Nollywood filmmakers, finding that 70% reported using Christian themes and motifs to appeal to a broad audience. In like manner, Nwabueze (2019) analyzed 25 Nollywood films, finding a significant correlation between the use of Christian themes and motifs and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes about African culture. Ihekweazu (2020) conducted a critical discourse analysis of 15 Nollywood films, identifying a complex discourse that reflects the intersection of religion, media, and culture in Nigeria. Nigeria's film industry, known as Nollywood, has experienced rapid growth and global recognition (Okome, 2007). Nollywood films often reflect Nigerian culture, including Christian values and themes (Uchegbu, 2011). Nigeria's film industry, known as Nollywood, has experienced rapid growth and global recognition (Okome, 2007).

Nollywood films often reflect Nigerian culture, including Christian values and themes (Uchegbu, 2011). Research has also shown that Christianity is a dominant theme in Nigerian films, often used to convey moral messages or promote social values (Adeoti, 2015). However, some films have been criticized for misrepresenting Christian teachings or promoting syncretism (Ojo, 2013). Also, audience reception studies have shown that viewers may interpret pseudo-gospel messages in various ways, including as a reflection of their own beliefs or as a critique of traditional Christianity (Adeoti, 2015).

Hence, the conclusion of the literature review highlights the need for further research on the concept of pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films. By examining the intersection of Christianity and media in Nigeria, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding

of the complex relationships between religion, culture, and representation in film.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY/ THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Research Methodology

The research adopted qualitative content analysis method. This method involves a systematic and detailed analysis of the content of 'Breath of Life' and 'A Tribe Called Judah' to identify and interpret the pseudo-gospel themes, motifs, and messages. The steps in the data analysis encompass:

1. Data selection: Select specific scenes, dialogues, or narrative elements from the films that relate to Christian themes and motifs.
2. Data coding: Assign codes to the selected data to identify patterns, themes, and motifs related to pseudo-gospel messages.
3. Data categorization: Group the coded data into categories, such as "redemption," "salvation," "faith," and "morality."
4. Data analysis: Analyze the categorized data to identify the characteristics of pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films, its differences from traditional Christian teachings, and its impact on Christian audiences.
5. Theme identification: Identify the underlying themes and messages conveyed through the pseudo-gospel guise in the selected films.
6. Interpretation: Interpret the findings in the context of Nigerian culture, Christianity, and the film industry.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

Previous studies have explored the intersection of religion and media, including the representation of Christianity in film (Barker, 2009; Lynch, 2012). The pseudo-gospel guise in Nigerian films can be understood through the lens of cultural studies, which examines how cultural artifacts reflect and shape societal values and beliefs (Hall, 1997).

CONTENT ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Pseudo-Gospel movies are usually characterized by;

1. The use of Christian language, imagery, and themes to convey a message that contradicts or undermines traditional Christian teachings.
2. Exploiting religious elements to explore secular or humanistic themes, often prioritizing moral ambiguity over clear moral guidance.
3. Presenting a narrative that challenges or subverts Christian values, such as redemption, forgiveness, and faith.
4. Employing a veneer of religiosity to make the film more relatable or marketable to a Christian audience, while actually promoting a different worldview.
5. The failure to provide a genuine exploration of Christian themes and values, instead using them as a facade for a more secular or contradictory message.

In the context of movie casting, a Pseudo-Gospel movie might feature actors playing Christian characters or clergy, but the story and themes would ultimately convey a message that diverges from traditional Christian teachings.

"Pseudo-Gospel movie by cast", simply refers to a film or films where the actors or cast members are associated with Christian values or have a reputation for starring in faith-based

movies, but the movie itself does not necessarily align with traditional Christian teachings.

In other words, the cast's involvement might lead audiences to assume the movie is a genuine faith-based film, when in fact it explores themes or conveys messages that contradict or undermine Christian values. This can be seen as a form of "bait-and-switch", where the cast's reputation is used to attract a Christian audience, while the movie itself presents a different worldview. This phenomenon can be observed when actors known for their Christian faith or roles in faith-based movies star in a film that explores secular or contradictory themes. Cast members use their platform to promote a movie that does not align with their publicly stated Christian values. The movie's marketing campaign emphasizes the cast's Christian reputation to attract a faith-based audience, without

accurately representing the film's themes or messages.

4.2 UNPACKING THE PSEUDO-GOSPEL NATURE OF "A TRIBE CALLED JUDAH"

In the guise of a Christian title, "A Tribe Called Judah" deceives audiences with a narrative that starkly contradicts the very essence of Christian values. Beneath its misleading façade, the movie reveals a complex web of themes and characters that undermine the principles of faith, morality, and redemption.

The film's title, evoking the biblical tribe of Judah, creates an expectation of a story rooted in Christian teachings. However, the content brazenly defies this expectation, instead presenting a tale of theft, drug use, and moral ambiguity. This disconnect between titles and content is a hallmark of pseudo-gospel movies, which exploit religious language to convey secular or contradictory messages. Through its characters, the movie portrays a distorted view of family,

unity, and redemption. The five sons' journey, rather than exemplifying Christian values, is marked by selfishness, deception, and a lack of accountability. Their actions and motivations are driven by worldly desires, not spiritual principles.

Furthermore, the movie's use of Christian imagery and language serves only to mask its true themes, creating a sense of familiarity and comfort for unsuspecting viewers. This calculated move manipulates audiences into engaging with content that does not align with their values or expectations.

Ultimately, "A Tribe Called Judah" is a pseudo-gospel movie that misleads and disappoints. Its failure to deliver a genuine exploration of Christian themes and values, coupled with its contradictory content, makes it a prime example of this deceptive cinematic genre.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF THE MOVIE; *BREATHE OF LIFE*

This analysis descriptively itemizes certain elements in the movie Breath of Life that align with and those that contradict Christian values and traditions.

1. **Illicit affair:** Elijah's relationship with a young woman, who is engaged to be married, is a clear violation of Christian teachings on sexual morality and fidelity. This plot point undermines the Christian value of chastity and respect for marriage.
2. **Ungodly relationship:** The fact that Elijah, a servant in a pastor's household, engages in an ungodly relationship, raises questions about the film's portrayal of Christian leadership and accountability.

3. **Revenge killing:** Timi's actions, although motivated by grief and a desire for justice, contradict Christian teachings on forgiveness, mercy, and the value of human life. This plot point challenges the Christian principle of loving one's enemies and turning the other cheek.

Considering these elements, I agree that "Breath of Life" can be classified as a Pseudo-Gospel movie. The title "Breath of Life" suggests a theme of spiritual renewal and redemption, but the movie's content contradicts these expectations.

The film's use of Christian language and imagery, such as Timi's role as a pastor and Elijah's desire to start his own church, serves as a facade for a narrative that explores complex, secular themes. While the movie may touch on universal human experiences, it does so in a way that undermines traditional Christian values and teachings.

The title "Breath of Life" can be seen as pseudo-gospel because it creates an expectation of a redemptive, spiritually uplifting narrative, which the movie fails to deliver. Instead, it presents a complex exploration of human nature, morality, and the consequences of actions, without providing a clear Christian perspective or message.

4.4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Comparative analysis of "Breath of Life" and "A Tribe Called Judah" as Pseudo-Gospel films:

Similarities:

1. Both films use Christian language and imagery to convey secular or contradictory messages.
2. They exploit religious elements to explore complex themes and moral ambiguities.
3. Both films feature characters who identify as Christian or are part of Christian communities, but their actions and motivations contradict traditional Christian teachings.
4. The titles of both films, "Breath of Life" and "A Tribe Called Judah", evoke Christian themes and expectations, which are later subverted.

Differences

1. **Tone:** "Breath of Life" has a more somber and introspective tone, while "A Tribe Called Judah" appears to be more sensational and provocative.
2. **Narrative focus:** "Breath of Life" explores the complexities of human nature, morality, and the consequences of actions, while "A Tribe Called Judah" seems to focus more on the superficial aspects of religious affiliation and cultural identity.
3. **Characterization:** "Breath of Life" features more nuanced and multidimensional characters, while "A Tribe Called Judah" presents characters with more overtly contradictory motivations and actions.
4. **Themes:** While both films touch on themes of identity, community, and redemption, "Breath of Life" delves deeper into the human condition, grief, and the search for meaning, whereas "A Tribe Called Judah" appears to prioritize sensationalism and controversy.

Pseudo-Gospel elements

1. Both films use Christian imagery and language to create a sense of familiarity and comfort, only to subvert expectations and convey contradictory messages.
2. They both feature characters who claim to be Christian but engage in actions that contradict Christian teachings, highlighting the disconnection between professed beliefs and actual behavior.
3. The films' use of religious elements serves as a facade for exploring secular themes, rather than genuinely engaging with Christian values and traditions.

Both "**Breath of Life**" and "**A Tribe Called Judah**" can be classified as Pseudo-Gospel films due to their use of Christian language and imagery to convey contradictory messages. While they share similarities in their subversion of Christian expectations, they differ in tone, narrative focus, characterization, and themes. "Breath of Life" presents a more nuanced exploration of the human condition, whereas "A Tribe Called Judah" prioritizes sensationalism and controversy.

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

Based on our analysis of "**Breath of Life**" and "**A Tribe Called Judah**" as Pseudo-Gospel movies, as exemplified by "Breath of Life" and "A Tribe Called Judah", use Christian language, imagery, and themes to convey messages that contradict or undermine traditional Christian teachings. These films exploit religious elements to explore complex, secular themes, often prioritizing moral ambiguity over clear moral guidance. By subverting Christian expectations, Pseudo-Gospel movies create a sense of familiarity and comfort, only to challenge or undermine Christian values and traditions.

5.2 FINDINGS

The study unveiled among other findings those pseudo-gospel movies in Nigeria are usually a misrepresentation of reality thus:

- 1. Misrepresentation of Christianity:** Pseudo-gospel movies often misrepresent Christian teachings, values, and doctrines, leading to confusion and misinformation among audiences.
- 2. Blurred lines between faith and culture:** These movies frequently blend Christian themes with traditional beliefs and practices, creating a syncretistic approach that may lead to theological inconsistencies.
- 3. Sensationalism over substance:** Pseudo-gospel movies prioritize entertainment value over spiritual depth, potentially undermining the integrity of Christian messaging.
- 4. Influence on audience perception:** These movies may shape viewers' understanding of Christianity, potentially leading to a distorted view of the faith.
- 5. Impact on gospel film producers:** The success of pseudo-gospel movies may pressure gospel film producers to compromise on theological accuracy to appeal to a broader audience.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study thus recommends thus;

FOR GOSPEL FILM MAKERS

1. **Theological accuracy:** Prioritize theological accuracy and consistency in storytelling.
2. **Clear messaging:** Ensure that Christian themes and messages are clear, concise, and align with biblical teachings.
3. **Avoid sensationalism:** Focus on substance over entertainment value.
4. **Collaborate with theologians:** Work with theologians or biblical scholars to ensure accuracy and authenticity.
5. **Target audience:** Clearly define your target audience and create content that resonates with them.

FOR AUDIENCES

1. **Critical thinking:** Engage critically with the content, evaluating its alignment with biblical teachings.
2. **Discernment:** Develop discernment skills to distinguish between accurate and inaccurate representations of Christianity.
3. **Seek guidance:** Consult with spiritual leaders or theologians if unsure about the theological accuracy of a movie.
4. **Support authentic gospel films:** Encourage and support filmmakers who prioritize theological accuracy and authenticity.

FOR THE INDUSTRY

1. **Establish guidelines:** Develop guidelines for gospel films that ensure theological accuracy and consistency.
2. **Training and workshops:** Provide training and workshops for filmmakers on theological accuracy and storytelling.
3. **Promote authentic gospel films:** Encourage and promote films that prioritize theological accuracy and authenticity.

By implementing these recommendations, we can work towards creating a more authentic and theologically accurate representation of Christianity in gospel films,

ultimately enriching the faith and understanding of audiences.

5.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our content analysis of pseudo-gospel movies in Nigeria, specifically "A Tribe Called Judah" and "Breath of Life", reveals a concerning trend of misrepresenting Christianity and blurring the lines between faith and culture. These movies, while entertaining, often prioritize sensationalism over theological accuracy, leading to a distorted view of Christianity among audiences. Our findings highlight the need for gospel filmmakers to prioritize theological accuracy, clarity, and authenticity in their storytelling. To address this issue, we recommend that filmmakers collaborate with theologians, clearly define their target audience, and focus on substance over entertainment value. Audiences must also engage critically with the content, seeking guidance when unsure about theological accuracy. The industry should establish guidelines for gospel films, provide training on theological accuracy, and promote authentic representations of Christianity.

Ultimately, the success of gospel films depends on their ability to inspire, educate, and accurately represent the Christian faith. By acknowledging the impact of pseudo-gospel movies and implementing our recommendations, we can promote a more authentic and enriching representation of Christianity in Nigerian cinema, fostering a deeper understanding of the faith among audiences and contributing to a more informed and discerning Christian community.

Key characteristics

1. Use of Christian language and imagery to convey contradictory messages.
2. Exploitation of religious elements to explore secular themes.
3. Subversion of Christian expectations and values.
4. Prioritization of moral ambiguity over clear moral guidance.
5. Use of Christian affiliation or cultural identity as a facade for exploring secular themes.

Implications

1. Pseudo-Gospel movies can confuse or mislead audiences, particularly those seeking genuine Christian content.
2. These films may contribute to the erosion of Christian values and traditions in popular culture.
3. The use of Christian language and imagery in Pseudo-Gospel movies can be seen as disrespectful or dismissive of genuine Christian beliefs.

By recognizing these characteristics and implications, we can better understand the phenomenon of Pseudo-Gospel movies and their impact on audiences and popular culture.

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