

**To Coma and Back: Re-awakening Stage Drama in Nigeria Through a
Systemic Overhaul**

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Abstract

In Nigeria today, there is a desperate 'battle' for attention between stage drama and television/video drama. The more the electronic medium drives forward, the more stage patronage dwindles. Things have gone so bad that stage drama is almost extinct in Nigeria. This need not be so, as very many well-meaning people have pointed out, since each medium has its areas of strength and weaknesses. A number of factors have led to the decline of live theatre. These include insecurity, unfocussed development of stage drama, the lure of the Western form of drama, inadequate infrastructure, poor audience engineering, weak returns on investment, poor literary theatre culture, weak economic power, the introduction of television drama, and the emergence of home video drama. This paper proposes a number of interventions that can restore stage drama, perhaps not to its former glory, but to a living alternative dramatic entertainment form.

Introduction

Stage drama is on the decline in Nigeria. In commercial arenas, recreation centres and even the universities, which once boasted of vibrant theatre, stage drama has all but stopped. As if to foreclose any recovery from this decline, the National Theatre in Iganmu, Lagos is in a state of utter neglect, providing an ignoble metaphor of the general apathy. Stage drama, however, is a veritable means of communication, education, enlightenment and entertainment, among its other benefits, and the living presence of the actor in a live performance creates an

impact that other media may find difficult to match. Given the relevance of stage drama in society, it is necessary if not urgent, that the medium be revived as a parallel alternative to whatever other entertainment presently available in Nigeria. Before this is done, however, there is the need to determine what steps to take to stem the tide of events that is making stage drama go comatose, and actualise the objective of bringing the clientele back to the drama arenas.

Reasons for the decline in stage drama patronage

Reasons which account for the decline of stage drama in Nigeria are:

Insecurity: The spiralling urbanisation of Nigeria from the 1970s resulting from the nation's oil wealth brought with it a rise in armed robbery, especially at nights, when incidentally and conveniently stage performances were scheduled to hold. Theatre goers reacted by staying home at night. But Owumalam insists that insecurity may not necessarily be the only problem but the "preference (people have) for presentation of entertainment programmes to be enjoyed at home without their making the effort of going out to seek such pleasures"(2002:74). In any case, no one reason was enough to bring about the poor state of affairs in Nigerian stage drama.

Unfocussed development of stage drama: To understand the diminishing attraction of the stage, it would be useful to briefly recall the development of drama in modern Nigeria. In traditional Nigerian communities, there was vibrant theatre commonly found within the celebrations and festivals of the community, the rituals, and in folk activity. From the Yoruba forest regions to the Igbo heartland and to the savannah plains of Nigeria, festivals thrived and theatre, confined within these festivals or in the recounting of race history, were in place. Like in most traditional African societies, these activities were outdoors and were fixed at specific times of the year. However, in the western part of Nigeria, more recent history identifies the *Alarinjo*, an indigenous travelling theatre and percussor to the Yoruba Travelling Theatre of Hubert Ogunde, Kola Ogunmola, Duro Ladipo and others which eventually conformed to European expectations and definitions of formally organised professional theatre.

The travelling troupes of the Yoruba which existed largely in the capital city of Lagos aided the growth of theatre and encouraged public participation. The cinema was also developing alongside and people had

a choice to attend the cinema at night or attend the infrequent (by cinema standards of regularity) stage shows which at the time were often commonly, even if wrongly, referred to by the semi-literate as 'concert'. Therefore, the traditional Nigerian society was familiar with theatre, albeit of the African variety which is suffused with dance, music and mime. It was nothing like the European, housed-in affair and could be presented almost impromptu. Preparation for the traditional theatre performances was elaborate and colourful, with elaborate stage-specific performance costume, music ensemble, and extensive props and paraphernalia. In the Eastern parts of Nigeria where the Igbo are in the majority, music, dance and masking of the face and head dominated the performance, lacking the significant percentage of dialogue that, even though merely emerging in the Yoruba traditional performance, was the long-accepted practice in Europe.

Properly speaking therefore, the African performance form was time and resource intensive, unlike the European form emerging in the universities in the Departments of English and of Theatre Arts. This production convenience of western drama had to do with the ability of the European drama to use even a character or two where necessary, deploy dialogue to facilitate the communication of ideas, and dispense with music and dance, which even though adding colour, was not a necessary component of European theatre, like it was in African theatre.

The long training of actors, often from childhood, and the secrecy associated with the religious cult setting within which the masking operated made traditional plays demanding to produce. Another hurdle imposed by its very nature, was the need for a cohesive, homogeneous audience that stimulated and actuated the complementarity that is so vital for the efficacy of an African theatre experience, where every member of the community is expected to participate, not necessarily by choice but by community decision, as even the markets are shut down for the festival theatre. Everyone attended, for if the community went to the square to celebrate, it was anathema for any member of the community to stay away!

It is true that some traditional theatre could be solo performances. Some masquerades of the Igbo of South East, Nigeria like the *Ullaga*, *Nwakakpu mmanwu* and other satirical masquerades, perform in front of compounds where immoral conduct has been perpetrated. This sub-set of masquerades enact in simple terms, unwholesome behaviour of that member of the family and the consequences that could result. It presents a threat of sanction and public disgrace should the person persist in the

unacceptable behaviour. People would watch this night-time performance from hiding. There is no audience applause or ululation that accompanies public performance at the square, since this activity was not entertainment, even if some persons felt entertained. Instead, the audience listened as to a homily, even if some of the audience felt like cheering. The culprit nevertheless was the butt and was expected to change for the better. This brief satirical drama is bereft of the usual elaborate paraphernalia associated with the formal celebrative traditional theatre. Often, one guide who may also beat the musical gong accompanies the actor.

The traditional form declined with the rising urbanisation and the introduction of European theatre in the cities and educational institutions. The decline increased rapidly because of the drift to the cities where the village festivals that required homogeneity of culture could not be practiced. The youths however returned to the clan to participate in the festivals. But it was not the same, for they returned as semi-strangers, losing the finesse of the dance because rehearsals were too short for improvement in the performer's adroitness or the evolution of new, refreshing styles. So, the dances and movements remained largely repetitive. Besides, there was no competition to stimulate development. You went to the festival knowing what to see. The ancient Greeks knew what to expect in their theatres, but because their theatre was speech-dependent, there was a lot the dramatic poet could do to change the stories/myths that formed the raw material for the performance. Thus, variations maintained interest and curiosity in the audience. In traditional Nigerian theatre, dance and music were dominant and the same masker/actor executed the same dance steps every year the performance returned to the square.

Unfortunately, stage drama failed to adapt from the traditional form, but rather leaned completely on western models which the university graduates had been exposed to. Since this was alien to the people, it was a matter of time before the skewed foundation gave way. It is my belief that development in any area must have good foundation on the culture of the people.

The Lure of the European form

In commercial centres in the late 19th Century, especially Lagos, a number of public theatres sprang up, prominent among which was Glover Memorial Hall in Lagos established in 1887-88 (Awodiya, 2005:97). By the mid-20th Century, according to Nwamuo, theatre

practitioners and academics like Geoffrey Axworthy and Martin Banham were:

establishing University theatres (which were) distorting the noble face of traditional Nigerian theatre.... Theatre was therefore removed from the communities and taken to buildings in the cities, for the elite who could pay for such relaxation. Euro-American prescriptions about theatre and its practice have tended to deaden the energy, the fire and the spirit of traditional Nigerian theatre. (1990:63)

These modern theatres were based mainly in the higher institutions of learning like the universities at Ibadan, Ife and Nsukka and were either run by the Departments of English and Theatre Arts, or as educational theatre like the Unibadan Masks, the Ori Olokun of University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) and Oak Theatre of the University of Nigeria, in the following decades.

Dugga states that formal theatre in Nigeria started as practice before it became academic, and the University of Ibadan which pioneered theatre arts “engaged artistes like Kola Ogunmola to enrich the academic experience of its students.” (2006:5) Therefore, the universities were producing theatre people trained in the European form, who quickly enriched the market in dramaturgy, acting and theatre work. Film was in vogue, but did not confer class as all manner of persons thronged the cinema housed at low fees. The ‘decent’ found more comfort and security in the theatre. Again, there was little financial profit from the festivals which did not charge gate fee but depended on the goodwill contributions or *awo* from the appreciative spectators, which often amounted to very little. This meant poor remuneration which discouraged professionalism.

But many of these conveniences were available in the European form and this encouraged people to continue to develop drama and theatre along European lines. The universities, for instance, could not have arranged festivals because of the dedicated semi-religious nature, the specialization of each performer, as well as the secretive nature of the cult which managed the events. The European model had the attractions for formalised learning.

On the other hand, use of dialogue meant that actors could tell stories-in-action even if they were not accomplished performers. In the traditional setting, the semi-professional actor told the story in dance and music, each exercise an independent skill! These diminished individual and corporate interest in traditional forms and put attention on the

European alternative. Also, the more the middle class grew, the more they, trying to imitate the tastes of the European overlords which gave them a false sense of having 'arrived', spent quality time in the theatres where often good shows were mounted. It became the fad to visit the theatre with the family during the weekends.

Modern theatre continued to rise and achieved its peak in the sixties, but by the late seventies, the fortunes of the theatre started to dwindle. Ifeanyi Ugwu's record of a sample of audience response to the live stage (the National Theatre, Iganmu) is a pointer:

...in 1978, total attendance to theatre was 364,932 people. In 1979 the figure came down to 130,102 people, and in 1980 the number stood at 99,322 people. The figures demonstrate that, not only was the strength of audience relatively low for a thickly populated Lagos, but also, the number kept dwindling annually, even when the population of the city was daily appreciating... (2006:54)

The Rise of Television Drama

In response to the availability of the tube and the proliferation of TV houses, more good quality soap operas were televised, produced by the graduates of the schools of Theatre and English Literature who were on hand with shows which people could watch in their homes. Some examples include *Bassey & Co.*, *Try Me*, *The Masquerade*, *Cockcrow at Dawn*, *Another Life*, *The Family*, *Mirror in the Sun* and many other weekly TV serials. In fact, practically all TV stations in Nigeria, and they were over twenty in the 1980s, presented at least one serial drama each. Indeed, many stage scripts were serialised and presented on TV. And one did not have to go to the theatre house to see it! This again is down to the question of convenience. It was also cheaper. Theatre charged money; so did cinema houses. But TV charged nothing. Thus, the television soaps that grew during the productive 1970s and early eighties, created in people a new entertainment avenue for home relaxation. The power of televised drama is because it has the additional advantage of "generating a feeling of authenticity" (Ayaoge, 2003:96), and, if one may add, satisfying the non-literate population who would rather enjoy a video play which demands little mental effort than a stage play which sometimes forces more intellectual activity.

Poor Economy / Funding

The unemployment of the 1980s and 1990s, occasioned by the national economic distress produced young people who thronged to the schools for lack of what else to do. The snowball effect was austerity. The money many could ill afford could not therefore be directed at theatre which was for them 'expensive' entertainment. Indeed, the common saying in Nigeria is: "only a well-fed man thinks of relaxation." Poverty therefore helped drive people out of the theatres.

The theatre, requiring more funds and dedicated personnel that would rehearse over long periods, yet lacking clientele, lost its actor appeal. Maintenance of the theatres became very difficult and theatre proprietors began to use the performance spaces for other public and social engagements.

Lack of Theatre Culture

Okoh identifies the lack of theatre culture in today's Nigerian as an impediment to a viable theatre practice in Nigeria. Sadly, people

are not able to understand the meaning of the arts and its usefulness to the society outside its entertainment value. They would rather watch video films and television programmes than go to the theatre. Some even look down on the profession and would do everything possible to discourage their children and wards from taking to theatre studies (2005: 404).

The interest that seems to be rising in the area of theatre arts nowadays is simply because of the glamour and small wealth that electronic media drama is today offering the actor.

Inadequate Performance Venues and Poor Audience Engineering

The lack of performance venues and poor audience engineering did not help matters. The few venues were shoddily constructed, the stages inadequate, the atmosphere uncomfortable, and there was a weakness in planning and execution that painted a discouraging, unappealing picture of the theatres. Even then, the few stage productions became shoddy because of lack of good funding. Even the academic institutions that used to provide quality entertainment, dallied because of paucity of funds and a general decay created by the depression and lethargy of the times. Apathy set in and people began to abandon the theatres in droves.

Even the travelling theatres, both the Ogunde type and those that were set up by fresh theatre graduates, could not thrive anymore due to declining patronage and prohibitive production costs. The theatre “could no longer sustain the cost of travel from their earnings.” (Dugga, 2006:7). Too quickly, everything was falling apart for Nigerian theatre.

The Rise of Film / Television Drama

Even though television came to Nigeria in 1959, and the first television drama was in 1960, according to Olusola (1981:371), it was not until the seventies, when the colour variety became affordable, that its full impact was felt in homes. The preference for TV drama was due to what may be termed subordinate reasons. Dugga summarises the state of affairs when he notes that in the 1980s the Nigerian economy took a downward plunge. The dwindling fortunes of the theatre practice in Nigeria were compounded by

the absence of theatre infrastructure, political instability and insecurity, ...the soaring competition from Television, Cinema and later video film, as well as the negative social perception and attitude to the theatre as a profession. (2006:6)

Television drama was making waves, but people still patronized the theatres. Educational theatre, for instance, continued to thrive in the educational institutions even up to the early nineties. But theatre was yet to receive the blow that upstaged it and made it go comatose.

The Emergence of Video Drama

As stage production became less appealing and commercially unviable, a new theatrical activity, the home video drama, became dominant. Home video drama is a recorded television drama which is stored in a video tape or compact disc format and sold to the public. It borrows themes from the television soap, but adopts the more extensive outdoor recordings that are reminiscent of film, while retaining a good measure of the camera shots that are employed in television drama production.

The term “home video” connotes an amateurish video camera recording made at home as pastime, perhaps to record family events for private viewing. But in Nigeria, it is much more than that, for the breath of Nigerian home video drama is ambitious and lavish in design elements. They even produce epics with extensive dramatic plots that

deny the amateur status which the name 'home video' suggests. The camera shots are like those of television soaps, but there are always exterior scenes that sometimes incorporate street activity, including car chases. Also, as the industry developed, it has exploited the computer-generated graphic effects that are available today. Therefore, the name 'home video' belies the sophistication of the industry in Nigeria. What is however of concern here is the challenge this new theatre poses to stage drama as alternative entertainment, since its clientele is drawn from the same pool as stage drama. Instead of sharing patronage with the stage, the Nigerian video drama seems to have all but completely turned the attention of all available clientele to itself at the expense of the stage. This state of affairs, among other factors, is making stage drama to go comatose in Nigeria.

The Nigerian home video drama started off in the vernacular, (with sub-titles), and was an instant hit with the populace. It has since developed into a multi-million naira industry. The financial return on investment is so high that stage workers have streamed to home video production which they have found much more financially rewarding. On the other hand, stage audiences have for convenience, transferred their interest to it. Even though the output of these video dramas in the past few years which I consider its 'middle life' is disturbing, the populace has remained glued to the television screen. But, efforts ought to be made to stem and reverse this trend if the purest traditions of the theatre and its most edifying features are to be sustained and fully enjoyed.

Video drama is basically like the television drama but it came as a complete story on tape. Even where the story continued, it hardly exceeded two parts. Again, it was produced purely for commercial purposes and people could watch preferred stories at leisure. They also had the opportunity of repeated viewing, using the television tube as channel, of course. Therefore, video drama was a natural development from television drama. But it was, for the stated reasons, more convenient than television drama.

In this environment, gifted actors began to look elsewhere to express themselves, the closest being TV but TV performance had all but stopped. The issues raised and discussed in the home videos were close to the people and were things they understood and could relate to. Suddenly, people discovered that watching the vicissitudes of life acted out by recognizable people, brought appeal to the story. In this regard, the tube claims better proximity to the stage than cinema can. But the similarity in appeal stops there, for while the tube could be watched at leisure and in

the comfort of the home and at one's own time, the stage compelled the movement of the audience-to-the-story rather than the preferred story-to-the-audience which television provided. Theatre tried to fight back, but it was feeble and the strategies, rushed as they were, were not well thought out.

I recall how theatre groups tried in vain to keep The Rosy Arts Theatre in Owerri, Nigeria alive but could not, despite varied strategies designed to attract enough patrons to pay for the space and offset production costs. Today, that theatre house and many others are used for wedding ceremonies and other social functions only. Matinee productions which were attempted for Sunday afternoons failed to capture attention because of the video player and cable television which were providing entertainment to Nigerians, many of whom had grown lazy intellectually to bother with the dialogue of the plays and its temporal nature.

In the face of all these, there were adequate, if not superfluous, personnel to tell stories and play them out. A lot was happening in the society and there was no lack of themes to present. In the Western part of Nigeria, the proximity of the then capital of Nigeria, Lagos, influenced the flowering of recording stage performances on video tape. Demand rose as quick-fix businessmen saw the potentialities of the video as profitable business. In fact, a number of Yoruba language dramas were put on video and sold with various degrees of success. But the explosion did not occur

until the Igbo language home videos arguably stimulated by the unqualified success of *Living in Bondage*, a NEK production, in 1993, came into the picture. Even though NEK had earlier produced Yoruba home video drama, and Nigerian Television Authority had brokered an "inept" production of (Achebe's) *Things Fall Apart* with a lot of publicity, there was still not enough spark to ignite the fuse of the new industry. (Duruaku, 2000:130)

The home video drama industry now employs over 30,000 odd actors and crew. (They use the same personnel over and over). There is also over 500 home video producers since the early 1990s when the boom began, culminating in what today is (Nigerian) Nollywood, named after the American Hollywood, and the Bollywood of India. Indeed, there is no day that over 50 movies are not produced in Nigeria; and the market is growing relentlessly. This is not doing the stage performance much good.

Strategies for Reviving Stage Drama

In spite of the foregoing, there is a need to restore and maintain the primacy of the stage. Wherever the TV and film have grown, the stage has remained preserved even if as less glamorous twin; for the values of the stage cannot be overemphasized. Going to a live musical show or a football match is far superior in essence to the recorded medium of video, or compact disc. The appeal is not the same and the societal restoration and harmony of either a festival, or indeed the stage is sadly lacking. The collective sigh, the spontaneous laughter, the engaging collective applause and the sheer presence of the performer cannot be substituted. The audience may find home entertainment convenient, but not more relaxing or appealing.

Canice Nwosu puts it succinctly when he observed that

Unlike movies... (stage drama) does require the live presence of both actors and the audience in a single space. This is the theatre's uniquely important advantage and function, its original religious function of bringing people together in a community ceremony where the actors are in some sense priests or celebrants, and the audience is drawn to participate with the actors in a kind of Eucharist (2005:180).

Stage and video drama are siblings that can and should co-exist, each one being maintained by its particular audience, because even though both entertain and enlighten, they are separate arts forms. The theatre, however, has for a long time been more urbane, demanding more intellectual participation than television can ever do. For this reason alone, the theatre outside its ritual basis will hardly fill a very large hall the way television can address a mass audience.

In Europe and North America, where the movie industry and video productions originated and are flourishing, theatre performances, according to Okoh, "are still waxing strong. Broadway and Off-Broadway theatres, for example, still record full audience capacity. In summer, theatre festivals abound everywhere and they are heavily attended" (2005:405).

There should be a live-and-let-live situation between the video and stage productions. Since there can be different audiences for both drama, what the advocates of stage drama should seek is to make the stage convenient by eliminating the identified shortcomings. Also, the stage worker in Nigeria must be able to benefit from television / video, as well

as retain his stage interests so that he exhibits flexibility since both forms are so closely linked. Some of the strategies for reviving interest in the theatre follow.

a. Introduction of exotic forms - Over the years, theatre makers and theorists have tried to sustain appeal through experimentations. Many others have tried out new forms and even searched for the relationships between theatre and the more compelling aspects of human activity and interest like medicine and education. Today, these frontiers are being vigorously explored in the realisation that people are likely to pay attention to things that relate to their health, the realities of their lives, their environment, and their general well-being in concrete form, rather than the concept of relaxation misunderstood in Nigeria as idle pastime. But paying attention to these exotic forms may well be the cutting edge needed to bring stage drama back to life in Nigeria.

b. Infusion of the aesthetics of dance and music - Stage drama in Nigeria should fall back to the infusion of the aesthetics of dance and music which TV cannot match. The camera lens cannot roam enough the way an eye of a spectator can appreciate dance on the stage, receiving and accessing complex data simultaneously and holistically. In fact, efforts have been made in the recent past to integrate music and dance into drama, but these efforts have been fuelled by African nationalism rather than a desire to enrich drama to attract the audience. Perhaps, if the goal is re-directed, the method of handling the infusion of dance and music will be more rewarding.

Adesokan notes that music and dance act as vehicles for promoting dramatic intention at the fundamental level of comprehension and entertainment, "giving soul to while propping the body of the production. The absence of an action, affective as well as qualitative music and dance greatly reduce consumer interest". (2005: 498) The use of African drums and orchestras, as well as folk songs, will certainly attract the Nigerian to the theatre.

c. Audience comfort in small theatres - I advocate the provision of compact neighbourhood, easy-to-run performance spaces with power generators to obviate the poor electric power supply in Nigeria. This will encourage people to patronise the theatre. If these theatres are darkened, the performances can be in the day, reducing the fear of insecurity. An extension of this is community theatre which should run as theatre-for-

development centres where the people can participate and express themselves. The fun and relevance that this kind of theatre practice can generate is immense. These neighbourhood theatres will be easier to maintain and would be able to generate enough for the actors and other staff, who may also benefit from other incentives from government and corporate bodies. The stage can never, however, pay as much as video drama because it does not possess the breath of mass address that is inherent in the electronic medium. Clearly, small, efficient, day-time neighbourhood theatre will lure people back to the stage.

d. Re-evaluation of theatre curriculum in schools - Drama should be given active attention at all levels of education in Nigeria. The pre-primary and primary classes should be exposed to theatre and drama in education where the children will be exposed to creative dramatics, improvisation and role play. When they are caught young, they are more likely to carry the interest to adulthood. As it is, TV and video at home are perhaps the most dangerous distractions (to study) for young children.

For the other levels of education, educational theatre should be encouraged and the theatre departments strengthened. The Theatre Arts departments have to become socially relevant to the host community and beyond. Indeed, school-based theatre should bring theatre to the people and address itself to the issues relevant and immediate to the people. Up to the 1980s, secondary and primary schools had dramatic societies that livened up the schools with drama performances. The range of plays included those that were school external examination texts. I remember playing roles in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar* while I was in Class Three in the secondary school! Such opportunities no longer exist in Nigerian public schools.

e. Developing a Tourism industry - Tourism in Nigeria is in its infant stage. As it develops however, so will the interest in stage productions, for the recreation-seeking tourist will hardly stay in his hotel room to watch films and video drama. A developed tourism industry engenders a lively entertainment industry of which stage performances of plays or/and music take the front seat. Travelling/Mobile Theatres would be useful in this regard. Nwosu believes that the formation and development of mobile/travelling troupes, which involves taking theatre to the people, is an essential strategy for reviving the live theatre (2005:182). This will complement the neighbourhood theatres.

f. Bring the Video/TV Stars to the Stage: Like drama, music is a performing art; like drama, it has the electronic form typified in the audio cassette and compact disc. But live performances remain attractive and electrifying. Drama can borrow from this by sometimes using star actors of the screen on live shows. It is true that many screen actors may not be able to cope with the peculiarities and stresses of stage performance, but a good number of the screen actors in Nigeria cut their teeth on the stage. The presence of these 'stars' on stage shows will surely help pull people back to the theatre.

Conclusion

While stage drama is seeking strategies to come back to life, home video drama in Nigeria is arguably beginning to show signs of an implosion. This has been occasioned by rifts, and lack of professionalism. Because the demands from the actor by the camera lens is less than that expected of the stage actor, it was easy for many actors who could not have survived on the stage but had achieved some measure of success on TV to jump onto the bandwagon when they saw the ample financial rewards in video acting. Artistes who have not even cut their teeth in the theatre industry are today producers and directors of their own video dramas (Odumosu, 1994).

Today, it is the fad to 'enjoy' the home-grown video films despite their hurried production and often insipid story lines. But the competition is cut throat and thus the fast rate of production to tap into the large market. Nigeria has 140million people, (2006 census), 30% of which are engaged as home video practitioners or patrons of home video drama. The trade is a huge commercial success, thereby encouraging more people into the industry. It is however believed that after the rush, the calmness of denouement will set in and a reasoned reflection will follow to put polish into the industry, because the reason why people patronize the industry now is the lack of alternative entertainment that would provide temporal and financial cushion to patrons. If the quality declines and the theatre offers interestingly fresh content, the audience will return.

Home video drama in Nigeria, even with its weaknesses, still remains a significant threat to stage drama, and "has dealt a devastating blow on (its) survival, development and sustenance in Nigeria..." (Nwosu, 2005:175), but drama will take stage again if some of the strategies

outlined can be implemented. However, both the stage and the video drama should thrive because there is room for both in Nigeria.

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