TRADITION AND CULTURE: A REFLECTION OF AFRICAN SOCIETY IN FEMI ADEBAYO'S FILM; *SEVEN DOORS*

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ABSTRACT: *African traditions and cultural heritage are deeply embedded in the values, beliefs, and practices passed down through generations. Despite the pressures of modernisation and globalisation, preserving these traditions remains crucial to maintaining African identity. This study examines Seven Doors, a Nigerian limited series directed by Femi Adebayo, as a depiction of cultural artefact that reflects and preserves African heritage. The film, set in the late 1960s and early 1970s, explores themes of monarchy, tradition, morality, and the tension between cultural continuity and modernity. Using the Afrocentric Theory as a framework, the study analyses the film's narrative structure, symbolic elements, and visual representations to highlight its role in cultural preservation. The research employs a qualitative analysis to highlight the cultural practices and their functions in preserving and advancing African heritage. The findings reveal that Seven Doors serves as a medium for promoting African values such as kingship, ancestral reverence, communal responsibility, and indigenous knowledge systems. The film's depiction of language, rituals, music, and spirituality reinforces the significance of oral traditions and storytelling in African societies. Additionally, the study underscores the challenges posed by cultural erosion and external influences, emphasising the necessity for continued cultural introspection through creative media. By examining Seven Doors as a cinematic representation of African identity, this research contributes to the discourse on the role of film in safeguarding heritage and fostering cultural pride.*

KEYWORDS: African Traditions, Cultural heritage and preservation, Afrocentric Theory, modernisation and globalisation, cultural erosion and external influences.

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INTRODUCTION

African traditions and cultural legacy are a diverse range of activities, beliefs, and values transmitted from one generation to the other. These traditions are deeply embedded in the varied social frameworks, languages, and rituals of African nations. They illustrate the relationships across African groups, their connection to the environment, and their engagement with the spiritual realm. Rituals, ceremonies, and festivals are crucial aspects of African traditions for preserving cultural continuity and societal norms.

Africa's cultural legacy is rich in symbolism and diversity, with each ethnic group showcasing its distinct art, music, dance, and oral storytelling traditions. Ancestor veneration, respect for the land, and the interdependence of life are prevalent motifs in numerous African civilisations. Notwithstanding the obstacles posed by modernisation and globalisation, African traditions persist in shaping current life, frequently incorporated with modern practices in manners that maintain their relevance.

Films function as significant instruments for cultural representation and preservation, especially within the African context settings, where oral traditions and visual storytelling have historically been essential to cultural transmission. Films depict African traditions, societal values, and historical experiences. They offer a vibrant medium to present the continent's cultural heritage to international audiences. According to Uduigwomen, Abakedi, and Abakedi (2020), films embody the core of African heritage, encompassing moral principles, spiritual convictions, communal traditions, and interpersonal dynamics. African filmmakers are essential in preserving the continent's cultural identity by incorporating traditional storytelling, symbols, and aesthetics into their creations. Films illustrate the interaction between tradition and modernity, depicting the issues of cultural degradation resulting from globalisation and urbanisation while emphasising the significance of legacy.

Nevertheless, African societies encounter considerable obstacles in safeguarding their cultural heritage in the face of modernisation, globalisation, and technological progress. These effects have resulted in the progressive decline of traditional traditions, beliefs, and values, especially among younger generations. The prevalence of foreign cultural beliefs via media and education intensifies this problem, resulting in an increasing disconnection between African populations and their profound cultural heritage (Nwala and Daniel, 2020; Oni, 2009). This cultural loss jeopardises the continuity of African identity, societal cohesion, and the moral frameworks that have historically characterised these communities. The necessity for continual cultural introspection via creative media, including films, is essential in confronting these difficulties. Films are an effective medium to capture, preserve, and promote African cultures, maintaining their significance in modern society. Creative works such as *Seven Doors* function as cultural repositories and pedagogical instruments, cultivating pride, identity, and belonging while mitigating the impacts of cultural erosion.

Seven Doors, an engaging film by Femi Adebayo, is a notable contribution to African cinema, providing deep insights into Nigerian society and the wider African milieu. The film, grounded in cultural and social critique, delicately intertwines parts of tradition and contemporary to illustrate the intricacies of African existence. The film examines the themes of morality, societal values, and the conflict between traditional continuity and modernisation, reflecting the developing identity of African nations. The narrative is imbued with symbolic and thematic complexity. It depicts characters as they confront societal issues, ancestral relationships, and

communal expectations. The title, *Seven Doors*, symbolically signifies choices, opportunities, and the repercussions associated with human decisions, aligning with ancient African concepts regarding destiny and accountability. The film's significance is in its capacity to mirror and evaluate societal frameworks, illuminating the challenges African traditions encounter in an increasingly globalised environment. The use of Afrocentric viewpoints and genuine depiction highlights its dedication to safeguarding African values.

Seven Doors is a 2024 Nigerian limited series produced and directed by Femi Adebayo. The series, set in the late 1960s and early 1970s, explores issues of tradition, monarchy, and the repercussions of ancestral deeds. The story revolves around Adedunjoye, a contented family man who is unexpectedly selected to ascend as the King of Ilara Kingdom. Initially hesitant, he acquiesces to the position after his wife Amaka's persuasion. Upon ascending the throne, Adedunjoye encounters resistance from corrupt chiefs and grapples with a succession of calamities afflicting the realm, including the untimely demise of his daughter. In search of answers, Adedunjoye meets the main priest, who discloses that his ancestor, King Adejuwon, perpetrated heinous acts, including the death of his seven wives, to prolong his life. To atone for these ancestral transgressions and restore harmony, Adedunjoye is counselled to "knock on seven doors," signifying the necessity of marrying six additional women, resulting in a total of seven. This directive tests his marriage to Amaka and confronts his moral principles.

Throughout the series, Adedunjoye contends with the imperatives of tradition, the intricacies of polygamy, and the pursuit of forgiveness, all while endeavouring to guide his kingdom through tumultuous periods.

Objectives of the Study

i. To explore how *Seven Doors* reflects African traditions and cultural heritage and

ii. to examine the roles and significance of films in preserving and promoting African heritage.

This study examines *Seven Doors* as a cultural artefact that encapsulates and mirrors African customs and societal ideals. It analyses the film's thematic complexity, character depictions, and visual aesthetics This study investigates how these components expatiate on the interaction between tradition and modernity in Nigerian society. The research also explores a thorough analysis of the symbolic and cultural importance of narrative, conversation, and images in the preservation of African heritage. The study seeks to illustrate how *Seven Doors* functions as a conduit for cultural preservation, societal critique, and the advancement of African identity in the context of modern global influences.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Afrocentric Theory serves as the underlying framework for this study, providing a perspective to evaluate the cultural and societal components portrayed in Femi Adebayo's *Seven Doors*. The Afrocentric Theory aims to re-centre African viewpoints in discussions of identity, culture, and history, highlighting the significance of African values, traditions, and experiences in the interpretation of African art and society. By positioning African culture as the central reference point, the theory challenges Eurocentric narratives that frequently marginalise or misrepresent African heritage. This study uses Afrocentric Theory to examine how *Seven Doors* embodies and sustains African traditions, societal ideals, and communal frameworks. The theory facilitates a profound comprehension of the film's subject issues, including the conflict between cultural continuity and modernity, the influence of traditions on societal cohesiveness, and the importance of moral standards and communal bonds in African societies. This theoretical framework analyses components such as speech, visual symbolism, and characters' actions and interactions to underscore their cultural value and contribution to the promotion of African identity. The incorporation of language, music, and folklore in the film accentuates cultural pride and continuity. This theoretical framework emphasises the significance of creative media in cultural preservation and supports the importance of African viewpoints in analysing the relationship between tradition and modernity in the film.

Literature Review

Conceptualizing African Culture and Tradition

African culture and tradition comprise the diverse array of rituals, practices, values, and beliefs that characterise the identity and lifestyle of African societies (Idang, 2015). Tradition denotes the traditions, rituals, and customs transmitted across generations, influencing social interactions and directing ethical conduct. These encompass oral storytelling, community living, and veneration of elders, which function as mechanisms for conveying knowledge and preserving societal values. Tradition is dynamic, evolving with changes yet preserving its fundamental character, sustaining continuity amid modernisation (Tamunomiegbam and Arinze, 2024).

Culture, conversely, comprises the comprehensive framework of a society's lifestyle. It embodies the shared experiences, historical development, and perspective of a community. According to Idang (2015, p.98):

Culture, as it is usually understood, entails a totality of traits and characters that are peculiar to a people to the extent that it marks them out from other peoples or societies. These peculiar traits go on to include the people's language, dressing, music, work, arts, religion, dancing and so on. It also goes on to include a people's social norms, taboos and values.

In the African setting, culture is intricately woven into communal existence, projecting solidarity, interdependence, and reverence for nature. It honours diversity, as each ethnic group offers distinct manifestations of art, cuisine, dance, and spirituality to the continent's extensive cultural history. Fundamental components of African culture and tradition encompass:

Language: It is an essential instrument for communication. Language is a vital component of African culture and tradition. It serves as a carrier of identity, history, and values (Tchindjang, Bopda, and Ngamgne, 2008). In Africa, language is not merely a means of communication but a repository of collective memory, expressing the unique worldview of diverse ethnic groups. It plays a crucial role in oral traditions, where stories, proverbs, songs, and rituals are transmitted across generations, preserving the essence of cultural heritage values (Tchindjang et al., 2008). Through language, social norms, moral values, and indigenous knowledge systems are taught, ensuring the continuity of traditional practices. It also fosters unity within communities, as shared languages create a sense of belonging and solidarity.

Spirituality: Spirituality is profoundly anchored in ancestral convictions and a relationship with the almighty. In the context of African culture and tradition, spirituality is deeply intertwined with daily life, reflecting a holistic worldview that connects the physical, spiritual, and communal realms (Singh and Bhagwan, 2020). It encompasses the belief in a Supreme Being, ancestral spirits, and other spiritual entities that influence the well-being and destiny of individuals and communities. African spirituality is not confined to religion but is embedded in cultural practices, rituals, and symbols that guide moral values and social harmony. Central to African spirituality is the veneration of ancestors, who are seen as intermediaries between the living and the divine. Traditional ceremonies, festivals, and sacrifices are means of maintaining a harmonious relationship with these spiritual forces. Spirituality also underscores the interconnectedness of all living things, emphasizing respect for nature and the environment. This worldview fosters a sense of purpose, identity, and communal solidarity, serving as a foundation for African values and traditions.

Art and Music: Art and music are essential expressions of identity, heritage, and communal values. African art, including sculptures, masks, textiles, and beadwork, often carries spiritual and symbolic meanings. It reflects social structures, beliefs, and history. Music, characterized by rhythm, drums, and call-and-response patterns, serves as a medium for storytelling, celebration, and spiritual connection. Both art and music are integral to ceremonies, festivals, and rituals, fostering unity and continuity within communities. They also preserve oral traditions, convey moral lessons, and celebrate African aesthetics, showcasing the continent's creativity and deep connection to its cultural and traditional roots.

Tradition and cultural preservation are crucial in African society as they maintain the identity and values of diverse communities. They foster a sense of belonging and continuity, connecting generations through shared practices, rituals, and stories. Preserving cultural heritage safeguards indigenous knowledge, languages, and art forms, which are vital for personal and communal identity. In an era of globalization, maintaining and celebrating African traditions counteracts cultural erosion, ensuring that the rich diversity of African societies is respected and sustained for future generations.

The Role of Film in Cultural Preservation

Films are dynamic mediums for reflecting and preserving tradition and culture. According to Zhang (2024), they are visual narratives that capture the essence of societal values and practices. In African societies, films serve as a repository of traditions, showcasing rituals, folklore, languages, and communal lifestyles (Dairo, 2021). They bring to life the intricate tapestry of cultural identity, allowing audiences to connect deeply with their heritage. As a medium of tradition, films immortalize ceremonies, festivals, and ancestral wisdom, ensuring they remain accessible to future generations. Films also explore the balance between preserving traditional values and navigating modernity, addressing themes of cultural resilience and adaptation (Hiswara, Aziz, and Pujowati, 2023). Through storytelling, films give insights into societal norms, moral teachings, and historical experiences, fostering pride and understanding. Films also act as a platform for cultural dialogue, bridging gaps between diverse communities (Lu, 2015). By reflecting and preserving traditions, films contribute to the continuity of cultural heritage and inspire respect for the richness of African identity.

African films and movies often serve as powerful mediums for promoting traditions and preserving cultural heritage. Here are some notable examples:

"*Things Fall Apart*" is a Nigerian film adapted from Chinua Achebe's novel. It depicts the traditions and values of the Igbo community and their conflict with colonial powers. It also emphasises cultural traditions, narrative techniques, and the significance of communal existence in pre-colonial Nigeria. *"Queen of Katwe"* was filmed and produced in Uganda. This film, while set in contemporary times, highlights traditional Ugandan life and the principles of resilience and communal support. It integrates modern challenges with cultural pride. *"Osuofia in London"* is also a Nigerian film. This comedy contrasts traditional Nigerian values with Western culture through the experiences of Osuofia, a rural villager who travels to London. It comically emphasises the significance of remaining authentic to one's origins. "*Sembène's Xala*" (Senegal) was directed by Ousmane Sembène. This film exposes colonial impact and governmental corruption while highlighting traditional Senegalese practices and communal existence."*Ijele*" is also a Nigerian film. A quintessential Nollywood film rooted in Igbo mythology and traditional beliefs. *Ijele* explores themes of love, betrayal, and the occult, safeguarding folklore and oral traditions.

"*Heritage Africa*" is a Ghanaian film that examines the conflict between accepting colonialism and maintaining traditional African values. The film highlights the significance of cultural identity. Lastly is a popular Nollywood film, "The Wedding Party". The film showcases Nigerian cultural practices surrounding marriage, highlighting traditional wedding ceremonies, family dynamics, and customs. Portraying these cultural elements strengthens societal appreciation for Nigerian heritage and encourages a sense of pride in one's cultural identity. These films promote a sense of pride, unity, and the preservation of African values, positively influencing societal attitudes toward tradition and identity.

Postcolonial and Afrocentric Approaches to African Identity

Postcolonial and Afrocentric Approaches to African Identity examine the historical, cultural, and intellectual efforts to reclaim and affirm African identity following colonialism and Eurocentric narratives (Montle, 2020). These methodologies rigorously analyse the representation of African experiences, traditions, and voices while promoting the re-centring of Africa in global discourse.

Postcolonial Perspectives

Postcolonial theory examines the enduring impacts of colonialism on African societies, cultures, and identities. Academics such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o underscore the importance of mental decolonisation and the imperative of reclaiming indigenous languages, literature, and knowledge systems to restore African identity. Likewise, Chinua Achebe's writings challenge colonial narratives and emphasise the depth of African traditions. Postcolonial frameworks examine the hybridity and dual consciousness prevalent in post-colonial countries, as articulated by Homi K. Bhabha, investigating the transformation of African identity through resistance and adaptation. This viewpoint highlights the quest for self-definition and contests the supremacy of Western paradigms in cultural, academic, and political domains.

Afrocentric Viewpoints

The Afrocentric paradigm, advocated by intellectuals such as Molefi Kete Asante, demands the centralisation of Africa in its historical, cultural, and intellectual discourses. This framework prioritises the restoration of African traditions, philosophies, and historical agency to challenge Eurocentric misrepresentations. Afrocentricity regards African languages, cosmologies, and communal values as fundamental elements of African identity (Tchindjang, Bopda, and Ngamgne, 2008).

Interaction Between the Two

Postcolonialism attacks colonial influences, whereas Afrocentricity promotes the revival of African-centered epistemologies. Collectively, these methodologies cultivate a sophisticated comprehension of African identity, intertwining resistance with the endorsement of cultural pride. Academic publications in these domains foster discourse on decolonisation, cultural legacy, and African autonomy.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopts a qualitative research design, employing descriptive and interpretative methods. These approaches will be adopted for deep exploration of the film *Seven Doors,* focusing on its cultural and societal significance. The qualitative framework enables the examination of themes, symbols, and narratives that reflect African traditions and societal values. This design ensures a nuanced understanding of the interplay between tradition and modernity in the film.

Data Collection

The primary source for this study is *Seven Doors*, a film directed by Femi Adebayo. This film provides the core material for analysis, particularly its narrative structure, character development, and thematic content. *Seven Doors* is a limited series comprising a single season with a total of six episodes. Each episode delves into the intricate narrative set in 18th and 19th-century Nigeria, exploring themes of kingship, family, love, betrayal, and restitution. The series was released on December 13, 2024, and is available for streaming on Netflix. Secondary data include academic literature, journal articles, reviews, and other scholarly works that discuss African traditions, cultural heritage, and film as a medium for preservation and critique. These secondary sources enrich the analysis by providing contextual and theoretical insights into the cultural dimensions depicted in the film.

Data Analysis

Thematic and textual analysis are employed to dissect the film's cultural and societal elements. The thematic analysis identifies recurring motifs such as ancestral reverence, communal values, and moral dilemmas, which are central to African traditions. Textual analysis examines dialogues, visual symbolism, and narrative techniques to uncover their roles in portraying and preserving African culture. Together, these methods facilitate a comprehensive evaluation of how *Seven Doors* serves as a reflection of Nigerian society and a repository of African heritage, particularly in its confrontation with globalization and modernity.

This methodology ensures that the study not only highlights the film's cultural significance but also accentuates its role as a medium for cultural preservation and societal critique.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Depiction of African Traditions in Seven Doors

Seven Doors is a cinematic masterpiece that intricately incorporates the rich tapestry of African traditions into its narrative fabric. The film depicts African traditions and cultural heritage through its portrayal of customs, beliefs, and values passed down from one generation to another. The story revolves around the theme of kingship, which is profoundly ingrained in African societies as an institution that represents power, responsibility, and moral integrity. The protagonist, Adedunjoye, faces dilemmas that reflect the weight of tradition in governance, family life, and personal morality. Central to the narrative is the Yoruba tradition of ancestral appeasement, wherein past actions have repercussions for future generations.

Additionally, the film highlights the importance of monarchy in African societies. The selection of a ruler is not solely based on personal will but is often dictated by ancestral lineage and spiritual signs. The film presents a vivid portrayal of the transition from ordinary life to kingship, symbolizing the weight of leadership as a communal duty rather than a personal privilege.

Representation of Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage in *Seven Doors* is vividly represented through key scenes, symbols, dialogues, and visual elements that collectively preserve and promote African identity (see Fig. 1, 2, 3 and 5). The film's depiction of the coronation ceremony (see Fig. 4), complete with traditional music, chants, and regalia, exemplifies the richness of Yoruba culture. The elaborate process underscores the continuity of cultural heritage despite modern influences. One of the most striking scenes occurs when Adedunjoye consults the main priest to understand the calamities afflicting the kingdom (See Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Adedunjoye's Consultation with the Priest

The priest's explanation of Adejuwon's transgressions illustrates how oral traditions serve as repositories of historical knowledge and ethical teachings. Similarly, the depiction of traditional ceremonies (see Fig. 3), such as weddings and funerals (Fig. 2), adds authenticity to the film's portrayal of African life. Another crucial moment arises during the discussions surrounding polygamy. While this practice may seem outdated to some viewers, the film presents it as a legitimate cultural norm that requires understanding rather than judgment. By addressing both the advantages and challenges of polygamy, *Seven Doors* adopts a balanced perspective on this contentious issue, thereby preserving its place in African cultural discourse.

Fig. 2: Yoruba Traditional Wedding

Fig. 3: African Ceremony

Fig. 4: Coronation Ceremony

Fig. 5: Traditional Costume and Attire

Symbols, Dialogues, and Visual Elements

Symbols play a vital role in conveying the cultural significance of *Seven Doors*. The titular *seven doors* represent the requirement for Adedunjoye to marry six additional wives to atone for the sins of his forefather, Adegbite. Each door signifies a threshold that must be crossed with caution and purpose, reflecting the African belief in destiny and personal agency. This showcases the concept of collective responsibility, a vital aspect of African traditions. The dialogues in the film are heavily infused with the use of indigenous languages, Yoruba proverbs, and idioms, which enhances the film's authenticity and connects audiences to their cultural roots. Visual elements, such as costumes, architecture (Fig. 6) and landscapes (Fig. 7),

nature (Fig. 15) contribute significantly to the preservation of African heritage. The vibrant colours and intricate designs of traditional attire (Fig. 5) worn by characters evoke pride in African aesthetics. The use of sacred objects like the Ifa divination board signifies the reliance on spiritual guidance in decision-making.

Fig. 6: Architecture

Fig. 7: Landscape

Likewise, the depiction of palatial structures and rural settings provides a glimpse into the architectural diversity of Nigerian society. These visual cues create an immersive experience that transports viewers into the world of *Seven Doors*.

Reflection of African Society

Seven Doors is a compelling reflection of African society by delving into themes of family (Fig. 8), community, and identity while confronting the challenges posed by modernity and cultural erosion.

Family is a foundational unit in African societies, and *Seven Doors* captures this reality through its portrayal of familial bonds (see Fig. 8). Adedunjoye's initial reluctance to accept the kingship stems partly from his desire to maintain a stable family life with Amaka and their children. However, his eventual acceptance reflects the African value of prioritizing collective welfare over personal interests. The film also explores the dynamics of extended families, highlighting the support systems they provide during times of crisis.

Community solidarity is another prominent theme in *Seven Doors*. The kingdom of Ilara functions as a microcosm of African society, where individuals work together to overcome adversity. The resistance faced by King Adedunjoye from corrupt chiefs underscores the ongoing struggle against exploitation and injustice, even within traditionally structured communities. Moreover, the film portrays the resilience of communities in the face of external pressures, emphasizing the strength derived from unity and shared values.

Identity is intricately tied to culture, and *Seven Doors* addresses this connection by exploring what it means to be African in a rapidly changing world. Characters like Adedunjoye grapple with questions of self-identity as they navigate the intersection of tradition and modernity. His journey from a contented family man to a conflicted king mirrors the broader quest for identity experienced by many Africans today.

Fig. 8: Family Setting

Challenges of Modernity and Cultural Erosion

Modernity poses significant threats to African cultural heritage, as highlighted in *Seven Doors.* Globalization and urbanization have led to the erosion of traditional practices, particularly among younger generations who are increasingly influenced by foreign ideologies. The film critiques these trends by showcasing the adverse effects of abandoning cultural values in Favor of superficial progress. For instance, the corrupt chiefs in the movie exemplify how modern greed can undermine traditional institutions. Their pursuit of wealth and power at the expense of communal well-being serves as a warning against the dangers of losing sight of cultural priorities. At the same time, the film acknowledges the inevitability of change and advocates for a balanced approach that integrates modern advancements with cultural preservation.

Language, Spirituality, Art, and Music in Seven Doors

As noted by Tektigul et al. (2023), language is a vital instrument for communication and a carrier of identity, history, and values in African cultures. In *Seven Doors,* the use of Indigenous languages alongside English preserves Nigeria's linguistic diversity while ensuring accessibility to global audiences. Proverbs and idiomatic expressions embedded in the dialogue enrich the narrative, offering insights into African philosophies and worldviews.

Spirituality permeates every aspect of life in *Seven Doors*, reflecting the deep integration of religion and culture in African societies. The veneration of ancestors and the belief in supernatural forces shape the characters' actions and decisions (Morgan, Okyere-Manu and Beatrice, 2020). This spiritual dimension adds depth to the film's exploration of morality and justice, reminding viewers of the enduring influence of African cosmologies.

Fig. 9: Display of Spirituality (African Rituals)

Fig 10: Display of Spirituality (African Rituals)

Art and music in *Seven Doors* serve as powerful tools for cultural expression and preservation. The film incorporates traditional musical instruments, rhythms, and call-and-response patterns (Fig. 11) to evoke the spirit of African celebrations and rituals. Similarly, visual art forms, such as sculptures (see Figs. 12) and textiles, enhance the movie's aesthetic appeal while conveying symbolic meanings tied to African traditions.

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Fig. 11: Apala Music

Fig 12: Sculptures

Postcolonial and Afrocentric Approaches to African Identity in *Seven Doors*

Postcolonial theory examines the lingering effects of colonialism on African identities (Adigun, 2019), as articulated by scholars like Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Chinua Achebe. Femi Adebayo's *Seven Doors* explores African identity through postcolonial and Afrocentric lenses by highlighting the tension between traditional African values and Western influences.

Postcolonial themes are evident in the protagonist's internal conflict, reflecting the duality of living in a society where colonial structures persist. For instance, the character's pursuit of success in a globalized world often requires abandoning indigenous practices, symbolizing the ongoing impact of colonialism on African identity. This is seen when the protagonist; Adedunjoye faces pressure to conform to Western business norms, which clash with his community's traditional values.

Afrocentricity emerges strongly in the film's celebration of African spirituality and communal bonds. The ritualistic elements and reliance on ancestral wisdom underscore the importance of reconnecting with African roots. A key scene showcasing this is the spiritual ceremony that restores balance in the protagonist's life, emphasizing the power of indigenous knowledge over foreign ideologies.

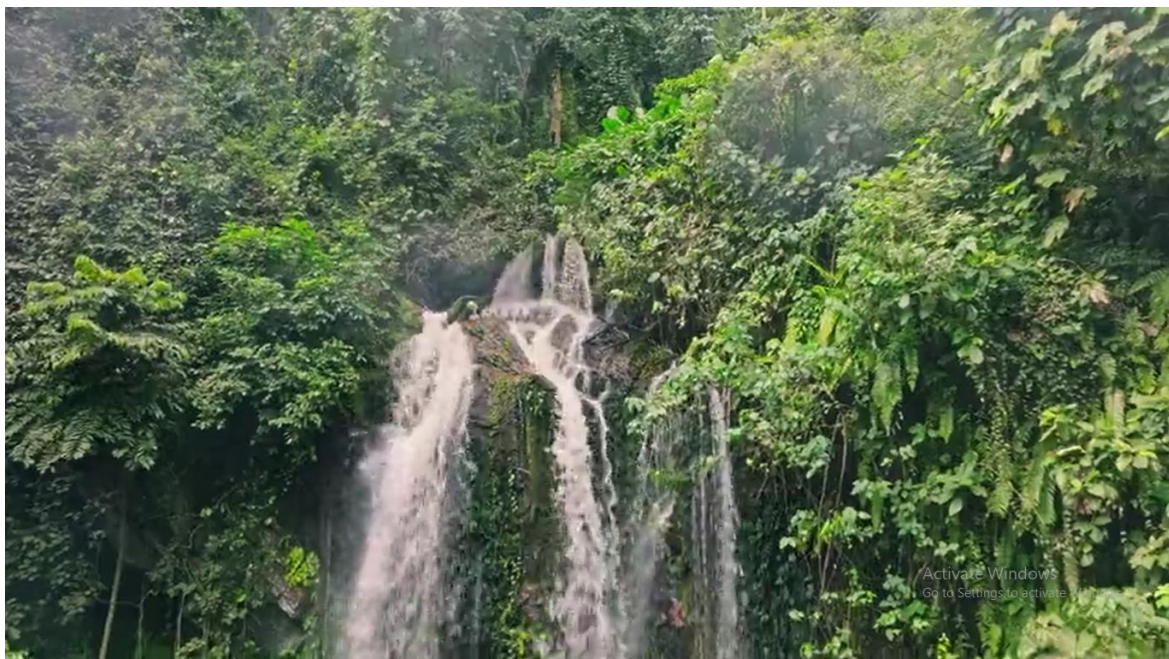**Fig. 14: Display of Spirituality (African Rituals)**

Fig. 15: Nature

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The study of *Seven Doors* reveals the film's significant role in preserving and promoting African traditions, cultural values, and societal structures. The film reflects the complexities of African heritage, highlighting the interplay between tradition and modernity. One of the primary findings is the film's depiction of kingship as a sacred institution in African societies. The protagonist, Adedunjoye, struggles with the expectations of his community and the moral dilemmas imposed by ancestral sins. This demonstrates the weight of historical continuity in governance. The necessity of upholding traditional practices while adapting to contemporary realities is a recurring theme which reinforces the tension between cultural preservation and modernization.

The research also highlights the role of *Seven Doors* in showcasing African spirituality, particularly the Yoruba belief in ancestral reverence, divine intervention, and communal responsibility. The film illustrates how African spiritual beliefs shape decision-making processes, personal identity, and moral obligations. Rituals, consultations with priests, and the concept of atonement through marriage serve as cultural markers that reaffirm African spirituality's place in contemporary narratives. This finding aligns with the Afrocentric perspective that positions African traditions at the core of identity formation.

Another key finding is the representation of language, proverbs, and symbolic storytelling as tools for cultural preservation. The dialogues in *Seven Doors* incorporate indigenous expressions, reinforcing the significance of linguistic heritage. Proverbs and idiomatic expressions serve as vehicles for transmitting wisdom, ethics, and societal norms. The inclusion of Yoruba language elements in the film enhances its authenticity and underscores the role of language in sustaining African cultural identity. Additionally, the study identifies polygamy as a central theme in *Seven Doors*, presenting it not merely as a marital arrangement but as a sociocultural practice embedded in African traditions. The protagonist's dilemma regarding polygamy reflects broader discussions about the evolving nature of African customs in the face of changing societal attitudes. The film provides a balanced portrayal, showing both the responsibilities and challenges associated with polygamous unions while maintaining a culturally respectful perspective.

The visual elements of *Seven Doors* further reinforce its cultural depth. Traditional attire, ceremonial practices, and architectural designs in the film serve as visual representations of Nigerian heritage. The coronation ceremony, adorned with elaborate regalia, music, and sacred rites, exemplifies the continuity of African leadership traditions. Similarly, the depiction of communal living, family structures, and the significance of elders in decision-making reflects the collectivist nature of African societies.

Furthermore, the research underscores the impact of modernization and globalization on African traditions, as depicted in *Seven Doors*. The film critiques the gradual loss of cultural values due to external influences, particularly among younger generations. The corrupt chiefs in the film symbolize the erosion of moral integrity in leadership, while the protagonist's struggle to reconcile tradition with contemporary expectations highlights the broader discourse on cultural sustainability. This aligns with previous studies that emphasize the need for cultural introspection and the role of creative media in resisting cultural dilution.

From a theoretical perspective, the Afrocentric framework validates the film's contribution to cultural preservation. *Seven Doors* challenges Eurocentric narratives by placing African values,

traditions, and philosophies at the forefront. The study finds that the film serves not only as entertainment but also as an educational and historical document that reinforces African identity. The interplay of postcolonial and Afrocentric approaches in the film affirms the importance of reclaiming and celebrating indigenous knowledge systems.

In conclusion, Seven Doors stands as a significant cultural artefact that embodies the richness of African traditions. The film successfully balances historical representation with contemporary relevance, offering a nuanced exploration of identity, morality, and societal evolution. The study recommends that African filmmakers continue to embed cultural elements in their works to promote heritage preservation and counter the effects of cultural erosion. By serving as a bridge between the past and the present, films like Seven Doors play an essential role in safeguarding African traditions for future generations. The findings also underscore the film's role in critiquing the erosion of African values due to external influences such as Westernization and materialism. Looking at the settings of the majority of films released in recent times, it is evident that there is a gradual loss of traditional values, particularly among younger generations. However, *Seven Doors* reflects the need for cultural preservation. The use of Afrocentric Theory in the study helps to position *Seven Doors* as a cultural artefact that challenges Eurocentric narratives and asserts African identity. The study suggests that films like *Seven Doors* should be recognized as significant tools for educating both African and global audiences on the richness and complexity of African heritage. Furthermore, the study recommends that African filmmakers should consciously incorporate traditional themes into their narratives to strengthen cultural identity and ensure the transmission of African values to future generations.

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