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# REHABDRAMATICS AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA; AN EXAMPLE OF THE "I AM SPECIAL" PROJECT, AMAENYI AWKA.

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## ABSTRACT

The physical health and wellbeing of individual members within given communities appear critical to the actualization of the concept of holistic human development. However, there appears to be budding issues stemming from the inadequate attention paid to the wellbeing of challenged children and adolescents within these communities in Nigeria by families, agencies and government institutions. Hence, this paper aims at forging more inclusive creative modules for the intervention of the performing arts in cases of medical rehabilitation especially as it concerns challenged children in Nigeria. The objectives include assessing the potentials of RehabDramatics as an effective instrument for injecting new approaches in promoting right social impulses especially as it concerns the development of at-risk children and adolescents. The researcher's engagement of RehabDramatics in the applied theatre project evaluated, attempted not just to utilize Drama and performance based learning to educate and motivate right creative and social impulses in children, but also to include these and more in rehabilitating at-risk children and young adults who may have been exposed to debilitating experiences, practices and environmental constructs that may have in turn impaired healthy psychosocial, emotional and creative development. The researcher also adopted the use of structured and semi-structured interviews carried out with participants and other concerned individuals as a major method of data collection. The administration of questionnaires was engaged in



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evaluation of a part of the research to ascertain determinable outcomes. The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, IPA as well as participant observations were also engaged during the course of research. The study finds that co-ordinated theatrical activities as expressed through RehabDramatics, possess unique qualities in fostering progressive psycho-social, attitudinal and communal change such that should promote more qualitative life for challenged children and young adults.

The need for the provision of quality health care for members of communities who need them is a "front burner" issue globally. Indeed, with the health care challenges confronting nations of the world such as the Covid 19 pandemic, Lassa fever, SARS, etc., many governments across the globe have had to join forces with their citizens within local community structures in building a common front on tackling these issues in order to sustain the continued survival of mankind. Nigeria and indeed other African countries also continue to grapple with various outbreaks of diseases such as Cholera, Malaria, Typhoid and others especially in rural areas where health facilities are lean. It therefore becomes imperative that social innovations which have the propensity and capacity to engender positive responses and needed action to the challenges of health care delivery especially within various local communities, are engaged in providing succour to the individuals who need them.

Drama as well as other theatrical performances can be classified as viable instruments within the humanities and are often times utilized as social intervention tools. Indeed, in more recent times, the Arts and humanities have become engaged in multidisciplinary research efforts in addressing aspects of the human condition; health care inclusive. Concepts such as Health humanities for instance, attempt to identify certain needs within the sphere of healthcare provision and delivery. Indeed, as an academic discipline, it provides for the inclusion of aspects of the humanities such as Art, Literature, Philosophy and Performances in order to engender a more inclusive and outward-facing approach to health related challenges. Scholars in more recent times propose that concepts such as Health humanities



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could be instrumental towards the in-depth appreciation of Art as well as the systematic application within clinical situations and education that allows for a creative and rehabilitative experience to be shared between patients and the care givers themselves. On the import of Health Humanities to nursing for instance, Crawford et al, observes that:

> The humanities have long held a place in nurse education where their inclusion was deemed appropriate to inculcate an appreciation of the fullness and complexity of human experience. The 21st century has seen a growing commitment to a nursing curriculum that involves a full appreciation of this complexity. The use of the arts in learning for nurses has also been encouraged by the use of problem-based learning and the desire to encourage them to engage in reflection about their practice. Poetry and novels can aid this task, particularly those focused on the experience of certain illnesses, conditions and treatments as can the reflection about the teaching process itself. (5).

The humanities also appear to be instrumental in providing therapeutic interventions and reduction to aspects of medicine such as mental health and so on. This perhaps lies in the effectiveness of Creative Arts in providing unique experiences for individuals while inducing different levels of appreciation and even participation within the process. Citing Biley and Galvin, Crawford states that, "art offers a showing of human experience in unique ways" (5). He further observes that:

> There is a growing interest in creative disciplines such as dance and drama in physiotherapy. The arts and creative therapies as disciplines in their own right have made inroads into fields as diverse as cancer care, mental health care, including forensic contexts and psychotherapy, dementia care, and social care work with children. (6).

The use of Theatre thus, has continued to be advocated as a transdisciplinary measure especially within the purview of medical sciences and health care



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delivery. This approach attempts to broaden the spectrum for the application of new perspectives as well as creating collective understandings and conversations on the prospect for improved health standards. Indeed, theatrical activities possess unique abilities in raising communal consciousness about given health concerns as well as *particuliarizing* distressful individual experiences as may not be possible through other forms of Therapy. The concept of RehabDramatics as recommended in this proposal attempts to bridge the gap between the prospects for both rehabilitation and education to occur simultaneously. There is no gainsaying that adequate awareness raised about certain diseases would go a long way in educating the communities concerned on the best preventive measures that can be adopted as well as help in the mobilization of needed action where there are health emergencies already. Thus, the instrumentality of dramatic performances could play an important role in this regard.

The term RehabDramatics is made up of two word components; *Rehab* and *Dramatics*. The word *Rehab* is derived from the noun, *Rehabilitation* or the verb, *Rehabilitate*. The Online Etymology Dictionary (2019) defines rehabilitation as "bringing back to a former condition after decay or damage and in part from the Medieval Latin word, *rehabilitatus* meaning to restore one's reputation or character in the eyes of others" (n.pag). Given these definitions it would appear that the term Rehabilitation could derive more in-depth meaning within contextual applications and constructs. The Online Etymology dictionary gives further clarifications in defining the application of the term within certain scenarios inclusive of:

> To restore to good condition, operation, ability to work or the like. To restore to good condition operation or management as a bankrupt business, to re-establish the good reputation of a person, one's character or name "and" to restore to former capacity, standing, rank, rights or privileges. (n.pag)

Indeed, as a word being used across and beyond disciplines of medical nature and

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also capable of being jointly referenced with synonyms such as salvage, restore, recondition, reconstruct and refurbish, the word Rehabilitation provides as an adequate base term in evaluating discourses on individuals who are faced with some form of disability or the other. Indeed, taking a hint from the Latin derivation, the contextual appreciation of the word, Rehabilitation extends beyond its application to the possibility of achieving wholesomeness and restoration of full physical functions from illnesses, disabilities and challenges caused by sudden infections, accidental mishaps, blunt force traumas and so on, but also with secondary disabilities such as psychosocial challenges which these primary conditions may bring along. The British Dictionary concurs with this position with the contextual definition of the verb, Rehabilitate as the ability "to help a person who has acquired a disability or addiction or who has just been released from prison.
; to readapt to society or a new job, as by vocational guidance, restraining or therapy" (n.pag).

Thus, as the study carried out shows, there appears a need not only to restore and readapt individuals who suffer from different disabilities back to society but also to improve prospects for psychosocial development to thrive.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2019) defines Dramatics as "the study and practice of theatrical arts such as acting and stagecraft" (n.pag). It so connotes that the use of the word dramatics informs of the performance and production of plays as well as other theatrical or staged events. Derived from the word 'Drama' which portends a portrayal of life, involving conflicts and emotions through action, dialogue and designed for performance, the word dramatics ensures that certain components needed to create a theatrical event must come together to allow for a proper appreciation and evaluation of the production's objective. Perhaps it is in this light that the term could be used and engaged within other approaches that project the efficacy of performative elements and performances, themselves in the understanding of working concepts.

Thus, the concept of RehabDramatics attempts the coming together and utilization of the dramatic, theatrical and

performance based arts, beyond the purpose of task-solving but in stimulating psychosocial improvements within each participating individual such that could foster rehabilitative possibilities in areas of self-imagery, self-representation, self-worth and social relationships. The infusion of these performances should therefore provide artistic content that can be identifiable and relatable to circumstances within which the participant live. The need to engage oral literature and performances within the creative process can be used to aid knowledge acquisition and rehabilitative tendencies as the medium do not appear to be delineated from the present realities of participating individuals. RehabDramatics could be engaged as an approach in the use of Drama as a medium capable of fostering Therapeutic and transformative changes. The broader concept of Drama Therapy have overtime engaged particular approaches in evaluating the various complexities of human and social behaviour as well as the need to develop avenues where artistic and performative processes can be used to improve cognitive and creative possibilities needed for qualitative psychosocial behaviour. Butler et al citing Enumah, Verhofstadt-Deneve, Boal, Dauber and Fox, Laban and Jones state that:

> Drama therapy can be defined as the systematic and intentional use of drama/ theatre to achieve psychological change and growth. Manifestations of drama in the field of therapy include psychodrama, social theatre, playback theatre and movement as a linguistic activity. Drama therapy acknowledges the relevance and interdependence of health and creativity in an approach to space and healing that is interdisciplinary (95).

RehabDramatics, thus could be engaged within these processes with particular reference to the engagement of indigenous, artistic and performative content that is capable of not only enhancing dramatic activity and engagement, but also increasing acceptability of same through relatable communication avenues that are essential in improving therapeutic possibilities. The engagement of oral indigenous art forms is critical to this

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concept as it portends that the immediate society of every individual, and by extension its norms, cultural practices, languages and traditions is capable of influencing individual perceptions and behaviour of its citizens and thus, could be infused along with other dramatic activities and processes to engender new approaches that could foster positive rehabilitative change.

RehabDramatics as an operational term could thus be utilized as the engagement of the dramatic art medium beyond the spheres of learning and *conscientization*, in inducing rehabilitative possibilities through a controlled and pragmatic inclusion of activities that are creative, expressive, participatory and development-driven to the study of challenged individuals. RehabDramatics advocates for the use and integration of oral and performative art forms, literature, techniques and instruments prevalent within the community of research in the process of engendering performance based learning and thus fostering improved cognitive and psychosocial development as it concerns transformative engagements with challenged persons. The concept of RehabDramatics integrates these inclusive and performative components of Drama along with existing oral traditions and literature such as poetry, folklore, puppetry, dramatic representations, dance and games in an attempt to induce the prospects of both learning and rehabilitation to occur simultaneously.

**Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis in the engagement of Drama Therapy**

The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is a research approach that offers insight into the experiences of individuals and how these experiences inform their perceptions on a given phenomenon. Originally domiciled in the study of psychology and introduced by Jonathan Smith, IPA is quite distinct from other approaches and is uniquely suitable in the discourse of Rehabilitative-Drama because of its Psychological, interpretative and idiographic components. Studies have overtime evaluated the potentiality of IPA in drama related concepts. This approach entails a detailed appraisal of the various phenomena *vis a vis* ideological and socio-cultural constructs that have affirmed themselves within the fabrics of the communities being

researched and thus have shaped the conceptualization of certain notions and attitudes of the individuals within that community. In instances where these notions are linked to issues of health and physical wellbeing, IPA provides as an avenue to inquire and provide depth over a range of issues and experiences while putting them in context with present realities. Robert Allan et al agrees when he says that:

> IPA in particular can add mesh to the bones of a phenomenon, drill down and explore the depth of an issue for a particular group of people, further explore the nuances of the impact of context on relationships, or bring narratives to the fore, that explicate clinical challenges that cannot always be met with a singular treatment approach. Currently, there is also substantive dialogue about how research can contribute to improved clinical outcomes and evidence based practices. (406)

The IPA approach, within the construct and application of Applied-Theatre processes and activities, thus provides an avenue for the participants to relive certain experiences with a view to contextualize the meaning and understandings ascribed to the phenomena responsible for them. Dramatic activities should therefore increase communal awareness about these phenomena and the attributed experiences; and where these activities are carefully guided to participants whose physical wellbeing are greatly affected by certain social attitudes, therapeutic change should occur. Dima reports on a Psychodrama study using IPA;

> Some examples drawn from IPA studies in different fields are: How does a woman's sense of identity change during the transition to motherhood? How do people who have complained about their medical treatment make sense of being angry? How do parents manage the challenges of living with an autistic child? What does jealousy feel like? The psychodrama study using IPA reported in this paper was guided by the following research questions; how do members of psychodrama therapy experience and make

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> sense of therapeutic change? How do they experience and describe the group experience? (72).

Indeed as a model of Drama therapy, this study engages the participants in an art making process; where experiences are shared but made collaborative by the introduction of Dramatic enactments and oral traditional art forms such as Folklore, songs, games, etc.. The primary concept of the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis in the context of this research, allows for a study that is flexible such that various artistic techniques and procedures could be adopted to suit each given situation. Dima et al.again acknowledging Smith's recommendation for the integration of IPA in psycho-dramatic exercises posit that "there is no single definitive way of doing IPA, but it offers clear guidance and suggestions for the analysis, interpretation and writing up process. And also advice for researchers on how to adapt the method to their own particular way of working". (72). There is need, however, for proper guidelines to be drawn in the application of IPA. This ensures that a given progress pattern is observed and experiences are adequately taken note of and documented. Dima et al suggests that.

> Consistent with IPA theoretical foundations, research tends to focus on People's experiences and/or understandings of particular Phenomena, on personal meaning and sense making in a particular context for people who share specific experiences hence IPA is suitable to respond to broadly and openly framed research questions. (72) .

Similarly, Drama therapy, engages and expresses the different experiences of individuals within a performative process as can be utilized in improving psychological skills in children and Adults alike. Indeed, Drama therapy can be defined as "the systematic and intentional use of drama/theatre to achieve psychological change and growth". (Emunah, 1994). Scholars inform that other manifestations of Drama therapy include Psychodrama, Playback theatre, Movement drama and so on which basically acknowledges the relevance as well as interdependence of health and creativity in an approach that cuts across disciplines. Dayton cited in



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Butler et al, (2013) states that "drama therapy allows for a creative symbolic expression of thinking, feeling and behaviour that can lead to an enhanced creativity and spontaneity in the individual and an increased ability to perceive and take action toward desirable life choices" (96).

The similarity of the art forms of dance and drama in the context of therapy perhaps lies in the activity and conscious involvement of thoughts and body movements to create healthy energy where psychological and physical development could thrive. It has been observed that movement can be used to communicate. Thus, the ability not just to understand the meaning of bodily expressions as can be espoused through drama or dance, but also to channel these art forms as therapeutic media becomes imperative in inducing positive behavioural and psychological development in dealing with children or adolescents. The drama-therapist could employ deft skill in a group setting, where the participants are assisted to resolve problems through creative ways. This in turn creates an environment, for example, through the instrumentality of drama, where the voices, stories, bodies and reflections of the participants and the group in general, play an important role in improving teacher-participant relations and inadvertently increasing the therapeutic potential of the process. Butler et al maintains that:

> Therapeutic change occurs through an intricate interplay of various guided human experiences. The therapy analogue of the client-therapist relationship becomes broader in group therapy. Every participant in psychodrama is a potential therapeutic agent to the others. It is therefore important to organize a therapeutic drama group in such a way that a therapeutic atmosphere can develop and cohesiveness can be established. (96)

The Movement drama concept, thus as an offshoot of Psychodrama and Drama therapy presents as a participant-based dramatic workshop where different units of certain themes and phenomena are analysed through creative exercises that stimulate self-exploration, narration, ingenuity and group work. These exercises, scholars observe should be chosen specifically to suit the particular

need of the group as well as incite the participants to express themselves openly and directly while creating a feeling of comfort and shared interest, giving them the opportunity to explore their minds and bodies in creative, therapeutic and dramatic ways (Butler, 2013). The end result among others should include a development of the concept of the body as a symbol of empowerment as well as a broader understanding of the narrative essence of drama, as expressed through activities like storytelling, in expanding the therapeutic space and motivating the possibilities of creating better alternative stories and self-descriptions.

**The "I am Special" Applied Theatre Project, God's Care Special school, Amaenyi, Awka.**

The project was carried out at Gods Care Special School in Amaenyi, Umuayom; a school designated for the care of children and adolescents with speech and hearing disabilities in Awka South Local Government area of Anambra State. The project involved working with the children in the school, with the assistance of the school administration, teachers and research assistants in using the medium of drama to represent and assess different phenomena associated with the plight of challenged children especially as it concerns those with hearing and speaking difficulties. Initial observations revealed that while the major population of the children in the school suffered from different degrees of deafness and/or dumbness, the school has over the years, had to provide care for children with other challenges such as mental, biological and neurological deficiencies like Down syndrome, Albinism and so on. The project lasted for 3 months with a contact period of one hour daily, twice a week. Some of the students were noted to reside within the school premises for a number of reasons ranging from incidences of child abandonment to the total lack of specialized and constructive care for the said challenged children by their parents or guardians.

The purpose of the project was explained in detail at a special PTA session on the 20th of April, 2019 at which some of the parents and teachers present were informed of the objective of the project. 18 students were selected based on their levels of willingness in engaging dramatic, playmaking and other theatrical techniques in aiding learning processes as well as evaluating issues



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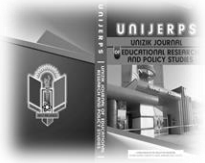
concerning them. The participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identities and profiled thus:

| No | Pseudonym | Age | Gender | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | "Samson" | 11 | Male | Deaf and Dumb. Has a twin brother who can hear and talk. Became deaf and dumb at age 7. |
| 2. | "Martha" | 12 | Female | Deaf and dumb from birth |
| 3. | "MJ" | 12 | Female | Deaf, dumb and mentally challenged slow in comprehension. |
| 4. | J-Boy" | 12 | Male | Became deaf and dumb at the age of nine. Parents claim it is a spiritual attack. Dreams to be professional dancer or footballer. |
| 5. | "Clara" | 12 | Female | Deaf and dumb abandoned as the school for 4 years. |
| 6. | "Tim" | 13 | Male | Became deaf and dumb at age 4. Suffers from frequent bouts of convulsion. |
| 7. | "Oprah" | 13 | Female | Deaf and dumb from birth. |
| 8. | "Dave" | 14 | Male | Became deaf and dumb at 6. Family claims it is a spiritual problem. |
| 9. | "Clems" | 14 | Male | Deaf and dumb from birth. Wants to be an engineer. |
| 10. | "Joe" | 14 | Male | Mentally challenged. Suffers from down syndrome. Resides in the school. |
| 11. | "Sammy" | 14 | Male | Deaf and dumb from birth. Wants to be a professional footballer. |
| **No** | **Pseudonym** | **Age** | **Gender** | **Notes** |

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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. | "Nuella" | 14 | Female | Deaf and dumb from birth. Was reported to have been affected by drugs the mother ingested during pregnancy |
| 13. | "Mark" | 14 | Male | Deaf and dumb from birth. |
| 14. | "Divine" | 14 | Male | Deaf, dumb and mentally challenged from birth. |
| 15. | "Miracle" | 15 | Female | Deaf and dumb from birth. |
| 16. | "Terry" | 15 | Male | Suffers from down syndrome. |
| 17. | "Naomi" | 16 | Female | Deaf and dumb from the age of 7. |
| 18. | "Bobby" | 16 | Male | Deaf and Dumb from the age of 9. |
| 19. | "Vincent" | 16 | Male | Deaf and dumb from birth. |
| 20. | Charity | 17 | Female | Deaf and dumb, became pregnant at 15. Abandoned by family. Resides in the school after her baby was adopted. |

During the course of the *Amaenyi* project, the major issues revolved around incidences of spiritual manipulation as possible causes behind the predicament of children living with hearing and speech challenges. Also other issues such as peer-bullying were identified as factors affecting qualitative development in the children living with these health challenges. The rehearsal processes leading up to the eventual production afforded the participants avenues to give objective interpretations to these anomalies through expressive segments and representations. Some of these issue themselves also cropped up within the rehearsal sessions thus allowing for the researchers to address them immediately. One of the instances was the constant jeering at a female participant "Miracle" who exhibited extreme shyness and made some forceful grunting sounds whenever she stood up to 'say' something. This always elicited laughter from some other equally challenged members of group. The researchers were able to communicate the participants on the disadvantages of such responses, by deliberating infusing actions and gestures to discourage such

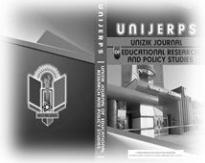

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behaviour while encouraging children like "Miracle" whenever they expressed themselves; there was an introduction of a reward system mechanism to engage these children in social and performative activities like dancing, games etc. geared towards improving confidence levels.

The final production was carried out on the 16th of August, 2019. Post production activities engaged participants on issues raised at the preliminary stages of the project as it concerns the menace of bullying and discrimination. Some of their sentiments as expressed before which changed over the course of the project were noted. Observations revealed that prior to actual dramatic engagements; participants expressed general feelings of resentment and thoughts of retribution towards individuals that were found culpable of bullying children with hearing and speech difficulty. About six participants prescribed that such individuals be subjected to the same disabilities as appropriate punishment. These positions appeared to change as the project progressed. The infusion of dramatic enactments was aimed at developing and improving self worth to ensure that possible scenarios for discriminatory actions to occur are minimized. Furthermore, a total of one hundred and twenty questionnaires were also distributed to adult-respondents within the Awka metropolis. These questions sought to measure general perceptions on social attitudes towards the plight of children living with speech and hearing challenges as well as other forms of disabilities as they affect children and adolescents. Some of the responses were reflected as follows:

**Table 6:** Do you agree that children with hearing and speech disabilities are more likely to be bullied and discriminated against?

| S/N | RESPONSE | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | YES | 98 | 81.6% |
| 2 | NO | 4 | 3.3% |
| 3 | MAY BE | 18 | 15% |
| | TOTAL | 120 | 100% |



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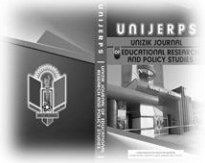
**Table 7:** Do you agree that spiritual forces could be responsible for hearing and speech loss in children?

| S/N | RESPONSE | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | YES | 55 | 45.83% |
| 2 | NO | 38 | 31.6% |
| 3 | MAY BE | 27 | 22.5% |
| | TOTAL | 120 | 100% |

**Table 8:** Which of these do you think is more responsible for discriminatory actions meted out towards challenged children?

| S/N | RESPONSE | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | COMMUNAL/RELIGIOUS PRACTICES | 15 | 12.5% |
| 2 | INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR | 44 | 36.6% |
| 3 | BOTH | 61 | 50.83% |
| | TOTAL | 120 | 100% |

Again in this regard, one would observe from the general answers given that a section of the population engaged, believed that 'spiritual causes' could be responsible for these disabilities. These responses were also evaluated during post production activities with some notable changes in perceptions observed. The Amaenyi project engaged participants on similar issues as it concerns the menace of bullying and discrimination. Some of their sentiments were expressed before and after the production and noted below:



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**Question:** How would you want people who have bullied and discriminated against you to treated?

**Table 3**

| S/No | Before Dramatic Engagements | After Dramatic Engagements |
|---|---|---|
| P1 | I wish that they become deaf and dumb so that they knew how it feels. | I forgive them. I will grow to be better so that they will know they were wrong. |
| P2 | They should be arrested and put in jail. | *Absent* |
| P3 | I don't like remembering those things. | I pray they understand that I did not decide to be born this way. |
| P4 | I don't even want to have contact with such people. | I forgive them, but I will not give them another opportunity. |
| P5 | I leave them in the hands of God. Only they know why they do those kinds of things. | They should be taught that we are also human beings. |
| P6 | Let their children suffer the same thing, then they would understand. | They should ask for forgiveness and know that what they are doing is wrong. |
| P7 | They should be beaten up. | If they will listen, they should be taught better how to treat children with this disability. |
| P9 | Let them be disgraced. | They should not be allowed to stay near children. |
| 910 | My aunty said that I'm possessed. She called me all sort of names. I prayed for it to happen to her child. | If it happened to her child, she won't be like that. |
| P11 | If I could, I will make them like me for 1 week, then they will understand. | We should all be alive, they will see what I will become in future. |

Observations revealed that prior to actual dramatic engagements, participants expressed general feelings of resentment and thoughts of retribution towards individuals that were found culpable of bullying children with hearing and speech difficulty. About six participants prescribed that such individuals be subjected to the same disabilities as appropriate punishment. These positions appeared to change as the project progressed. The infusion of dramatic enactments was aimed at developing and improving selfworth to ensure that possible scenarios where discriminatory actions are more likely to have negative impact are minimized.

## Conclusion

The engagement of dramatic activities especially within aspects of Drama therapy has proven to be very beneficial to the delivery and sustenance of health care services. The concept of RehabDramatics in this regard provides as an avenue where individuals who may be directly challenged or affected by illnesses, outbreaks or disabilities and other members of the community, can be better educated, informed and mobilized to take desired action for the common wellbeing of all.

Applied drama projects engages members of the community in the processes of sensitization and action planning. Indeed, drama can be utilized in replicating the advantages and disadvantages of certain social practices that may directly affect efforts to achieve the sustainable provision of healthcare in various communities. The need to continuously engage community members on social values, norms as well as established cultural practices using the dramatic medium provides as a viable alternative for researchers and change agents. Thus, until some of these practices are re-enacted in a way that community members are brought in full glare of short or long term repercussions, many of the phenomena responsible for the seeming dearth in the provision of quality healthcare to individuals who desperately need them may continue unabated. It is therefore very likely that qualitative change in communal behaviour and attitudes could induce improved social responses that could foster better acceptance of health related remedies such as medication,

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life style moderations and even therapy. This inclusiveness as well as unique quality in engendering needed action, promotes the engagement of Applied Theatre techniques as a very effective medium. Finally, drama could also be utilized in bringing political leaders and the citizenry to a round table; such that new policies of government on the wellbeing of challenged children as well as community responses are replicated and dramatized so as to allow all parties discuss and understand their roles in the effort to achieve holistic development.

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