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Journal of Gender and Power is aimed at providing an international forum for discussing various issues and processes of gender construction. It is a scholarly, interdisciplinary journal, which features articles in all fields of gender studies, drawing on various paradigms and approaches. We invite scholars to submit articles and reviews reporting on theoretical considerations and empirical research.

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Editor's Preface

This issue of the Journal of Gender and Power can be considered as a special case study as all are written about gender in Nigerian society. This is a very interesting space for studying both femininity and masculinity and all articles which are included in this volume certainly confirm it. And there is gender inequality in this country, including the access of women to education and the job market, their marginalization, and discrimination in all spheres of social life, including subordination to men, also in the field of sexuality. This inequality and related to it phenomena result from cultural tradition and norms as well as various stereotypes that are deeply rooted in human awareness as well as in social structure and institutions. As Nigerian researcher Yetunde Adebunmi Aluko, write: existing „disparities are derived from shared traditional and religious understandings of gender identity and roles and represent a kind of superstructure on top of an underlying structure of socio-cultural gender prejudice and discriminatory practice."[1] And of course, it does refer to many other African countries.

The authors of the articles present various phenomenon dimensions of gender relationships in Nigeria. Together they give a picture of womanhood and manhood and Nigerian society. We can hope that this volume can be a small contribution to the slow process of women's emancipation efforts in Nigeria. Kelly Bryan Ovie Ejumudo confirmed that achieving such a „goal is not only necessary for sustainable development efforts in Nigeria: it also demands a pragmatic approach to appropriate policy formulation, program design, focused implementation and effective monitoring and evaluation in a genial climate of political will, genuine commitment, and national re-orientation."[2]

Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik
Editor-in-Chief

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[1] Y. Aluko (2016), Change in Status of Women In Nigeria: A Dialectical Framework for Understanding. *Sokoto Journal of the Social Sciences*. December, vol. 6, no. 2, p. 217.

[2] K.B.O. Ejumudo (2013), Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in Nigeria: The Desirability and Inevitability of a Pragmatic Approach. *Developing Country Studies*. 201, vol. 3, no. 4, p. 65.

ARTICLES

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Women and Rural Water Management: Unequal Power Relations and Gender Stereotypes, Ondo State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT. Inadequate access to potable water continues to be a serious problem in villages in Nigeria. Due to cultural and religious perceptions with regard to gender roles in rural water management, the marginalisation of women from rural water management (RWM) has continued to hamper rural development, reinforcing subjective perceptions of the social construction of gender roles in water management. This study proceeded using a purposive sampling technique with 30 In-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions comprising of eight males and eight females in each of the three study sites. The study draws from a gender-based participatory paradigm that conceptualised gender roles and women's participation as representing partnership and ownership. Findings from this study revealed that rural women are solely responsible for the sustenance of their family's potable water provision. Further findings show that perceptions about gender roles in RWM and the time women spend in water provision make their inclusion in RWM impossible. Therefore, the gender power differential which re-emphasises the culturally perceived role of women in water management could be partly responsible for prolonging water challenges faced by rural communities.

KEYWORDS: gender stereotypes, gender equality, women, water, rural water management

Introduction

Access to potable water is critical to survival and is a particular challenge in Nigerian rural communities where clean potable water is scarce. Rural women who, although known within the local communities as primary collectors of water and directly affected negatively by the scarcity of potable water, are seldom involved in essential water management activities (Dang, 2017). The domestic (female) and productive (male) do-

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mains have created a false dichotomy that allows for women to be seen only in their reproductive role as wives, mothers and caregivers and not as actors who could participate effectively in the issues of rural water management and development. Conventional development has focused on men and "marginalised the women to the more marginal welfare sector" (Kabeer, 2005, p. 13–24). This paper therefore examines perceptions about the management of unclean water among rural dwellers and the participation of women in RWM beyond the household level. Potable water, which can reduce the "burden of water provision on women and girl children thereby increasing their efficiency measures that in the end will reduce health-care costs" (Mehta, 2006, p. 63–78), is either scarce or not available. Aromolaran (2013, p. 631) argued that potable water can be made more easily available in the rural areas, and without 'modern chemicals' which are not affordable, by intensifying indigenous practices. Indigenous/rural approaches, like the use of *Moringa oleifera* and other local practices, are considered to be cost-effective and safe. Moringa seeds have been traditionally used to successfully purify "highly turbid water with 90–99 per cent of the bacteria removed from streams or river water, making it safe for drinking in place of the regular materials like chlorine and alum", which are often not available for rural dwellers (Sajidu et al., 2005, p. 251). A study involving gender analysis that covers the broad context and the various dynamics of a rural water project including indigenous approaches was therefore carried out. This analysis involved arranging various groups of women and men into diverse situations and at different times, in different bargaining positions in relation to their approval and acceptance of different roles. It was hoped this would make it possible to anticipate better how new ways of using water and managing it can bring about much-needed changes in the complex socially negotiated construction of roles (IUCN & Oxfam, 2018).

Like other communities across the globe, Ondo operates within a patriarchal system, especially in rural areas. It was observed at the research sites that women's voices remain invisible beyond their homes. This was expressed and investigated during focus group discussions and in-depth interviews when male and female respondents were asked about their perceptions of the role of women in rural water management, both at home and in the community. At the household level, the burden of the provision of potable water falls on the shoulders of the women. This makes it impossible for the women, due to their weak and unequal socio-economic power and lack of education, to productively engage with their male counterparts

or actively participate in water management activities at the community level. By way of community awareness movements and engaging of the women in supervisory positions, stereotypical sentiments around women can be dismantled, with respect to their involvement in rural water management. However, research has argued that the varying gender roles in rural water management beyond women's household responsibilities, have not been extensively acknowledged. This is the point of insertion for this particular study. This paper, therefore, aims to examine the effects of gender stereotypes and gender power differentials as seen in RWM practices in selected rural communities in Ondo. The concluding section considers ways to increase women's involvement in rural water management and reduce the impact of cultural and religious perceptions which are critical issues around a participatory approach in RWM.

1. A Gender-Based Participatory Paradigm in Water Management

This paper adopts a gender-based participatory paradigm (Izueke & Ezichi-Ituma, 2018) as a conceptual framework in which participation can be conceptualised as representative of partnership and ownership; this is a 'bottom-up' approach involving people at different levels, ensuring that decisions are soundly made and based on shared knowledge. A process is required that emphasises people's empowerment and participation, gender equality, legitimacy, transparency, responsibility and effectiveness. The new institutional structures introduced under gender equity based participatory models of local governance seek to balance out gender inequalities by presenting a platform where women can be organised alongside men and be allowed to express their opinions as well as contribute effectively in decision-making processes. With respect to rural water management, women's participation seeks to correct inequalities perceived in terms of access to water resources and benefits from rural water development projects as well as the exercising of decision-making powers with respect to the management of these resources (Kabeer, 2005). To translate the ethics of enhancing stakeholders' participation, especially that of women in local water governance processes, new institutional spaces have been created through, for example, decentralisation. However, in the context of local governance, this implies interaction among participants (mostly women and sometimes men) and stakeholders (mostly men) in determining their

development agenda and in managing resources to implement the delivery of potable water among households, which is their development priority (Blackburn, Chambers & Gaventa, 2000).

The European Commission has posited that participation and the rise of this notion have resulted from the expansion in development discourse while its agenda beyond the technical arena was to include institutional designs for facilitating the involvement of stakeholders in the maintenance of technologies and management of resources. The unification of the concepts of active participation and local management for improved operative and unbiased development is further engendered by advocating equitable participation of women. A very important hypothesis here is that women symbolise a relegated group in society whose lives are trapped in a formal framework characterised by gross inequalities of prescribed supremacy and authority in the community and deprived of equal admittance to and management of resources. There are various stages and perceptions of stakeholder participation. The first stage is discussion, where managerial bodies consult with the public to learn from their knowledge, opinions, experiences and concepts—here the procedure does not allow any share in decision-making. The second stage involves participation in the development and execution of strategies and programmes. The public participates actively by debating problems and jointly contributing to their solutions. At the third and highest stage, active involvement has to do with collective decision-making. Here, community members are equally granted an opportunity in the decision-making and are also responsible for outcomes (adapted from European Commission, 2003).

2. Qualitative Research Methodology

2.1. Research Methodology

2.1.1. Study Location

The study was conducted using qualitative research methods which are useful for investigation where social and physical issues interrelate. These have been applied in several water-related fields such as 'drought', 'water politics' and 'water and gender'. The study started in November 2019 and ended in February 2020 by engaging three rural communities in Ondo State, Nigeria. The first research phase started in Ile-Oluji which has a latitude of 7°12'6.27" N and a longitude of 4°52'3.44" E. The residents of this village

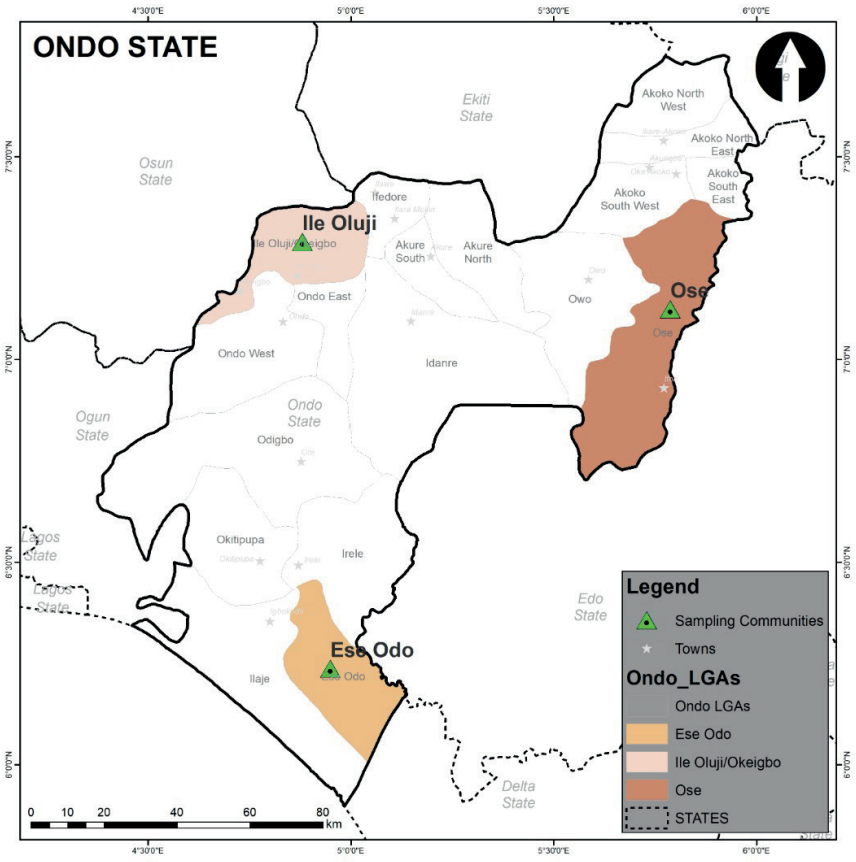

Figure. Map of Ondo State and the Selected Study Communities

(Agric Farm Settlements) are a mixed population in the sense that most of the resident are people from the neighbouring states with only a few native. We then proceeded to the second study site which is a village in Ose, located in the eastern part of the state with latitude 6°55'47.03" N and longitude 5°46'25.25" E. This area is predominantly occupied by farmers who were also involved with other jobs like trading. Farming here is practiced at a much larger scale in comparison with Ile-Oluji. The study finally ended at Ese-Odo, which is located at a latitude of 6°13'2.7" (6.2174°) north and longitude 4°57'52.5" (4.9646°) east. Although this area is surrounded by a very deep large river, the residents still need to manage their water locally, to make it potable. The major occupation here is fishing and farming.

2.1.2. Study Sampling

A simple random sampling method was used in this research and the selection of participants was based on those whose ages were above 35 years. The researcher thought that this age group would provide rich historical evidence around indigenous water management in their community. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews with key informants and focus group discussions (FGDs). These assisted in gathering experiences around the water insecurities, livelihood of women, and gender sensitivity of the community in rural water management. In-depth interviews with five males and five female participants from each of the three rural communities, totalling 30 participants in all including the key informants, were held across the research sites. FGDs were also conducted at the village centre between women and men separately across the study sites. These comprised eight males and eight females in each study area totalling 48 participants across the three study communities, most of whom were drawn from the participants of the in-depth interviews.

2.1.3. Data Analysis

Interviews were mainly done in English which is the predominant language in the selected villages. However, where respondents felt that communicating in the local language (Yoruba) would aid their understanding in interviews and FGDs, interviews were conducted in Yoruba and then translated to English. All interviews were recorded with the consent of interviewees, and those in Yoruba were translated and transcribed by the researcher. Excerpts of narratives are presented verbatim and were used in thematic analysis. Sets of themes described in the result and discussion section were decoded from the transcription of the audio recording during the interview and FGDs. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

2.1.4. Limitations and Ethical Issues

The limitations in data collections in this study were minimized by using the individual in-depth interview, FGDs and undertaking all the interviews in the individual villages or home settings of the interviewees. However, gender sensitive questions could not be addressed properly in the FGDs across the study sites especially in the women's group but were dealt with at the individual in-depth interview. Hence, to protect participants, sensitive issues around gender and water management were not discussed in open groups and informed consent was given before com-

mencing the study. Pseudo names were adopted in the entire study area with each name representing a collective or similar perception around each interview question.

3. Contextual Background

In the global and developed countries, the importance of a potable water supply and management systems has been the subject of serious attention which is reflected in the measurement of human developments and their inclusion in the Sustainable Developments Goals. According to Mehta (2006), development discourses and practices in the global south are being permeated by community participation both within organisational structures and rural water management. This moves away from gender stereotypes into community-based participation, although gradual, is becoming global discourse which is also trickling into the life of the rural dwellers. This move that seeks to include women has been as a result of the failure of extensive water focused and development projects which has consistently come under huge criticism (Agarwal, 2001). After the projected resolution that led to the development of the Women in Development (WID) approach and the declaration of a decade for women between 1975 and 1985, women became the target for developmental assistance. It was hoped this would address several areas by making development more effective, decreasing poverty, targeting basic needs and improving gender equity (Moser, 1989). However, social transformation was not presented; hence WID was strongly critiqued (Cornwall, Harrison & Whitehead, 2004) for its technical approach and for evading issues of power and inequality. Kabeer claimed it was like "treating cancer with Bandaid" (2005, p. 20). This did, however, affect the approach of Gender and Development (GAD), which now allows for a better understanding of power relations, diversities of race and class. This gender analysis contributes to 'deconstructing' the internal activities of the household and relating these to wider societal procedures.

Stereotyping among the rural population in Ondo has become entrenched. Therefore, whatever does not conform to the norm is seen to be defiant of culture and the way of life. Issues around water management and the scarcity of potable water are experienced by all, irrespective of gender, and one might therefore assume that everyone would be almost equally affected. Both males and females across rural communities have been

moulded either by fate, class or education into a particular role around indigenous/rural water management practices, which has continued to affect the availability and access of potable water among rural settlers. While the women are continuously mentioned as the "beneficiaries of water management and approaches", they are never involved in the decision and planning process of indigenous water management, which is always dominated by men (Finn & Jackson, 2011, p. 1232–1248). However, Resurreccion (2006) argued that such approaches, due to the ways in which they support gender stereotypes, create additional burdens for women by reinforcing male hegemony in indigenous water management. The gender and development (GAD) approach aims to re-integrate gender into all development systems, structures and practices by promoting changes in institutional practice, women's empowerment and gender equality.

Furthermore, Hope, Dixon and Von-Maltitz (2003, p. 94–110) explored men's communal responsibility which is so different from the responsibility of the women as well as the cultural perception of the role of men in rural water supply and management, "making it easy for the males to continue to dominate the water sector and overlooking/underplaying the possible contributions of the women". As a result of this non-participatory approach, many rural water projects failed both in the 1970s and 1980s due to established cultural norms and management gender bias (see Van Wijk-Sijbesma, 1998). Consequently, the 1970s through to the 1990s experienced a major and definitive shift into gender mainstreaming and incorporation by addressing the concerns of water management and the involvement of men and women from very low community settings (rural) to the highest points in government (urban). This intervention was based on the appropriate connections that should exist between gender equity and sustainable management of rural water (ibid.). Due to growing concern at little to no female presence in rural water management, women are now gradually being co-opted into local structures managing water in regions of Eastern Africa, like Tanzania, and in West Africa, like Nigeria.

Therefore, to attain the Sustainable Development Goal of halving the number of people not having access to potable water, one can maintain that what is required is a gender-based collective and participatory framework between women and men in rural water management practices which is devoid of stereotypes. While scholars (Moser, 1989; Agarwal, 2001; Singh, 2006) have widely explored the impact of gender differentials of rural communities, little has been done with respect to gender stereotypes and unequal power in rural water management. O'Reilly (2006, p. 958–972)

also agreed with the notion that gender stereotypes can be "dismantled during rural projects by making desirable alternatives available to the women which could be constructed through awareness raising targeted at specific group like the traditional heads". Likewise, the assessment of the role of gender and the changing gender relationships in organisations are becoming better understood in research and development through gender analysis (see Coles & Wallace, 2005).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Social Construction of Gender Roles in Rural Water Management

While women are continuously being cited as the "beneficiaries of water management and approaches", they are never involved in the decision and planning process of indigenous water management, which is always dominated by men (Finn & Jackson, 2011, p. 1232–1248). Elmhirst and Resurreccion (2008) argued that such approaches create additional burdens for women by reinforcing male hegemony in indigenous water management.

Both males and females across rural communities have been moulded either by fate, class or education into particular roles around indigenous/rural water management practices, which has continued to affect the availability of potable water among rural settlers without access to pipe-borne water. Apart from the challenge of access to water, access to some of the materials used for water management (also the responsibility of the women) is another problem. Men do not take on this role and the women have somehow accepted this as a further burden. One might assume that stereotyping would not be evident in issues around water management because the scarcity of potable water is experienced by all, irrespective of gender, and it affects everyone almost equally (Evertzen, 2001). Stereotyping among the rural population in Ondo has been entrenched into the way of life so that it has become a norm. Whatever does not conform to this norm is therefore seen to be defiant of culture and the way of life of the people.

Community-level meetings comprising of men only relate to the women through the wife of the community high chief. The only responsibility given to the women at the community level is to cook during the meeting, which the men believe is one of the fundamental roles of the women. Hence, the need to enhance community participation where women and

men both have an input into their development conflicts with local socio-political complexities (Agarwal, Delos-Angeles & Bhatia, 2002; Zwarteveen, 2008). While the core role of women in water management in the 'Global South' has been widely studied (Agarwal, 1997; Bakker, 2007), it is not yet clear how exactly 'gender and power' are being maintained by 'social hierarchies and stereotypes', according to Shah, Scott and Buechler (2004, p. 361–370). Narratives from women participants across the selected rural communities reveal how gender stereotypes are being practised unconsciously among the rural dwellers and the way in which this has impacted on the availability of and access to potable water in the villages.

> Before 10:30 I am through with all the water activities. I think these days, things are changing and some of our women want to be doing what the men are doing, I think that is against God and reversing the order of God (interview with female member in Ile-Oluji, November 2019).

> Really, we are helpless, because a woman does not have a voice in this community and so there is no point trying to make a point. After every day's activity of getting water and making some of it potable, we are so tired and useless such that most women are sleeping between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. (interview with female member in Ese-Odo, December 2019).

In Ese-Odo, women also wake early to fetch water from the "Yemoja"[1] spring. They then need to wait or come back in the evening so that the spring can replenish itself. The other option is to use a boat to go further from the main riverbank but this is dangerous, as the water is very deep. The women all stated that their men do not fetch water or engage in local water management; they regard their efforts as primarily for their children's future. The committee that looks after the water does not allow the women to take an active role in the rural water management meetings.

The narratives above reflect women's views with respect to their cultural role in rural water management activities. One response stood out: a woman participant was curious to know what the questions about equal participation would achieve in the management of their water. She did not see the usefulness of equal participation; she believed that the issues around water can only be successfully managed by men as this is part of a role given to them by God. She observed that recently women had started to grumble about their IWM activities, which she viewed as unnecessary.

[1] Yemoja is a water goddess that is believed among this community to supply water.

Another female participant reiterated that it was culturally acceptable for women not to complain or expect assistance from men in water management. This she supported with her strong religious sentiments, revealing that, from Creation, God had already made the man above the woman, and that a woman was supposed to learn and serve with submission "like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord" (1 Peter 3:6), she quoted from the Bible. She argued that women who are pushing for "all that nonsense" (interview with the female member in Ese-Odo, December 2017) about equal participation do not understand the order of God in the way things should be done. Although she agreed that the burden of water provision is huge and that assistance should be sought from the government, she felt it should not be sought from the men because, by doing so, one is trying to rearrange the order of God.

As noted by Singh (2006, p. 357–366), men's communal obligation and the huge difference from the obligation of the women as well as the cultural and religious perception of the role of men in rural water supply and management, make "it easy for the males to continue to dominate the water sector". This study observed that no matter how highly "educated"[2] a woman may be, she can never rise above the traditional, religious, and customary practices which make rural women subservient to men in Nigeria. There has been a shift in gender mainstreaming by addressing the concerns of water management and the involvement of men and women, from community settings (rural) through to the highest points in government (urban) from the 1970s through to the 1990s. This focus on gender equity and sustainable management of rural water is based on a growing concern regarding the lack of female presence in rural water management (UNICEF-WHO, 2011).

4.2. Gender Power Relations in Water Management

According to Lawuyi (1998), women are believed to have a special closeness with water which is deeply connected with feminine power. Across cultures, women bear the burden of water collection and they are also usually the managers of domestic/household water, responsible for household health and wellness, and water users in their own right (Strang, 2005). This study noted that women were situated in these roles

[2] Education among rural people is often measured by the ability to read and communicate in English or by attendance at colleges or universities (interview with key-informant, Ose, December 2019).

by virtue of their gender, age and household status. Hence, household resource use, distribution and structural inequalities in a community can be better understood using gendered analysis. The community involvement of women and men in projects and various water management tasks have to be evaluated in terms of their decision-making powers and the various advantages accrued to them (Agarwal, 2001; Cleaver, 2001; Coles & Wallace, 2005). The participation of women in funded water projects is usually a prerequisite; this does not, however, resolve power issues between rich, poor and educated women and between women and men. Power relations between the women and men across the study community were grossly unequal with most female participants confirming their exclusion from rural water management. It was also noted that sometimes the rich and educated but not the poor women were consulted in aspects of rural water management decision-making. Female participants described how women are side-lined in the issue of rural water management:

> It is a difficult life; the women are all alone in the household water management. We are never allowed to say anything publicly that can help improve our water crisis. I am just saying this, I cannot say it louder than this because I would be labelled as a bad woman, not even by the men, but by my fellow rich women (interview with a female key informant in Ese-Odo, December 2019).

> This is a woman's role but if the men can give us some assistance, this would mean the world to us. It is hard and not fair, and I believe there are more meaningful activities a woman too can be engaged with (interview with a female participant in Ose, November 2019).

These female participants described the process of daily collection of water as starting very early in the morning (some as early as 3.30 a.m.) until around 7.30 a.m. followed by about two hours to make the water potable. Thus, water management activities can take up to six hours and must be done in addition to other regular daily household chores like cooking. These women lamented how much else they could do with this time. Furthermore, it was observed that at community meetings and for any planning with respect to water management and community development, women only had as their representatives, the wife of either the king or the high chief (who is rich and educated), who thereafter would call a women's meeting to give them feedback on the developments in the community.

Generally, women across these villages do not have a voice. Cornwall (2003) also noted that the way people experience exclusion and inclusion can be complicated by social relations of class, kinship, marriage and household relations. He further noted that patterns of exclusion exist in water management in a situation where men exclude women from decision making roles and richer men and women limit the access of the poor to potable water. However, Ramamurthy (1997) argued that women can scheme a way through the patriarchal structural influence by resisting, inspiring and replicating power relations that function in a way that participation is enforced in water management. "Observing subjectivities of femininity and masculinity which relates to the activities of inclusion" in water management helps explain why men and women respond to community participation in the ways they do (Resurreccion, 2006, p. 375–400).

Male participants also shared their challenges with respect to water management and their perceptions about the role of women in water management in their community. One male participant (35 years old) commented that women's involvement in indigenous water management differed from that of men. He was from Ose, where they depend on a borehole of about 300 feet deep, unlike the well in Ile-Oluji that is only 60 feet deep. A further difference here is that water is predominantly sold from the compound or by individuals who can afford the cost of having a borehole at their houses. Another 57-year-old male participant claimed that women, or at least his wife, have no other role other than to look after the children and ensure potable water is readily available for the family. Women must queue to buy and fetch water from the nearest borehole. The two narratives below are intended to give the reader a sense of the lived experiences of the villagers.

> She wakes up very early in the morning (4 a.m.) to fetch water and would not be through with just fetching until around 9 a.m., because she has to go to more than one point to buy. If I put the distance from all of these points together, daily she covers about 3 km just to fetch or buy water, I can tell you that the men do not do this because this role has been designated to the women (interview with a male participant in Ose, November 2019).

> My three wives make the water management activities a little better because they rotate that role among themselves. You can see that the women are useful in taking care of the house most importantly in our water crisis (interview with a male key informant Ese-Odo, December 2019).

Men in all the study sites claimed that issues around water management are the women's responsibility and that it has always been like this and always will be. They acknowledged the scale of the work, but the men do not participate in these activities; this is not an act of 'deliberate wickedness', simply a way of sustaining the culture that has been handed down. It would be strange to see a man participating in household activities, most especially in the fetching of water or the household management of water. It was observed that while the men claimed to appreciate the efforts of the women, this was rarely communicated to the women for fear of affecting their water management activities. The men expressed their concerns about the interviews for this research, especially among their women, because they feared these kinds of questions might affect the women in their normal daily activities.

The rights of women with respect to water are not acknowledged. Gender divisions that apportion water responsibilities to women but confer most controls and rights to men, are experienced in most water issues. Dávila-Poblete and Nieves (2005, p. 49) agreed with this claim and maintained that most water sector decisions continue to be made based on the "false assumption that they are gender neutral", that the population is a 'homogenous whole', and that benefits reach everyone equally, which is not true because the benefits are largely for the men while the labour is for the women. Gender differences are paramount in the priorities chosen by men and women for water use and water management (Rutgerd & Zwarteveen, 2002).

When only women carry the burden of household water and only men have the opportunity to contribute to water management project planning, valuable opportunities to build the most effective community water schemes can be lost. Sandys (2005) argued that promoting equitable water resource management involves the abolition of gender stereotypes as a key instrument for developing the efficiency and reach of water sector investments. Improving water issues for women would necessitate modifications at many different levels and in many different areas. It involves altering divisions of labour that presently assign water responsibilities (without rights) to women by changing the current routines of public decision-making that would encourage and necessitate women's participation and alter perceptions about their involvement in water management (O'Reilly, 2008). Ribot (2002) further argued that decentralisation of roles and responsibilities with associated devolution of real powers and the retiring or re-negotiating of perceptions that disallow effective women's

participation, could provide genuine opportunities and a framework for women's participation in water management (Cornwall & Gaventa, 2001) and governance at the rural community level.

4.3. Challenges and Perceptions of Women's Participation in RWM

Water and its management are supposed to be a public affair as much as water is accepted to be a public good, which should be available, accessible and affordable to everyone in a community. However, villages in this research are typical of a hierarchical system driven by class and gender discrimination (see O'Reilly, 2008). In the focus group discussions, the women did not openly discuss their participation in local water management activities, and none spoke of their challenges publicly. Dissatisfaction was evident in their faces, mixed with a little fear. No one wanted to be reported to her husband or be accused of talking about her husband in a group. One female participant, for fear of backlash from men, said she would prefer to stay at home and not have anything to do with RWM. A female key informant said the presence of women in indigenous/rural water management at the community level would solve many water challenges.

> Most of the women know that all they are after is political gains, but the men would want us to stay away from such meetings with excuses that we cannot contribute meaningfully since we did not go to school (interview with female member in Ose, January 2020).

The responsibility of providing potable water for the household is enormous. Some women were concerned that participation in water management would be adding to their work.

> The tasks at home are much and we struggle to finish them every day; why are you trying to add other community activities to our responsibilities? (interview with female member in Ese-Odo, December 2019)

So many participation cases have placed extra demands on women's time or re-emphasised gender stereotypes without status gains or appropriate economic or social benefit in terms of income (Boelens & Zwarteveen, 2002). But because women are generally affected most, their participation in water management schemes would be invaluable and could

ultimately reduce their workloads. According to Barreteau, Bots and Daniell (2010), benefits of full and equal participation range from increased legitimacy of decisions to the development of participatory democracy, in addition to representative democracy, all of which are actions in the direction of sustainable development.

Female participants felt that the men should be fair and kind and hear the women out, because we are well experienced and we know a lot of things with respect to managing water" (a female participant, Ese-Odo, November 2019). However, male cultural perceptions about the role of women make this difficult. Since gender relations are based on attitudes, perceptions and behavioural patterns between men and women, involving women more in water management would affect the socially constructed practices that manifest themselves in the division of labour, roles, responsibilities and access to resources such as water (see Rao & Kelleher, 2005).

The majority of the residents of the rural villages under study were aware of the responsibilities and potential impact of the women in the provision of potable water. However, allowing women to participate in community committees and meetings is a big issue. This issue has been complicated by culture and religion. Women are perceived to be solely responsible for the provision of potable water to the household but participation beyond this sphere is connected with the perception of premeditated democracy, which automatically excludes women (Bernard & Kumalo, 2004). Most men and some of the women believe strongly that women's roles are not negotiable and are pre-ordained by God. An attempt to change this order would bring the men down and cause friction in their homes. Women, apart from not having time to participate in 'active decision-making roles within the community, are prohibited by their cultural and religious beliefs from taking active roles in water management (Garcia, 2001, p. 85–98).

Cooke and Kothari (2001) posited that the processes of unfair and unlawful use of power are generally hidden amongst the community and participation has become hegemonic in development discourses. Hence, patriarchy and hegemonic force among rural communities have consistently sustained the perceptions that limit the active participation of women in the RWM especially when it is beyond the sir homes. Agarwal (1997) also noted that participatory organisations are frequently socio-economically unfair and allow for continuous unequal relations of power. This was also observed in the local perceptions about the participation of women in village life which are often worked out through support systems and kinship structures. It is inside this unequal arrangement that water management

projects, supposed to be part of a gendered participatory system, are however perpetuating the cycle of inequality in RWM. Across these rural communities, men do not see the reasons why the women should be part of water management or any communal institutions.

> Women are our backbone, women should watch from the back to learn from men (Laugh! Laugh!! Laugh!!!) (interview with male member in Ose, February 2020).

> My son, never give a woman more power or more opportunity than she has at home, if you do, there might be chaos (interview with male key informant in Ile-Oluji, November 2019).

The men are likely to be aware that if the women can manage water provision at the household level effectively, they are probably capable of doing this at the community level, but they are probably threatened by this and therefore do not give women this opportunity. All this remains an obstacle to women's involvement in rural water management. Hirsch et al. (2010, p. 23) have showed how "participatory models can be steered in the political and cultural context of Uzbekistan", where usually little opportunity for stakeholder participation is provided. The men *in theory* agree that allowing the participation of the women could affect the local water scheme positively; however, there is a general fear by most of the men that the women would abuse the power and opportunity. One of the participants called me 'son', as if about to reveal deep mysteries, before saying: "If you give a woman power like the one you are talking about, that power would destroy her that is why God made the man first" (interview with male key informant in Ile-Oluji, November 2019). Thus, at the village level, an important cross-cutting theme in the examination of water management and provision is gender, because it is an 'analytical variable' in rural areas; the household provision of domestic water is a gendered issue as is its management at the community level (Mandara, Butijn & Niehof, 2013).

Conclusion

This article has explored unequal power relations and gender stereotypes in water management. It has also considered the potential impact of women in rural water management and their perceptions about their roles. It has examined women's perceived role, which revolves primarily

and culturally around water collection, protection, maintenance and storage at the household level in rural communities in developing countries, including in the research sites in Ondo. A substantial amount of a woman's time is spent on these activities; the women also plan the usage of water for their household carefully, as this can have a direct positive or negative impact upon their families' health.

During the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981–1990), the fundamental role of women was documented and has since been widely deliberated in the drinking water sector. In the context of potable water and its indigenous management for the provision of potable water projects, both the women and the men across the research sites agreed to the positive benefits of involvement of women beyond their homes. However, this was observed to be a theoretical consideration based on the women's contribution to water management at home; beyond the sphere of the home, they were not allowed to participate due to strongly held cultural and religious beliefs and perceptions.

Furthermore, the perceptions about women's roles in rural water management re-emphasise unequal power relations and gender stereotypes, thereby increasing the burden of water management. Gender awareness and sensitivity among the men and women could potentially re-order the perceived cultural role of women (that limits them to reproduction and household managers of water) by involving them actively in community development, especially as it relates to rural water management. The different narratives from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions showed that the under-involvement of women in rural water management practices at the community level had affected the management and adequate provision of water for the villagers. Men who see women's roles as limited to the household functions find it problematic to admit their involvement in the public domain on the assumption that women lack intellectual skills to make decisions.

Finally, I would like to argue that a change in the perceptions about roles and responsibilities with associated devolution of real powers and the re-negotiating of cultural views that disallow effective women's participation could provide genuine opportunities and a framework for women's participation in water management and governance at the rural community level. As much as decentralisation or devolution of power is a process which must be negotiated, the tough reality for the poor and side-lined women is that negotiation could be difficult since it is always dominated by political discourse and women in the rural areas are mostly not privy to this.

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Oil for Pot, Oil Against Pot: Narratives on Oil Spillages and Women's Experiences in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria

ABSTRACT. The incessant occurrences of oil spills, oil tank and barge explosions in the Niger Delta often result in environmental pollution that adversely affects farmlands, waterways and hamper economic activities in the region. In worse scenarios, these explosions sometimes result in losing human lives. This study examines the implications of oil spills on the environment and the lives of women and their families. It unveils the challenges women encounter from the oil-related activities, which were supposed to be the people's source of income generation and sustenance. To this end, related literature is reviewed, interviews conducted, and references are drawn from the ghastly Jesse experience and premiere of the Nollywood film, *Oloibiri* (Graham, C. 2016) to ascertain the root of agitations in the Niger Delta region. Ecofeminism constitutes the theoretical framework for this study. This study concludes that the people of the Niger Delta region in Nigeria, especially women, are victims of the natural resource (oil), which has gradually become a source of poverty and death. It recommends, amongst others, that the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) collaborates with the federal government in building cottage industries to provide employment for the youths and give grants to women to support their families.

KEYWORDS: oil spills, pollution, women, environment, exploration

Introduction

It is unarguably evident that the Niger Delta region, which constitutes the major source of income and revenue generation for the nation (Nigeria), suffers immensely from environmental hazards and disasters resulting from oil drilling, exploration and uncontrolled oil exploitations by multinational oil corporations operating in the region. Granted that the oil exploration in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria has generated immense income and wealth for the nation, unfortunately, the region is ravaged by numerous unsavoury ecological/environmental challenges such as pollution

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of farms and waterways, disasters of diverse forms, underdevelopment, unemployment, and by extension, poverty. To begin with, it is pertinent to mention the states that constitute the Niger Delta region. The States that make up the Niger Delta are nine in number, namely: Edo State, Delta State, Rivers State, Bayelsa State, Ondo State, Abia State, Akwa-Ibom State, Imo State, and Cross River State. In his M.A Seminar presented to the Department of Theatre and Film Studies, at the University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria, titled "The Emergence of Niger Delta Films in Nollywood: A Critical Analysis of Selected Works," Fyneface (2017) opined that although a lot has been written about the Niger Delta region due to ongoing oil exploration and exploitation, much attention has been on three States, viz Delta, Rivers and Bayelsa due to their volatile nature for being "one of the most endowed and richest in Nigeria in terms of natural resources, most especially, crude oil" (Fyneface, 2017, p. 2).

Suffice it to state that the oil, which is the natural endowment of the Niger Delta region, is expected to serve as a source of income generation that will eventually put food into the women's pot for the sustenance of the family. Unfortunately, it has become a source of starvation, sorrow and death. Reports on deaths and fire disasters as a direct impact of pipeline vandalism and explosions are common news today in the Niger Delta region, with the government paying lip service to the agitations and activisms arising from the desire to ensure that the activities of the multinational oil companies and groups or individuals perpetrating these acts are curtailed.

The Niger Delta Region and Oil Exploration

History shows that oil exploration in the Niger Delta dates back to the 1950s in Oloibiri, a community located in today's Bayelsa State of Nigeria. It is believed that Shell Petroleum Company, owned by the British, started oil exploration in this area in 1956, and "its operations have become more and more detrimental to the progress of the region" resulting in a series of "oil spills, human rights violations, environmental destruction and corruption" (as cited in Fyneface, 2017, p. 3). According to Okaba (2004) "a total of approximately 2,300 m^3 of oil is spilled in 300 separate incidents annually in the Niger Delta (2004, p. 126), additionally, "the oil multinationals have, over time, dumped their poisonous effluents directly into the sea, and also flare gas in very close proximity to community habitat" (2004, p. 119).

Government's neglect of the region to handle issues of pollution/oil spills and compensations from oil exploring companies to the communities where the oil is drilled resulted in the agitations for resource control, clean-ups of pollutants and contaminants from the lands and waterways. Thus, the rise in militant activities, youth restiveness and pipeline vandalization, and illegal oil refining by the youths are ways of remonstrating against perennial negligence of the region by successive governments. The plight of the regions is graphically enunciated in Judith Burdin Asuni's argument for the Niger Delta people:

> The people of the Niger Delta do not feel that the government of Nigeria has a contract with them. The federal government virtually ignored the Niger Delta in the 1990s, leaving development in the hands of the oil companies. The oil industry exploited and polluted the area, wiping out the traditional livelihoods of fishing and farming and providing few jobs or benefits in return (as cited in Fyneface, 2017, p. 9).

The dilemma of this region, which provides the economic base of the nation whose proceeds are utilized by the federal government in the development of various sectors of society, including the provision of social amenities for non-oil producing regions of the nation, can be summarized in the local parlance of "monkey dey work, baboon dey chop[1]." These minority groups do not benefit from the lopsided distribution of the resources shared from the dividends of natural resources they are endowed with. The realization that the region has been marginalized has resulted in the recurring decimal of youth restiveness and gangsterism as God'spresence (2010) argued that "incessant cases of robbery, cultism, militancy, kidnapping, pipeline vandalization, oil bunkering, rape, prostitution and other forms of violence perpetrated by members of youth gangs have posed a greater threat to public order and safety than at any time in the past ten years" (God'spresence, 2010, p. 82). This assertion indicates that the deplorable state of the indigenes of the Niger Delta is heightened each year and that everyone in the nation is susceptible to its aftermath.

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[1] "Monkey dey work, baboon dey chop." Often spoken in Pidgin English to mean, the monkey labours only for the baboon to eat. A derogatory term used to illustrate slavery (a situation where the masses/citizens or workers labour for the lords/bourgeoisies or a select few who do the eating/embezzlement or enjoy the resources/dividends).

Amaechi (2017) noted that Nwagbara (2008) reviews Tanure Ojaide's 'The Activist' as a political statement on the state of the Niger Delta, which has been "made comatose by the conduct of multinationals and the Nigerian government" (as cited in Amaechi, 2017, p. 28). Unfortunately, the government's nonchalance towards ensuring that these core oil states receive adequate compensation and reward for their resources has gravitated to a state of disharmony and underdevelopment in the region. This is compounded by the government's unwillingness to review the federation account's sharing formula, which is often fraught with bribery and corruption. The government's efforts in instituting a Niger Delta Ministry with a Federal Minister in charge and a Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to take care of the region's enormous and amorphous hydra-headed economic, environmental, socio-political problems seem not to be doing the job. There is an increase in youths' agitations, activism, militancy, and proliferation of arms to demand the dividends of oil exploration in the region. As a result, more killings, pollution, and structural poverty have taken centre stage.

Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism (Ecological feminism) is a brand of feminism that relates the earth to a woman. It "examines the connections between women and nature." Its focus on the environment accentuates how women and the environment/nature are affected by a patriarchal society. Ecofeminism first emerged in 1974 from French feminist, Françoise d'Eaubonne. However, ecofeminism emerged as a movement in the early 1970s and 1980 in the United States from a series of workshops and conferences by women professionals and academics to discuss ways to combine feminism and environmentalism "to promote respect for women and the natural world and were motivated by the notion that a long historical precedent of associating women with nature had led to the oppression of both" (Miles, 2018, p. 1). The metaphor of femininity is usually attributed to nature, the environment and the earth, such as: "earth-mother," "mother nature," and "mother earth."

The female gender is often plagued with inequality and subjugation by her male counterpart just as the earth is subjected to exploitation by man's/male's activities. This aligns with Thorpe's (2016) claim that "the environment is a feminist issue", thus accentuating the veracity of Miles assertions. In a work titled "What Exactly is Ecofeminism," Thorpe states that

the role of gender is important in resolving issues of environmental challenges and the status of natural resources, as well as in determining who the victims are and measures to chart a new path. Referring to The United Nations Environment Programme, Thorpe quotes: "around the world, environmental conditions impact the lives of women and men in different ways due to existing inequalities. Gender roles often create differences in how men and women act with the environment and how men and women are enabled or prevented from acting as agents of environmental change" (Thorpe, 2016, p. 1).

Thorpe however surmises that ecofeminism supports women with gender approach to issues of the environment and climate change, and that "ecofeminism relates environmental damage to women's exploitation and lack of empowerment." Thorpe makes reference to Professor Mary Mellor in the UK who concurs that "Ecofeminism is a movement that sees a connection between the exploitation and degradation of the natural world and the subordination and oppression of women... Ecofeminism brings together elements of the feminist and green movements, while at the same time offering a challenge to both" (Thorpe, 2016, p. 1).

The above arguments are valid and must be given maximum attention due to the similarities in the characteristics of vulnerability and resilience that women share with the environment. Since the male folk are responsible for the major environmental hazards ever experienced by humans, they should work collaboratively with the women folk—the most sufferers—to ensure that the environment, mother earth and all her inhabitants are preserved and sustained. However, it is imperative to understand that the agitations of ecofeminists are for the safety and sustainability of the environment and humanity, and not an antagonistic discourse against man's activities or just another gender discourse. It means taking a feminist stance on the safety of our environment and the earth for human existence. Little wonder that The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has recognized the following objectives as cardinal to issues of women and the environment:

1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels.
2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development.
3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

Unfortunately, women are not yet fully integrated into the decision-making process regarding environmental matters. However, the achievements from the 5-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action show a very encouraging development indicating women's greater participation and involvement in the decision-making process regarding the environment. position This is evident in Nigeria in the appointment of Professor Roseline Konya as the Commissioner for Environment in Rivers State during the former Governor Peter Odili's dispensation (1999–2007), and presently occupying the same office in Governor Nyesom Wike's Government (2015 till 2023).

However, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action's report has observed that women's engagement in the decision-making process regarding environmental issues is still fraught with some challenges, which include:

1. Low participation of women in environmental protection and management, and in the formulation, planning and execution of environmental policies.
2. Insufficient numbers and inadequate influence of women in responsible positions and a male monopoly in the management of environmental resources.
3. Under-representation of women in research and teaching in the natural sciences.
4. Lack of gender-sensitive environmental policies, programmes and research.
5. Absence of deliberate strategies to ensure women's participation in decision-making, including lack of funding and monitoring.
6. Low level of management and technical skills among women.
7. Women's limited access to resources, information, education and training (Womenwatch, 2005, p. 1).

Writings on the Niger Delta Subgenre

Literary and dramatic writings on the Niger Delta have continued to emphasize the environmental degradation and the implications on the dwellers and the nonchalance of government and the expatriate multinational companies involved in oil exploration and exploitation, and the region's pollution. In her novel, *Yellow-Yellow*, Agary (2006) tells the bizarre story of a community in the South-South region of the Niger Delta area.

Their farmlands and water-ways were submerged in crude oil, yet without compensation from the expatriate Company responsible for the spillage. The female character and heroine in the novel, Zilayefa, sees her mother return home with black oil all over her legs, requesting her bathing soap, sponge and towel. Zilayefa walks behind her mother towards the river to ascertain how the oil got to her mother. She heard people shouting, and she got amazed by what she saw. It was a group of helpless villagers whose farms have been submerged in oil. She speaks:

> A group of people, painted in the same black as my mother, some covered from head to toe, was marching to see the Amananaowei, the head of the village. I joined them to find out what had happened. It turned out some of them had also lost their farmland that day. They were marching to the Amananaowei's house to report the matter and demand that he take it up with the oil company. Some were crying; others were talking about compensation (Agary, 2006, p. 3–4).

As it is common with such incidents in Nigeria without any concrete intervention from the Nigerian government and oil drilling companies, the community represented in Agary's (2006) *Yellow-Yellow* did not get any compensation despite the loss of their farmlands to oil spillages. The oil company refused to pay any compensation, blaming the spill on youths who have been accused of vandalizing the pipelines. These scenarios are common in the Niger Delta area; government and oil companies put the blame on the community dwellers, and the hapless cycle goes on endlessly. For example, the Ogoni community in Rivers State, whose waterways have been polluted with oil spills, affecting their crops and denying them access to good drinking water, was marked for clean up several years ago. However, up till 2021, not much has been done. Speaking of his concerns over the government's nonchalance towards the clean-up exercise in Ogoni land, Nyesom Wike, the Governor of Rivers State, decries the poor handling of the process as the clean-up has become a political tool for the government to woe the people for support in elections. In an online report by Reed (2021), Nyesom Wike blames the Nigerian government for neglect stating that "when election comes in 2023, they will start another clean up. You people don't even ask question. Why is it a year to election that Ogoni clean-up will always commence? Now that there is no election are they doing clean-up now? Watch from next year they will start clean-up" (p. 1).

Raising their voices on their concerns over a people living in a polluted environment in the wake of Covid-19, some experts have queried

the delay in the Ogoni clean-up exercise. In this online report by Cornelius Essen from the *Guardian Newspaper*, experts who participated in a virtual conference organized by Kebetkache Women Development and Resources Centre in collaboration with Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (CORDAID) regretted the delay in the clean-up exercise, which was said to have started five years ago. They expressed its relatedness to Covid-19 and its dangers to health because "hand washing is now done with contaminated water, which is a serious setback in an attempt to contain the novel corona virus, especially in the oil-polluted Ogoniland and South-South geopolitical zone" (Essen, 2020, p. 1). The virtual conference was organized with the aim of reviewing the implementation process of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report regarding the Ogoni clean-up.

In her reviews of Isidore Okpewho's Tides, and Anthony Abagha's 'Children of Oloibiri,' Amaechi (2017) cited corruption of government, oil companies, and chieftains as well as other key players in the communities as cardinal factors in the continued environmental pollution in the Niger Delta. In this her PhD Seminar presented to the Faculty of Humanities, the University of Port Harcourt titled "Land Use and Environmental Justice in Selected Works of Nigerian and Kenyan Authors," Amaechi (2017), however enriched her arguments with Ugwu's work which focused on the "Ecological Degradation in Selected Niger Delta Novels." To Amaechi's (2017) observation, Ugwu's work "x-rays greed, negligence and subversive activities by human beings, which have led to a total privation of a natural environment—the Niger Delta environment—a microcosm of the larger global environment" (Amaechi, 2017, pp. 30–31). According to her, Ugwu's appraisal of Tides and Oil on Water indicates the problems of "despoliation of the environment, poverty, disease, illiteracy, corruption, militancy or violence, attributing it to one problem—fossil energy exploitation" (Amaechi, 2017, p. 31). These observations succinctly paint a picture of a region whose inhabitants suffer abject poverty and deprivation resulting from the exploitation of their natural resources to their own disadvantage. Similarly, a plethora of films (documentaries and feature films) have been produced in Nollywood to project the agitations, activism and plight of the oil-producing communities in the Niger Delta and to accentuate the reasons for youth restiveness and militancy with the hope of getting compensation from the government and the oil companies.

These devastating challenges have birthed the Niger Delta film genre, this sub-genre categorized under the Narrative Film Genre is aimed at

telling the stories, agitations, activism and plight of the Niger Delta people. Fyneface (2017, p. 23) noted that "the filmmaker through his panoramic camera angle often portrays the nauseating but nostalgic creeks through camera movements and their costumes in order to attract the viewer's attention."

Gender and Environmental Hazards

We all know that man's quest for wealth and desire to control and explore nature has brought about diverse unhealthy challenges to mother-earth. This desire has resulted in environmental pollution, green-house effects and depletion of the ozone layer, and other ecological manifestations that are detrimental to human health and safety. To start with, the "environment entails our surroundings, where we live, and the space within which we move and exist on earth. These include the air space, the land and the water ways" (God'spresence, 2014, p. 79).

Ahunanya (2017), in his unpublished M.A. seminar submitted to the Department of Theatre and Film Studies, University of Port Harcourt titled 'Theatre and Environmental Health Advocacy: An Experimental TFD Performance of "TuturuYaTufuo" in Aba City,' observed that the Black's Law Dictionary defines Environment as "the totality of the physical, economic, cultural, aesthetic and social circumstances and factors which surround the desirability and value of property and which also affect the quality of people's life" (p. 3). It is no gainsaying that sustaining the Environment is tantamount to humans' continuous existence upon the earth's surface.The activism and restiveness among the Niger Delta youths, pipeline vandalism and explosions, illegal oil-refining and bunkering in the region are absolutely male-oriented activities. In all, the male haunts the environment that sustains him. God'spresence laments the negative effects of environmental disasters on women who are the victims of male actions which "have adversely affected women and their children" (God'spresence, 2014, p. 82).

In the middle of all these, the woman suffers untold hardship as she thrives to sustain her household from the mess of males' activities and weeps for the death of her loved ones from environmental disasters. The monumental and monstrous activities of man upon the environment are fast degrading and depleting mother-earth. Soon, she would have been subjugated and the entire world would have been destroyed thus:

> So, if the earth is associated with the attributes of a woman, as mother-earth, or earth-mother, it is logical because man was created from the dust of the earth. This ought to create in man the desire to cater for the earth as he would do for his mother, but unfortunately his activities and practices for economic gains from oil exploration and exploitation with consequent gas flaring and deforestation, etc have adversely affected the health of mother-earth and the entire cosmos… (God'spresence, 2014, p. 81).

God'spresence observed that man was created from the dust of the earth and therefore should cater for his source of origin for sustenance because his negligence has resulted in "earthquakes, water and air pollutions, global warming, environmental degradation, depletion of the Ozone layer, and many more" (God'spresence, 2014, pp. 81–82). Again, in *Yellow-Yellow*, we can perceive the plight of the Niger Delta woman and her community people through Zilayefa, who narrates her ordeal after her mother's farm was submerged in crude oil:

> I left them and ran to my mother's farm. It was the first time I saw what crude oil looked like. I watched as the thick liquid spread out, covering more land and drowning small animals in its path. It just kept spreading and I wondered if it would stop, when it would stop, how far it would spread. Then there was the smell. I can't describe it but it was strong—so strong it made my head hurt and turned my stomach (Agary, 2006, p. 4).

The fatal experience of Zilayefa's mother and other community dwellers who lose their farmlands to oil spillages explicates the traumatic experience of the Niger Delta people today especially women, who have lost their source of income, food and livelihood to similar situations.

The Jesse Narrative

Jesse is situated in Ethiope West Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. It is the main town within the Idjerhe Clan, which comprises 32 communities. A disaster occurred on Saturday, 17th October 1998, when a "16-inch petrol pipeline linking the Warri refinery to Kaduna" exploded, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of villagers "and critically injuring hundreds more in the ensuing inferno" (as cited in God'spresence, 2014, pp. 82–83). Jesse was the most affected community. This report by the Environmental Rights Action team (Friends of the Earth, Nigeria) observed

that "majority of the victims were women and children" and that some were scooping the leaking petroleum product while others were watching, and some others were on their farms or fishing while others were returning from the Ethiope River from fetching water (as cited in God'spresence, 2014, p. 83).

The Jesse narrative paints a scenario of poverty, struggle for survival, death and resilience on the part of the community dwellers, on the one hand, and neglect with oppression by the government and oil companies, on the other hand. The Jesse narrative is one that should be told with nostalgia to demonstrate the level of victimization of a people whose source of income and resources meant to enrich their cooking pot has become a death portion. In 1998, the Jesse community in Delta State was engulfed in an inferno that burnt down their dreams of being enlisted as beneficiaries of the oil dividends accruing to oil host communities. Women's and mothers' cries swam through the waterways, and echoes of mourning hovered over the sky to ascend the flames that dissipated the lives of their children, sisters, husbands and loved ones who were caught in the inferno that was orchestrated by oil leakages in their community. This scenario paints a picture of what could be referred to as oil for pot and oil against pot. This implies that the oil, which is supposed to bring wealth to the people of the Niger Delta, has birthed various degrees of sorrow ranging from spillages to pollution, explosions, and death.

This theatre of the struggle for survival which brought all the actors together on stage at a site where oil flowed down their streams, waterways and farmlands was meant to pass on a message of poverty in the region to the government. Unfortunately, their 'script' and 'acts' could only be delivered in unison with wailing voices from mothers whose sorrows may never end till they see the grave. These narratives are common in the South-South of the Niger Delta region, as evident in an online report for the *Punch Newspaper* on July 13, 2012, where a fallen petrol tanker resulting from an accident, exploded and killed over 200 persons and burnt down thirty-four motorcycles in Okogbe community in Rivers State. As usual to its stereotype, women and children constituted a greater part of the "crowd that gathered to scoop fuel at the spot of the fallen fuel-laden tanker on the East-West Road" (Akasike & Odiegwu, 2012, p. 1). It is obvious that women and children are the vulnerable ones who suffer from the greed and recklessness of man's activities. These women and children, whose aim was to make some financial gains out of the situation to have food in the cooking pot and their belly, died a horrifying death of hunger and penury.

Women's Narratives of Oil Exploration in Oloibiri

In a bid to have first-hand information on the impact of oil spills on the environment, women and family, I embarked on a trip to the popular Oloibiri Community in Bayelsa State where the first oil well was discovered in commercial quantity. My interactions with the women on 15th May, 2018 were quite revealing. They cleared the misconception about the actual location of the first oil well in the Niger Delta. According to them, the first oil well was discovered in Otuabagi, one of the six (6) communities under Oloibiri Clan. Otuabagi has 16 oil wells and, according to Sunday Eli, an elderly woman in her 70s fondly referred to as Mama (meaning Mother), her family has 6 oil wells out of the 16. According to her, the first oil well that was discovered in Otuabagi, Oloibiri in 1956 belongs to her family; ironically, theirs is one of the poorest families in Otuabagi. Owing to the level of poverty in the community, majority of the women are farmers. As Idumoma Otolo (in her 40s) noted, they plant cassava, banana and plantain to generate income for the family.

However, the need to earn more money pushes every woman into the bush, searching for *Ogbono*[2] (Irvingia Gabonensis), which falls once every year between May and July. Nabai (in her 30s) reaffirms the imperative of the *Ogbono* season as a quick money-making venture for every woman in the community to earn a living. She noted that the season, (as I rightly observed), is highly competitive whereas, a set goes into the bushes in search of *Ogbono*, some others are at Mbiama market (a neighbouring market) engaging in buying and selling. Nabai's major occupation for the past 11 years has been to buy fresh fish, clean them up, prepare and smoke/dry them for sale. She is a single mother of three (7 years, $5^1/_2$ years, and 3 years) who claims her husband deserted the marriage, thereby making her the sole breadwinner of her family. She hopes that the rich people and the elite, especially those in Oloibiri community who benefit from the dividends of oil exploitation, would patronize her business to enable her cater for her young family. She believes her children will someday grow up and help fight for their rights.

Nabai clarifies the facts by stating that the Otuabagi community is in conflict with Oloibiri, which has usurped the credit as being the first and

[2] *Ogbono* (Irvingia Gabonensis) is luscious edible mango-like fruit, which also has flat-shaped seeds which are used in preparing glutinous soup; Ogbono is also called 'African bush mango' or 'wild mango.'

historic site of oil exploration in the Niger Delta region. She argued that Otuabagi where the first oil well was discovered in commercial quantity was not captured in the sharing of resources and dividends accruing to such communities; rather, all dividends and benefits were channelled to Oloibiri, since Otuabagi is just one of the six communities under Oloibiri Clan. This 'misappropriation' of rights has resulted in the misunderstanding and contention which exist between Otuabagi and Oloibiri communities. As a woman and indigene of an oil-producing community whose expectations and prospects are sacrificed at the whims of corrupt and selfish community leadership, Nabai saw no reason to waste her time in participating in the December 2017 celebration to commemorate the historic site of oil exploration at Oloibiri. Having established that the women of the community have no derivations from resource control, Nabai decried the inability of the women to access loans from the government and other organizations or agencies. According to her, they are tired of filling out different forms with promises of financial assistance from Government, Co-operatives and other organizations. However, the impact of oil spills on their farmlands and water ways was huge as it affected the aquatic lives and farm produces. In reaction to the devastation caused by oil spills on the environment (farmlands and aquatic lives), Nabai expresses some relief as oil spills have been put under control and now aquatic life is getting restored, their farm produces are improving, and now she could continue with her fish business as she hopes for her children to grow up someday to be rich because if they have money, she will enjoy.

Idumoma, on her part, laments over the negative impact of oil spills on the soil, resulting in the poor harvest of cocoyam and other crops and the impact of oil spills on waterways, especially on their fishing occupation. According to her, they now purchase sachet water, commonly referred to as "pure water," to drink and make use of rainwater, which is often not clean.

On the subject of education, Paulina Adias (59), Nkechi Ibosri (34), and 'Mama' in the company of Idumoma decry their inability to afford a good education for their children and employment for their sons who are graduates despite their membership of an oil-rich community. They accentuated their lack of access to resources shared by the government to oil-producing communities, in contrast with other communities that are beneficiaries. So, they resort to farming as their major source of livelihood and income. The financial challenges of the women of the Niger Delta deprive them of the opportunity to make a positive impact in their various

communities, just as Nutsukpo (2018) observed poverty to be the bane of women's contribution to development and wonders if these women are empowered in any way:

> The question is, are women, who constitute a large percentage of the population of the region, key actors in the developmental process and, if so, what impact are they making? Poverty, evidently, has a stronger impact on women and places several difficult obstacles in the path of their progress and their impact on society. How, then, are women being empowered to make a change in the Niger Delta? (Nutsukpo, 2018, p. 2).

Nutsukpo's concern for the impact women of this region could make on its development draws on the fact that the oil which was supposed to yield for them the dividends of oil exploration and exploitation has become a threat to their lives. This becomes more worrisome when their husbands are out of work or dead. These women inadvertently become breadwinners just as the women noted that the majority of them are breadwinners for their families. Idumoma regrettably bemoaned the plight of Otuabagi women noting that if a woman from Otuabagi community is killed as a result of the ongoing communal clash between them and Nembe—a neighbouring community perceived to be 'cannibalistic,' it will be a tough task for them (the killers). She says: "if they killed these community women, the killers would not eat their backs because their backs will be bitter due to bending down under the scorching sun to do farm work. The crude oil is there on their backs instead of blood. The sun has beaten and toughened their backs because of farming." She emphasized that their women go to the farm and work all day only to chew raw *garri*[3] and drink pure water (sachet water) as a meal.

These women have laboured from childhood, which, as 'Mama' noted, her mother left for her a legacy of farming represented by a cutlass which she bequeathed to her for farm work. She queries in pidgin English, "if I no go school, I no go anywhere, no be bush I go go?"[4] She emphasized:

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[3] *Garri* is dry granulated cassava flour. It is obtained by processing the harvested cassava tuber. It is a common food in Nigeria, especially in the Southern part of the country.

[4] "If I no go school, I no go anywhere, no be bush I go go?" A rhetorical question posed by Mama (Sunday Eli) asking if she didn't go to school or anywhere, the only place left would be the bush (implying to go farming).

"As my Mama born me, Mama go give me knife, na knife I dey hold."[5] They have engaged in this occupation from their youth, and now they are tired of working and weeding on the farm, so they resort to applying chemicals to their farmlands to clear the grass and weeds. This, of course, may cause some harm to the crops, which may eventually die; also, it could pose some health problems or be harmful to these women and their family members when they consume produce from the farms. Though they are aware of the implications on health, they are nonetheless helpless.

Applying chemicals to their farmlands as a result of conserving little energy for themselves from working laboriously on the farm is another way of compounding the problems already caused by oil spills. Ecofeminism focuses on this concern for mother-earth to be preserved for humanity therefore it is imperative for the government to understand the impact of environmental degradation and pollution on the water ways and soil (farmlands) as cardinal to human existence since these will eventually affect the lives of the dwellers in an oil polluted and devastated environment.

This pitiable condition of oil-producing communities in the Niger Delta who have suffered immensely from oil spillages resulting from oil drillings, pipeline vandalism and loss of lives from tanker explosions informs my coinage of the phrase "oil for pot, oil against pot." This coinage graphically explicates the plight of the peoples, most especially women, who often interact with the environment: farmland to plant their crops, the rivers and water ways where they fetch water and engage in their fishing occupation and other businesses.

The phrase "oil for pot" implies that this oil-producing community is supposed to be buoyant with abundance to eat, but "oil against pot" typifies abject poverty where the soil and water ways are polluted as a result of oil exploration, which has brought the oil that was supposed to be hidden beneath the soil and protected by the earth to the earth surface, and the women are struggling to keep up their families in an unfavourable environment, where the natural resources (land, water, air)that should have empowered them economically are degraded with oil spills. In sum, Idumoma's experience summarizes the Otuabagi women's narratives that they feed their husbands, and their husband's retirement benefits

[5] "As my Mama born me, mama go give me knife, na knife I dey hold" said by Mama (Sunday Eli). This means that she was born into farming as her inheritance from her mother. So, she holds onto the knife (cutlass), a major farming implement to symbolize farming as an occupation.

are used for their children's school fees and the rest goes to the hiring of labour for their farms, and at the end they are left with nothing.

Premiere of *Oloibiri* (Graham, C. 2016)

This 1 hour 50 minutes action thriller film on revenge and regret tells the story of the suffering of the Niger Delta people. It shows the exploitation of oil companies and government agencies on the Oloibiri community at the discovery of oil in Nigeria since 1956. The film tells the tragic story of Oloibiri people through four characters: Boma, alias Gunpowder (Richard Mofe Damijo), Elder Timipre (Olu Jacobs), Chisom (Ivie Okujaye), and Powell (William R. Moses). Gunpowder is a Geology graduate who refuses an offer to work with an oil company with the notion that they were responsible for the oil exploration that has crippled his community, Oloibiri. He resorts to militancy instead. Elder Timipre lost his wife as a young village man to water pollution and travels abroad under a scholarship, who now returns to execute his agenda.

Chisom is a medical doctor who treats her patient, Elder Timipre, at his home. On one of such occasions, she runs into Powel on her way back from attending to Timipre. Powel has just escaped from a bloody kidnap attempt upon his working visit to Oloibiri after his company, Foreshore, receives a license to drill oil from the community. The bid to secure Oloibiri brings about bloodbath and death in Oloibiri.

The film tells us that over 2,100 oil spills have occurred. The option of militancy and taking up of arms for self-defence and as a gesture of protest against the federal government of Nigeria and the multinational oil companies succinctly demonstrates the resilience of the community dwellers in the face of death. The blood bath, the oil spills as seen at the end where a character gradually falls down to his death in a slow motion while black petroleum pours down his face, typifies the wastage of lives; as well as natural resource (oil) whose revenue was supposed to bring food into their pot, not death. The film is an embodiment of the sufferings, killings, agitations, and militancy for the control of the natural resources of Oloibiri. Mama's (Taiwo Ajayi-Lycett) displeasure over her son's (Gunpowder) militant activities and self-indulgence demonstrates the fears of mothers for their sons who take up the fight against the insensitive government. This is revealed in Mama's speech as she queries her son about his sudden change in behaviour and lifestyle. She tearfully asks him:

> My son, who made first class in Geology and secured a good job, what happened to him?
> Gunpowder (in tears, replies): He died, Mama.

His spiritual death (death of his conscience) is predicated upon a resolve to lay down his life and sacrifice his academic certificate and job to reclaim his people's human rights. Standing as the agent of social change, and the liberator of his community, Gunpowder and his gang wage war against the Government and the Oil Company.

The plight of mothers and their families is grave as they observe the dramatic turn around and attitude of their children who do not see a prosperous future coming for them. The fear of mothers losing their children to government armed forces is daily present in their hearts; this is evident in Mama's soliloquy on Gunpowder's change of attitude and militant behaviour: "where did I pick that child from, hmm? He says he fights because the elders failed Oloibiri." The enormity of the impact on mothers, which is beyond imagination, is highlighted by Taiwo Ajayi-Lycette in an interview at the screening of the film when she said: "we are not talking about what happens to women whose sons are lost in all this carnage." She continues:

> You can imagine how terrible it is here in our culture where women, especially older women depend on their children to look after them. Which woman, which parent looks to bury their own children? Never! It is a major tragedy. And maybe when we do make *OloibiriII*, they will major on the devastation happening to women who are mothers of these people that they are killing, as we are having right now with the Avengers and everything. Some boys are dying, they have mothers. What happens to them? And most of these mothers, they are not professionals; they are not people who are rich and can look after themselves. When their sons are killed, are slaughtered, what happens to these women? So, we are creating a situation where many women's hearts are being broken (YouTube).

It should be understood that women are at the receiving end of all these fights between government forces and the agitators in the Niger Delta. The fight for resource control has gradually turned out to be a fight against women.

Conclusion

This work so far focused on crude oil which was supposed to bring economic and domestic gains to enhance the general well-being of the Nigerian people living in the Niger Delta region now turning out to become

a curse. Women and their children especially are implicated as the ones holding the burning end of the stick. The oil that was meant to lubricate the pot is the same oil that has caused seemingly perennial dryness to the pot. This study makes reference to the Jesse crisis, pinpointing oil spillages and explosions as having far reaching negative impact on the Niger Delta populace, especially women. It emphasized that the natural resource (oil) which ought to yield dividends to the people from its proceeds, has gradually become a source of poverty and death.

This study depicted the multinational expatriate oil corporations responsible for the numerous oil introspection, oil exploration and oil exploitations with massive environmental degradation going on in the entire region's ecosystem as doing nothing to help the impoverished Niger Delta dwellers. Reference was made to kinds of literature, and the premiere of *Oloibiri* film on the Niger Delta, which tells the bizarre stories of the agonizing experiences of a people who have a great natural endowment but are, nonetheless, poor.

This study also brought the bizarre Jesse experience to juxtapose with Otuabagi women's narratives on oil exploration and spillages in Oloibiri Clan to paint a vivid image on the plight of women in oil-producing communities; and to relate their plight, especially mothers who lose their family members, loved ones, and are sometimes victims themselves.

Ecofeminism was used as a theoretical guide for this study to pinpoint the feminist stance on man's unhealthy and unchecked exploitation of the ecosystem.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this research, the following have been recommended:

- The federal government of Nigeria, through the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) should build cottage industries and provide jobs for the teeming population of youths in the Niger Delta region.
- Grants from the federal government should be provided to households especially those women whose waterways, farmlands and businesses have been polluted through oil spillages.
- Committees should be set up at the community level to ensure that dividends given by the oil drilling companies to the various commu-

nities are shared to members rather than being hijacked by community leaders.

– The contract to clean up polluted waterways should be monitored by private organizations with expertise to avert any form of corrupt practices or embezzlement.

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Appendix

Date of interview: May 15, 2018
Names and ages of women interviewed at Oloibiri Community, Bayelsa State, Nigeria:
1. Mama (Sunday Eli): in her 70s
2. Idumoma Otolo: in her 40s
3. Nkechi Ibosri: 34 years
4. Paulina Adias: 59 years

Below are pictures taken from the interviews at Otuabagi

Nabai drying her fishes

Otuabagi women in plantain business

One of the Otuabagi women using local method to break open *Ogbono*

Mama (Sunday Eli) drying her *Ogbono* in the sun

In the picture is the Researcher in wine/white stripe skirt and blouse seated next to Ms Emem Okon, the Founder and Executive Director at Kebetkache Women Development & Resource Centre, with some of her staff, and some Otuabagi women interviewed for this study

Otuabagi women and staff of Kebetkache Women Development and Resources Centre at the first oil well in Otuabagi, Oloibiri

Signpost of the first oil well drilled in commercial quantity in Nigeria (June, 1956); the oil well is at Otuabagi, Oloibiri in the present Bayelsa State of Nigeria

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Sexuality and Choice of Musical Instrument: Beyond Gender Stereotyping

ABSTRACT. Choice of musical instrument is among the most important factors in determining the course of a student's music education. The selection of a musical instrument in secondary education can be a lengthy process due to various factors. The paper seeks to establish why gender stereotyping on certain musical instruments has affected musical performances in selected southwestern Nigeria schools. Enquiries would also be made into why females choose to play certain masculine musical instruments. Participant observation, oral and interactive questions with1 students in thirteen purposively selected Federal Government Unity Colleges in Southwestern Nigeria using a descriptive method for data analyses of findings, further information was collected via libraries, archives and the internet. Findings show that associating a particular gender to particular musical instruments has significantly influenced student's choice of a musical instrument, thereby resulting in numerous negative consequences, these include fewer musical instrument choices, limited ensemble participation, and peer disapproval. The paper concludes that the challenges of choice of a musical instrument based on gender stereotyping has been achieved because both males and females pick up any musical instrument of their choice and that females do well in their chosen musical instruments which are fundamentally taken to be masculine in nature and practice.

KEYWORDS: sexuality, musical instruments, gender, choice, stereotypes

Introduction

Gender stereotypes continue to persist at all levels, in politics, economics, science, technology, commerce, trade and particularly, regarding male and female participation in music and musicianship. Indeed, stereotyping is evident in all ramifications of human endeavors; research has shown sex-stereotyping of choice of musical instruments to exist, often unconsciously, in both males and females. There are classified musical instruments that are both culturally and professionally attached to sexes; usually, trombone, drums, tubas, guitar and saxophone are viewed as being overtly masculine instruments while the flute, clarinet, violin, viola

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and oboe are viewed as feminine instruments. The masculine and feminine characteristics placed on these musical instruments are often transferred to the individual that plays them. These stereotypes are created by and from various sources, including popular media, parents, cultural traits, instructors and learners. However, stereotyping can effectively be reduced by the manner of presentation of instruments to the learners for the first time, for example, at a meeting of learners and guardians who are interested in one musical instrument or the other where a female learner demonstrates on the trombone or tuba while a male learner demonstrates on the clarinet or oboe. This act alone does a great deal in breaking the jinx of musical instruments and those who play them and negates the concept of gender stereotyping thereof.

Abeles and Porter (1978, p. 78) and Griswold and Crookback (1981, p. 60) submit that gender issues have an effect on the musical education of children. For example, the sex-stereotyping of musical instruments can be a factor in reducing musical opportunities and experiences of children, as access to these experiences and the possible profession of these individuals. Indeed, playing a musical instrument according to Byo (1991, p. 28), needs a careful process before putting a particular learner in a particular musical instrument. Other scholars such as Zervoudakes and Tanur (1994, p. 65), Bruce and Kemp (1993, p. 215), Hanley (1998, p. 42), Tarnowski and Barrett (1997, p. 3), Sinsel, Dixon and Blades-Zeller (1997, p. 392), Delzell and Leppla (1992, p. 58), have written on gender perception and are not necessarily perceived as gender neutral. In addition to the sex-stereotyping of choice of musical instruments, research has been conducted on issues of gender in technology as it relates to music education by Comber, Hargreaves and Colley (1993, p. 3) as well as studies on gender with description on psychological sex types of children and their propensities for different musical instruments by Kemp (1982, p. 179) and Sinsel, Dixon and Blades-Zeller (1999, p. 390).

Home Consideration

In an interesting descriptive study, Simons (1964, p. 218) observes gross responses to musical stimuli, pitch and rhythm imitation, and free play activities of twelve pairs of same sex twins (five males and five females) of the same age group (10–15 years). In this study, it was also observed that the choice of what musical instrument to play depended so

much on the musical instrument each sex has been used to in connection with the available musical instrument consented to by the child's or children parents. Evidently, it will be very unwise to conclude that family influence generally and age proximity of the children will actually influence their musical ability on any chosen musical instrument.

Creativity and Intelligence Consideration

Musical ability obviously requires creativity, in the sense to perform excellently on the desired chosen musical instrument. Attempts to explain musical ability in terms of creativity have been very unsuccessful (Simons, 1964, p. 220). In an often-cited study, Getzels and Jackson (1962) identified six Chicago area private school students who scored in the top 20% on the researcher' creativity measure on the different choice of musical instrument. Of what interest is Getzels and Jackson's finding to this paper? It was found out that creativity ability also affects choice of musical instrument of students in the purposively selected unity schools visited. Students' choice of the musical instrument also depends on the existing innate creative ability which differs from one another. Guilford (1957, p. 112) stresses that creativity is not uniform. It requires a number of factors, as does intelligence. Moore (1966) concluded that creativity requires above average intelligence but is not synonymous with intelligence.

Biological Consideration

Herndon and Ziegler (1990) notes that it is important to distinguish between sex and gender. Put another way, sex is biological while gender is a cultural or sociological construction. When a child is conceived in the womb the initial sex is female. If the Y chromosome is to be activated by the already present male hormones, thereby creating a male embryo, it is not until the fifth week of gestation that the embryo is female.

Cultural Consideration

Cultural or sociological consideration begins immediately after a child is born. A female child may be wrapped in pink blankets while a male child may be wrapped in blue blankets. Even if the viewers cannot read

the small print but can discern colors, he or she will know if the newborn is a male (blue balloons, etc.) or a female (pink balloons, etc). It has been shown that while children are young, they are tending to segregate themselves in groups according to sex. Archer (1992, p. 41) asserts that 'same sex play preferences have been found to occur as early as 2 years of age'. This phenomenon takes place across cultures, although to varying degrees of intensity and length of segregation. In fact, Bruce and Kemp (1993, p. 176), found that one feature of children's instrument preferences is the identification of members of their own sex.

This identification could be construed as a form of sex segregation. There may be many reasons for this, both biological and cultural. It was also reported in Archer (1992, p. 40) that the biological reason for this segregation may be due to the fact that males tend to use more space in their play, more disorganized and louder while females play quieter and in a more organized way. The greater part of individuals will in general, draw in with music in any event either social academic, festival or political at point during their lives. Yet, what attracts individuals to music particularly when it comes to active or passive musical participation in the main occasion. Hargreaves, Marshall and North (2003, p. 160) opine that evidence points to a human biological predisposition to musicality that is shaped by other people, groups, situations and social institutions during the maturational process of an individual within a certain culture. Notwithstanding the arrangement that the collaboration between natural/hereditary and ecological variables is liable for advancing and creating commitment with music, how precisely each has an influence and how much is the subject of a captivating discussion.

Gender Stereotypes and Choice of Instrument

Abeles and Porter (1978, p. 67). undertook the first major study on sex-stereotyping of musical instruments. They wrote that children found the drums to be the most masculine and the flute to be the most feminine. Griswold and Crookback (1981, p. 57) found in their study that; Answers by adults to hypothetical selection suggest (of instruments for children to play) that "the sex of the child, rather than the sex of the adult or past musical experience, influenced the adult's preferences". Drawing an inference from the above puts it that violin, flute and clarinet are considered feminine; drums, trombone, and trumpet are considered masculine; saxophone and cello are rated relatively neutral.

Females tend to choose a wide variety of instruments than do males. However, the quality of sound was given as the primary reason for choosing a particular instrument more so than whether males or female should play it. The results of the Delzell and Leppla (1992, p. 60) study have an interesting implication since the evidence was found that gender stereotyping might decrease as children grow older. For example, the drum, which is rated as the most masculine musical instrument, was still highly favored by males. However, among females, it is the second most popular instrument, relating this to this study, it may be taken as being correct where both male and female instrumentalists are collectively grouped but drums are perfectly played where females are singularly grouped as found out in the study areas with females playing virtually all the available musical instruments in female based school and band. Likewise, while the flute is still rated as the most feminine of instruments, it is ranked fourth in preference for males. These findings dovetail with Teachout's (1993, p. 23) study that found out that musical factors highly influenced junior high band students' preferences for performance literature much more than environmental or referential factors. In addition, no significant differences were found in any of the factors by gender.

Within this study, thirteen unity colleges in Southwestern Nigeria (Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti States) where males and females were asked to state whether any of the six musical instruments (flute, guitar, trap set drums, trumpet, violin, and saxophone) should not be played by females and which of these males should play. They justified this question because both males and females indicated that playing an instrument depended on fascinating the sound of such musical appeals to the feelings of individuals. Females indicated that the biggest reason they did not want to play a particular instrument was not because of the difficult technicalities involved in learning and playing such musical instruments but because of the non-availability and non-accessibility to the musical instruments.

Simones (2011, p. 34) asks a question whether males or females should not play a particular musical instrument. The argument here centers around the investigation of mentalities towards instrumental music learning and the effects of culture-explicit settings in molding interest in instrumental music learning, commitment to and the value put on music in regular daily existence, trying to discover commonsense setting-based techniques for musical identity and long-term commitment to musical performances. Table 1 reflects the responses of students (females and males) interviewed in the thirteen purposively selected Federal Government Unity Colleges in Southwestern Nigeria.

Table 1. Choice of Musical Instrument per School and Instrument in Percentage Ratings

Name of School	Musical Instrument	Male (%)	Female (%)	Percentage	Students
Federal Government Girls College, Ipetumodu. Osun State	Flute	0	100	100	243
	Guitar	0	100	100	243
	Trap Set Drums	0	100	100	243
	Trumpet	0	100	100	243
	Violin	0	100	100	243
	Saxophone	0	100	100	243
Federal Government College, Ikirun. Osun State	Flute	10	90	100	208
	Guitar	60	40	100	208
	Trap Set Drums	65	35	100	208
	Trumpet	69	31	100	208
	Violin	15	85	100	208
	Saxophone	55	45	100	208
Federal Government Technical College, Ilesa. Osun State	Flute	27	63	100	185
	Guitar	65	35	100	185
	Trap Set Drums	80	20	100	185
	Trumpet	78	22	100	185
	Violin	34	66	100	185
	Saxophone	59	41	100	185
Federal Government Girls College, Oyo. Oyo State	Flute	0	100	100	225
	Guitar	0	100	100	225
	Trap Set Drums	0	100	100	225
	Trumpet	0	100	100	225
	Violin	0	100	100	225
	Saxophone	0	100	100	225
Federal Government College, Ogbomosho. Oyo State	Flute	11	89	100	217
	Guitar	68	42	100	217
	Trap Set Drums	65	35	100	217
	Trumpet	75	25	100	217
	Violin	36	64	100	217
	Saxophone	56	44	100	217
Federal Government Girls College, Sagamu. Ogun State	Flute	0	100	100	243
	Guitar	0	100	100	243
	Trap Set Drums	0	100	100	243
	Trumpet	0	100	100	243
	Violin	0	100	100	243
	Saxophone	0	100	100	243
Federal Government College, Odogbolu. Ogun State	Flute	21	79	100	219
	Guitar	54	46	100	219
	Trap Set Drums	68	32	100	219
	Trumpet	72	28	100	219
	Violin	25	75	100	219
	Saxophone	52	48	100	219

Federal Government Girls College, Akure. Ondo State	Flute	0	100	100	201
	Guitar	0	100	100	201
	Trap Set Drums	0	100	100	201
	Trumpet	0	100	100	201
	Violin	0	100	100	201
	Saxophone	0	100	100	201
Federal Government College, Ikole-Ekiti. Ekiti State	Flute	9	91	100	202
	Guitar	76	34	100	202
	Trap Set Drums	80	20	100	202
	Trumpet	78	22	100	202
	Violin	12	88	100	202
	Saxophone	60	40	100	202
Federal Government Girls College, Efon-Alaaye. Ekiti State	Flute	0	100	100	205
	Guitar	0	100	100	205
	Trap Set Drums	0	100	100	205
	Trumpet	0	100	100	205
	Violin	0	100	100	205
	Saxophone	0	100	100	205
Kings College, Lagos. Lagos State	Flute	100	0	100	258
	Guitar	100	0	100	258
	Trap Set Drums	100	0	100	258
	Trumpet	100	0	100	258
	Violin	100	0	100	258
	Saxophone	100	0	100	258
Queens College, Lagos. Lagos State	Flute	0	100	100	262
	Guitar	0	100	100	262
	Trap Set Drums	0	100	100	262
	Trumpet	0	100	100	262
	Violin	0	100	100	262
	Saxophone	0	100	100	262
Federal Government Technical College, Ijanikin. Lagos State	Flute	43	57	100	254
	Guitar	76	34	100	254
	Trap Set Drums	88	22	100	254
	Trumpet	82	18	100	254
	Violin	65	35	100	254
	Saxophone	56	44	100	254

Analysis of Findings

Table 1 reflects the responses from students in the thirteen purposively selected study centers in Oyo, Ogun, Lagos, Ondo, Ekiti and Osun states. Six (6) colleges are girls only oriented while seven (7) are co-educational oriented, each state has a minimum of two unity colleges and a maximum of

three colleges. Federal Government Girls College, Ipetumodu. Osun State is a female gender-based college with 243 students and has young girls play virtually all musical instruments. On the Flute, 100% of the girls play in the College Orchestra Band, and the same goes for all other available musical instruments in the college band, these include the guitar with 100%, Trap Set Drums with 100%, Trumpet, 100%, Violin and Saxophone are 100% respectively. Federal Government College, Ikirun. Osun State is a co-educational based college with 208 students. Findings show that both female and male students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute, female band members take 90% while male members have 10%, the guitar has 40% females and 60% males, trap set drums takes 65% males against 35% females, trumpet has 31% females to 69% males, the violin has 85% females to 15% males and Saxophone 45% females to 55% males.

Federal Government Technical College, Ilesa Osun State is a co-educational based college with 185 students. Findings show that both female and male students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute, female band members take 63% while male members have 27%, the guitar has 35% females and 22% males, trap set drums takes 80% males against 20% females, the trumpet has 78% females to 69% males, violin has 66% females to 34% males and Saxophone 41% females to 59% males. Federal Government Girls College, Oyo. Oyo State is a female gender-based college with 225 students. Findings show that only female students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute is 100% females and this applies to all other available musical instruments, including guitar trap set drums, trumpet, violin and Saxophone.

Federal Government Girls College, Oyo. Oyo State is a female gender based college with 225 students. Findings show that only female students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute is 100% females and this applies to all other available musical instruments including guitar trap set drums, trumpet, violin and Saxophone. Federal Government College, Ogbomosho. Oyo State is a co-educational college with 217 students. Findings show that both female and male students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute, female band members take 89% while male members have 11%, the guitar has 42% females and 68% males, trap set drums takes 35% males against 65% females, the trumpet has 75% females to 25% males, the violin has 64% females to 36% males and Saxophone 44% females to 56% males.

Federal Government Girls College, Sagamu. Ogun State is a female gender-based college with 243 students. Findings show that only female stu-

dents are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute is 100% females and this applies to all other available musical instruments including guitar trap set drums, trumpet, violin and Saxophone. Federal Government College, Odogbolu. Ogun State is a co-educational college with 219 students. Findings show that both female and male students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the flute, female band members take 79% while male members have 21%, guitar has 46% females and 54% males, trap set drums takes 32% males against 68% females, the trumpet has 28% females to 72% males, the violin has 75% females to 25% males and Saxophone 48% females to 52% males.

Federal Government Girls College, Akure. Ondo State is a female gender based college with 201 students. Findings show that only female students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute is 100% females and this applies to all other available musical instruments including guitar trap set drums, trumpet, violin and Saxophone. Federal Government College, Ikole-Ekiti. Ekiti State is a co-educational college with 202 students. Findings show that both female and male students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the flute, female band members take 91% while male members have 09%, the guitar has 34% females and 76% males, trap set drums takes 80% males against 20% females, the trumpet has 22% females to 78% males, the violin has 88% females to 12% males and Saxophone 60% females to 40% males.

Federal Government Girls College, Efon-Alaaye. Ekiti State is a female gender-based college with 205 students. Findings show that only female students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute is 100% females and this applies to all other available musical instruments including guitar trap set drums, trumpet, violin and Saxophone. Kings College, Lagos. Lagos State is a male gender-based college with 258 students. Findings show that only male students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute is 100% females and this applies to all other available musical instruments including guitar trap set drums, trumpet, violin and Saxophone.

Queens College, Lagos. Lagos State is a female gender-based college with 262 students. Findings show that only female students are involved in the college orchestra band. On the Flute is 100% females and this applies to all other available musical instruments including guitar trap set drums, trumpet, violin and Saxophone. Federal Government Technical College, Ijanikin. Lagos State is a co-educational college with 254 students. Findings show that both female and male students are involved in the col-

lege orchestra band. On the flute, female band members take 57% while male members have 43%, the guitar has 34% females and 76% males, trap set drums takes 88% males against 22% females, the trumpet has 18% females to 82% males, the violin has 65% females to 35% males and Saxophone 44% females to 56% males.

The biggest reason for choosing of a musical instrument as expressed by members of the opposite sex is that they have never observed a male or female play such an instrument. In another way, the male in this study indicated that females should not play the drums because they have never seen a female actually play the drums: females said males should not play the flute because they have never seen a male play the flute. In addition, males were not more inclined to gender stereotyping than were females. It remains a fundamental fact that males and females have similar ideas about which instrument is more appropriate for the opposite sex.

Current Development: Beyond Gender Stereotyping

It has been observed that gender stereotyping in the choice of musical instruments is taking on a new dimension. Females are getting well involved in playing those musical instruments that are initially considered to be males' while males are equally getting well involved in those musical instruments considered to be females'. For example, T-Mac, (male) a popular Nigerian musician is a renowned flutist. Tope-Sticks (female) play the drum. It has been observed that more males are playing the violin in the orchestra even than females now so, the gender stereotyping in the choice of musical instruments has reduced drastically to near minimal. It was also discovered that in all the female oriented Federal Government Unity Colleges in Southwestern Nigeria, where the school band is predominantly dominated by females who virtually play all the musical instruments which include the bass drum, recorder, crash cymbals and a host of others which are known to be peculiar to males. Moreover, it has been established that females are moving into the supposed musical instruments which are peculiar to males, not only that, but they are also doing well and becoming famous in these musical instruments. Most famous female guitarists in the world today include Joan Jett, Juliana Hatfield, Kathleen Hanna and Emma Anderson. The most famous Trap Set Drummer in the world today includes Adrienne Davies and Athena Kottak while Candy Dufter is the most famous female Saxophonist in the world today.

Table 2. Cumulative results on Choice of Music Musical Instruments in percentile ratings

Musical instrument	Sex				Total no. of students
	Female		Male		
	No.	%	No.	%	
Flute	2372	81	550	19	2922
Guitar	1880	64	1042	36	2922
Trap set drums	1708	58	1214	42	2922
Trumpet	1689	57	1233	43	2922
Violin	2247	79	675	21	2922
Saxophone	1988	68	934	32	2922
Cumulative total in percentage	Female: 67		Male: 33		

Table 2 reflects the analysis of the responses of students from the thirteen selected study centers. The table states the ratio of gender participation in musical performances and the instruments played in percentile ratio. On the Flute, the ratio of females at 81% to males at 19%, Guitar reflects females at 64% to males at 36%, Trap Set Drums results to females at 58% and males at 42%, and Trumpet at 57% for females and males at 43%, Violin stands for female at 79% to males at 21% and Saxophone for females at 68% to 32% for males.

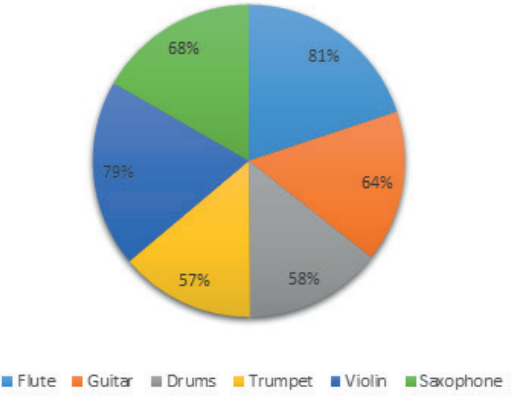

Figure 1. Female participation in Musical Activities in all the Study Centers

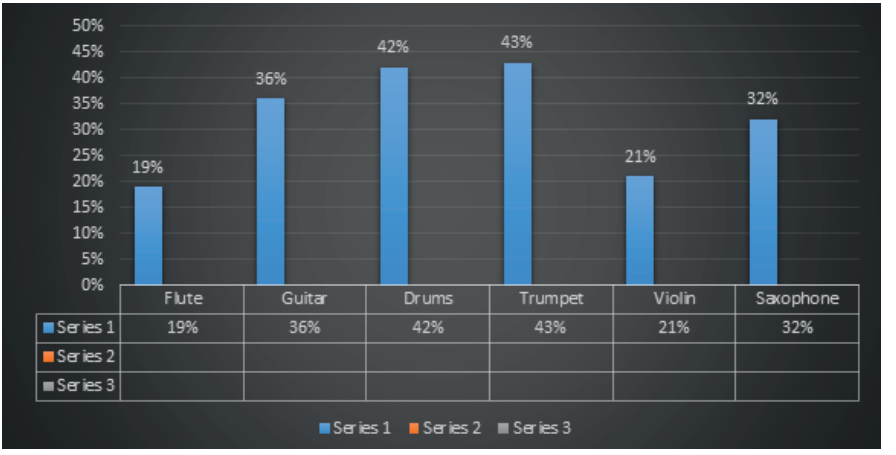

Figure 2. Male participation in Musical Activities in all the Study Centers

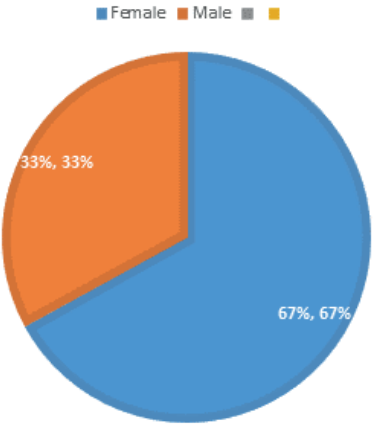

Figure 3. Cumulative percentage of participants in Musical Activities in all the Study Centers

Conclusion

Every year, band directors in schools and colleges in Nigeria recruit new students to populate the beginning band classes using various methods and materials. It would be a worthwhile goal for band directors. The most effective way to this, perhaps, is during the recruiting period, having understood that students identify with members of their own sex, a band

director might have a female demonstrates on the trombone and a male demonstrate on the flute or oboe so that students considering to join the college band will understand what it takes to join and that indeed, it is fundamental to pick up a particular musical instrument to play even, if without previous knowledge on such musical instrument. Resulting from interview with the music directors of the study centers, males do play the flute and females do play the trombone where there is the need to do so. This paper has opened the eyes of several people with the concept that some particular musical instruments cannot be played by particular sex or gender, this has been proved wrong because, in all the girls-oriented colleges in this study, girls have played all the musical instruments that are masculine based, like the drums and guitar.

In any event, care should always be taken in the introduction of musical instruments to students since the attitude of children or students can be changed depending on the method with which the instruments are first presented and demonstrated to them. Educators in today's pluralistic society need to be aware and have tolerance and understanding for their students' gender, ability, race and cultural differences in order to be successful as directors of college band orchestras. This holds true for band director who is training the next generation of wind, brass, string and percussion musicians especially at the early stage of secondary school education. Band directors should make more efforts to encourage more males and females to go into learning any musical instruments of their choice without gender barriers or cultural considerations and attachments.

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Appendix

Picture of Federal Government Girls' College, Ipetumodu after a performance

Picture of Federal Government Girls' College, Ipetumodu after a performance

Picture of Federal Government Girls' College, Ipetumodu during a performance

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Interpretion of Tekno's Music Video *Woman* and Women Identity

ABSTRACT. Women's identity in most undeveloped African nations as moderated by culture, patriarchy and chauvinist ideologies has continued to generate the attention of critics and scholars from different spheres. Using the literary and artistic methods of qualitative approach, this paper interrogates the portrayal of women in the music video of Tekno entitled *Woman*. The paper observes that the song understudy clearly disagrees with cultural, patriarchal and chauvinist ideologies that dehumanize and relegate the importance of women to the development of the society. The paper notes that such songs are very useful as campaign platforms against the poor identity given to women in most underdeveloped nations in the continent of Africa and, as such, calls on more Nigerian musicians to continue in this regards.

KEYWORDS: woman, underdeveloped, music video, identity

Introduction

Music is a phenomenon which finds use in the life of individuals or groups within a culture. African music(s) is divers and functional in every area of human endeavour. According to Garnett, (1998, p. 5) as cited by Mans, the meaning of music in a given culture can be transplanted from one environment to another in terms of distance and time, acquiring a new meaning in the new context. Mans (2006, p. 33) noted that meaning in African music is associated with musical performances which maintain social structures and values in a community and or cultural milieu as expressed in language, gender, age, religion and so on. Music in Nigeria as well as in other countries in Africa, is used as a popular means of communication within its context. This ability of music to convey meaning(s) within and across ethnic nationalities during musical performances is what defines its function.

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Musicians in Nigerian can be broadly divided into two societies: traditional and contemporary societies. Their music is broadly classified into three: folk, popular and art (Okafor, 2005, p. 2). Folk music is functional and rooted in the culture and traditions of the people. Popular music, which has great appeal to young people is associated with social aspects of humanity. In the past, popular music was promoted through electronic media in cities and metropolis; but in recent times popular music of various genre are made available via the internet and therefore readily accessed in remote villages across Nigeria. The third type is Art music made up of many variants which can be categorised as classical and neo-classical.

The performer of music in the indigenous culture according to Nzewi (2007, p. 204) engage society during public performances as system-mediator singers. The musician, whether male or female has the mandate to commend, rebuke and warn on societal ills. This type of corrective singing in public space is a strategy for communicating important socio-political issues transacted through theatrical musical performance employing jokes, humour and laughter for a listening audience. This African concept of musical performance has been partly replicated by contemporary popular musicians in correcting social ills related to sex, gender, race and other forms of exclusions/marginalization.

The subject of equality as well as inclusion is multifaceted and most debated in society (Biesta, 2006). Music by its nature is veritable for enlightenment and education leading to a desired change in behaviour. Music creates an environment that makes gender inclusion and equality possible through acquiring knowledge and understanding embedded in the lyrics of the music. Equality is often reinforced not only through rational engagement in dialogue but also through their interpretation and understanding of gender based music shaped by associations and experiences from social media, the internet, and society. This paper interrogates Clarence Peters' directorial interpretation of Tekno's music video entitled *Woman* and its implications to the identity of women.

Biographical Notes on Augustine Miles Kelechi (Tekno)

Augustine Miles Kelechi popularly known as Alhaji Tekno is a Nigerian popular musician, song writer, producer who was born on the 17th of December in 1992 at Bauchi State. His father was a strict disciplinarian and a soldier who worked in different parts of northern Nigeria. Tekno

entertainment qualities started from the church as an instrumentalist who drew inspiration from his father who was an expert in playing the acoustic guitar. As documented in Wikipedia, Tekno is a lover of music and entertainment was nurtured and brought to the limelight by a seasoned comedian called Julius Agwu in an amazing event been held in Abuja in the year 2012, this famous comedian spotted great potential in him (Augustine Miles) and encouraged him to forge ahead with his music career and as Tekno would have it, he has now become famous in the latter years after the great encounter with the famous comedian named Julius Agwu. Some of his songs are Duro, PuTTin, Jogodo, Old Romance, Skeletun, Woman, etc.

Analysis of Women identity in Tekno's Music Video *Woman*

Tekno begins the song with an exposition that is more of his usual singing style. In what appears to be the prologue or may be an exposition he reveals his identity which helps to inform the audience that the statement captured in the song has been made by a man who ought to be among the patriarchal class that victimizes and dehumanizes women on account of their biological difference. The following lines from the prelude of the song capture the identity of the singer

Afam bu Tekno (My name is Tekno)
But you can call me Mbaku

This image below unveils the musician and women's right activist in an art studio painting the image to portray the embodiment of woman's beauty.

After unveiling his identity, Tekno proceeds with a pre-chorus line that is repeatedly expressed as the chorus of the entire song. This pre-chorus undoubtedly unmasked the thematic preoccupation of the song as captured in Figure 1 in the music video where the performer engaged in the painting of women with beautiful combinations of colors on a canvas. The lines in this part of the song clearly exposed the unguarded impression of chauvinists relating to the identity of women. In their uncivilized wisdom, the woman's place is in the kitchen and must be domesticated as a cook who ultimately has nothing to contribute in decision making for the betterment of the society. Relegating a woman to the kitchen implies that her job is interior, inferior and domestic. She is expected to prepare food for

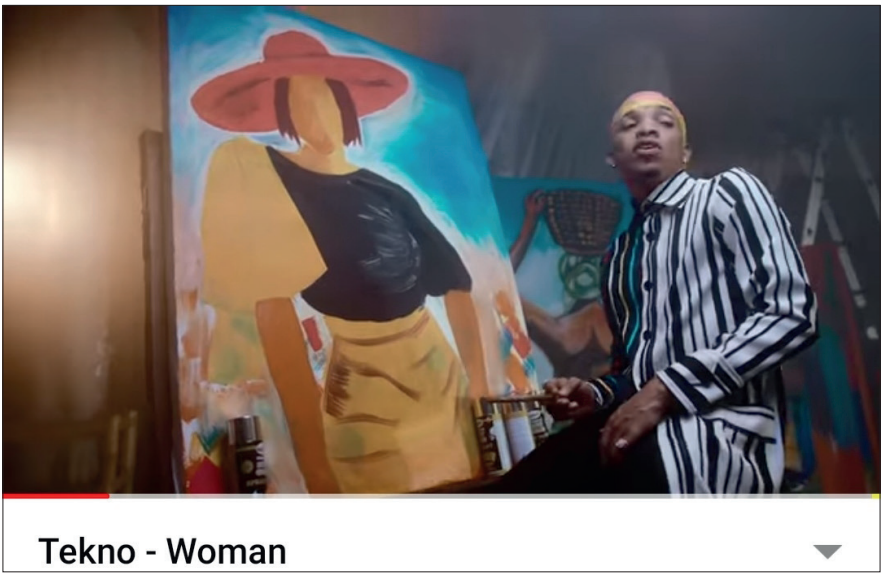

Figure 1. Pictorial representation of a Women painting from the video
Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

the man to eat and can only act as instructed and must not contribute to even decisions concerning her. The lines of the pre-chorus as expressed below indeed, unveils the mindset of most African men in the name of culture and tradition regarding womanhood as slaves who must obey all instructions without asking questions.

[Pre-Chorus]
Them say woman place na for Kitchen
Say she suppose to fry all the chicken
No suppose to talk for the meeting
Concern herself with the cleaning

The main chorus of this song debunks the above impression as shown in figure 2 in the section of the music video that domesticates women to be kitchen material rather than co-partners in making a decision for the growth and development of the nation. The song cautions individuals who parade such impressions and exhibits such action to remember their biological roots that came from the woman. The fact that their mothers are women is enough for them not to contemplate such relegating roles as it

Figure 2. Pictorial representation of Women as hardworking from the video
Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

will connect them in one way or the other. The song further exposes some female idols like Rihanna as a female that has made exploited in the music world and attracted numerous fans of both genders. In the opinion of Tekno, his love for the legendary musician Rihanna cannot allow him to join the bandwagons relating to women as objects and voiceless groups. The song also calls on women to rejoice and express their worries to men and dance freely in a graceful dance to refute such identity labelled on them. The song also clarifies that men need women in their survival and must respect them in their journey of survival. Consider the lines below:

[Chorus]
Yo yo yo
My mother is a woman (yo)
You cannot talk like this (yo)
Rihanna is a woman
I say come whine it for Daddy o (whine it oh)
Come whine it for Daddy o (baby)
Control it Mummy o
I want to teach you the dance oh eh

The song went further to appreciate womanhood by metaphorically adoring its beauty with 'Tomato wantanamera, Potato dance, do shakara and dance kira. These descriptions help to portray the beauty, usefulness and indisputable creature of the woman. The use of tomato and potato to qualify her usefulness indicates that a woman does not hide or cannot be hidden as one cannot enjoy stew without tomato and stew can be used to eat different meals such as rice, yam, beans and even some swallow. Similarly, potato is sweet and physically colorful for human use and nature's beauty. This implies that the world especially Africans must appreciate the value of women as existing creatures. The lines of the bridge chorus are here captured it thus;

[Bridge]
Jigi-jigi ko-gbewa
Tomato wantanamera
Ahan dance kira
Potatoe dance, do shakara oh eh
Jigi-jigi ko-gewa
Tomato wantanamera
I say dance kira
Potato dance, do shakara oh eh

The following images as represented in figures 3 and 4 were captured from the video to demonstrate the pride and positive portrayal of women in the interpretation of the song in the musical video. The director project the joy Tekno wants the woman to have rather than feeling oppressed by cultural oppressive tendencies.

The first verse of the song exposes what a woman has been and can be as against the impression of seeing her as a mere kitchen and domestic material. The verse identifies a woman as someone that can take up important and challenging roles in the society. Such roles as helper, lover, teacher and president are clearly projected in the song as responsibilities women can effectively handle. These roles captured in the song are serious roles that determine the success of any developed society. For example, teachers are the molders of the society as they engage in teaching and discovering hidden possibilities in students. As helpers they provide supporting inputs which are seriously needed in the society. There is no individual that does not need help, even nations expect help from other nations. Society expects love from inhabitants to be able to achieve the needed peace that will ignite development. The descrip-

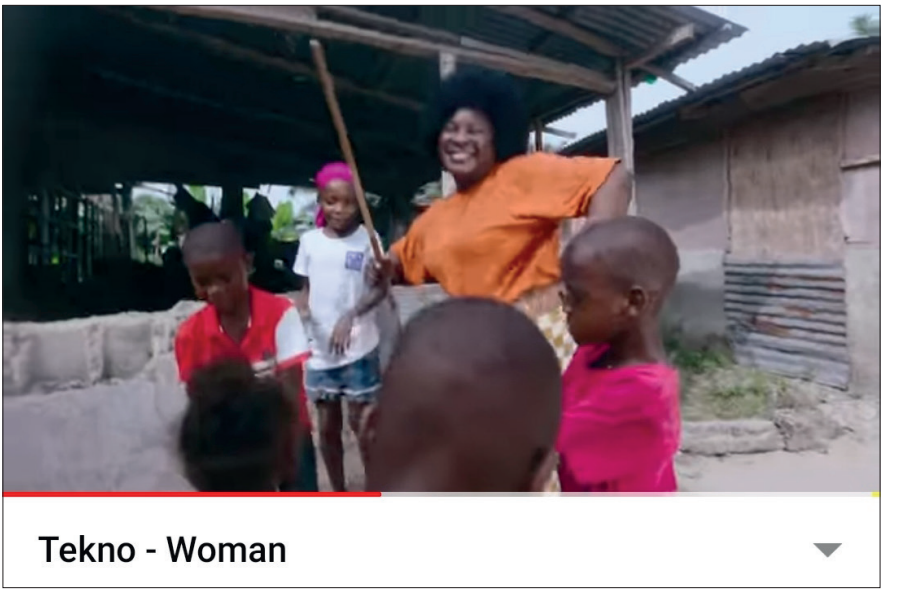

Figure 3. Pictorial representation Joy of Motherhood from the video

Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

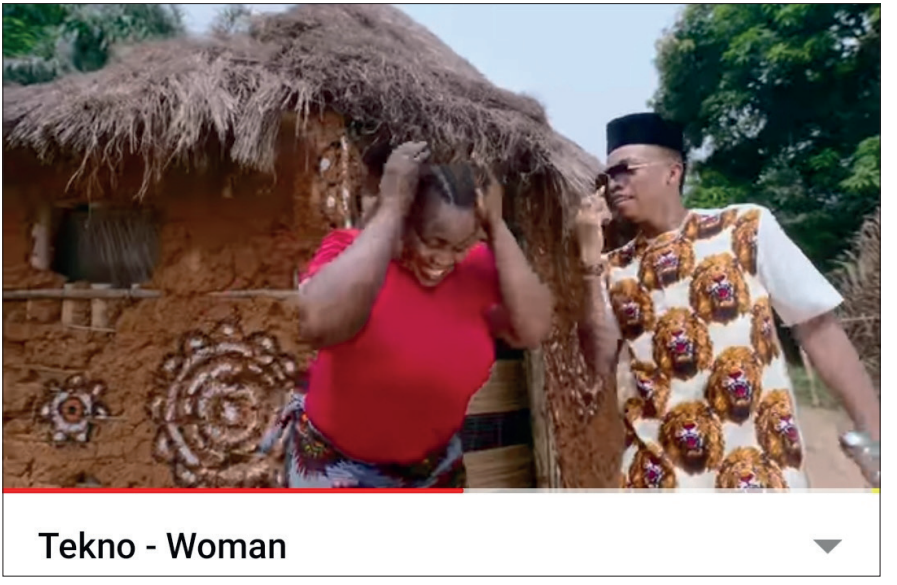

Figure 4. Pictorial representation of Joy of womanhood Projected in the video

Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

tion of the woman as one that can be a lover is not in doubt because in our various homes is mostly championed by the mothers, wives and daughters. Their lovely disposition sustains the home irrespective of the cultural background or the belief system. Tekno description of the woman as one that can be a president is evident in the number of women that have occupied important positions across the world including the presidency. In Africa such women as Nawal El-Saadawi, Mme Kathilili, Yaa Asantewa, Queen Amina, Funmilayo Ransom Kuti, Professor Dora Akunyili, Okonji Iweala and Helen Johnson are examples of powerful women who have demonstrated superiority and debunk the ideology that they are meant for the kitchen for domestic roles only. The potential nature of the woman as projected in this song is not in doubt and as such Tekno takes a personal position that for him he wants his woman besides him making money to support the family. The implication of this conclusion that a woman is what you make of her if you want to see her as a mere kitchen material, a slave, an irrational being, that is what she will but if you see the potentials in her when will be very useful to you and the society at large.

[Verse 1]
A woman can be a helper (A woman)
A woman can be a lover (A woman)
A woman can be a teacher (A woman)
A woman can be the President (A woman)
Say you want your baby for kitchen
I want my baby beside me
Say you want your girl for the cleaning
I want my baby to get a lot of money

The following images as represented in figures 5 (a–d) which were extracted from the video as directed by Clarence Peters celebrate the beauty of womanhood. Each of the images from the musical video celebrates the beauty of the woman which must be adored and preserved rather than relegating her to the background. This imagery of beauty and elegance were successfully achieved through the use of woman in well-designed costumes and matching colours in both indigenous and western outfits. This section of the music video is a contrast from how women are generally portrayed and perceived by many in the society.

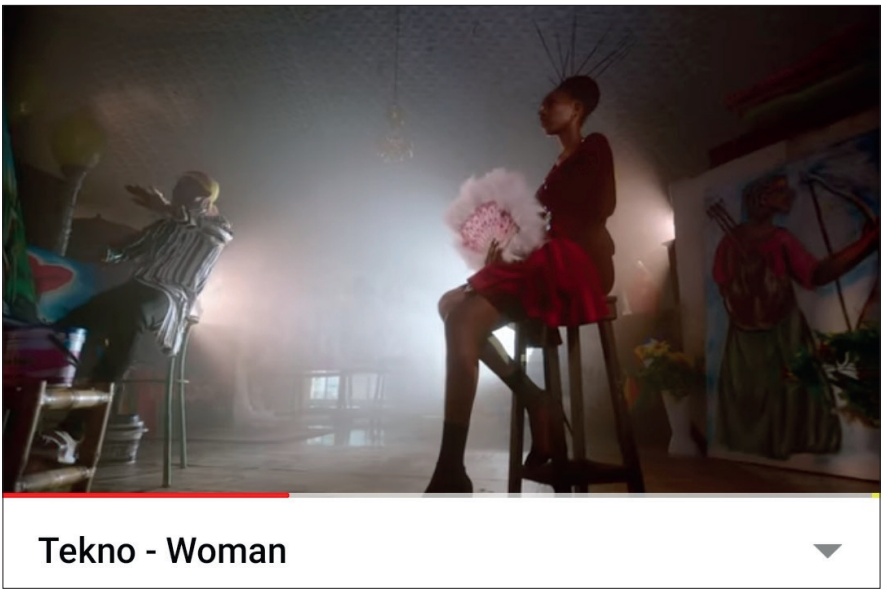

Figure 5a. Pictorial representation Beauty and Elegance in the video

Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

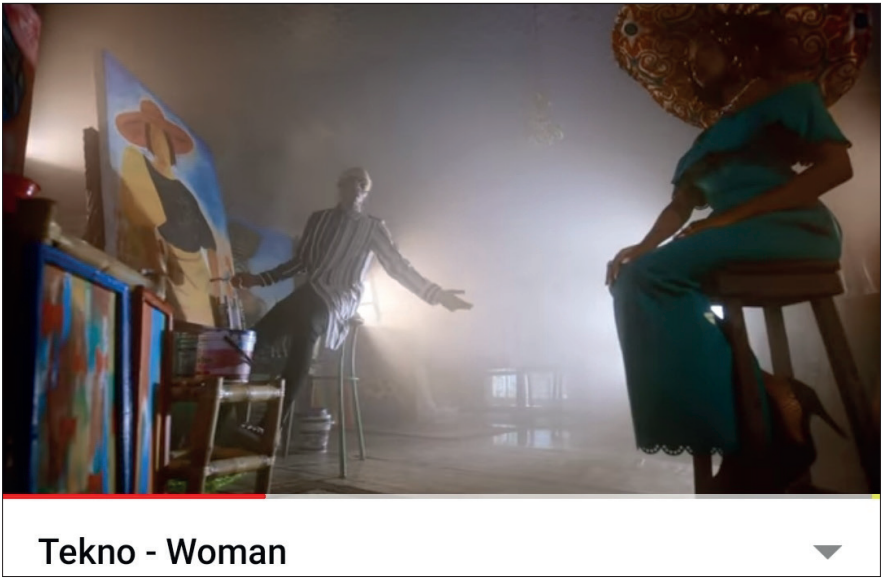

Figure 5b. Pictorial representation of Beauty and Elegance in the video

Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

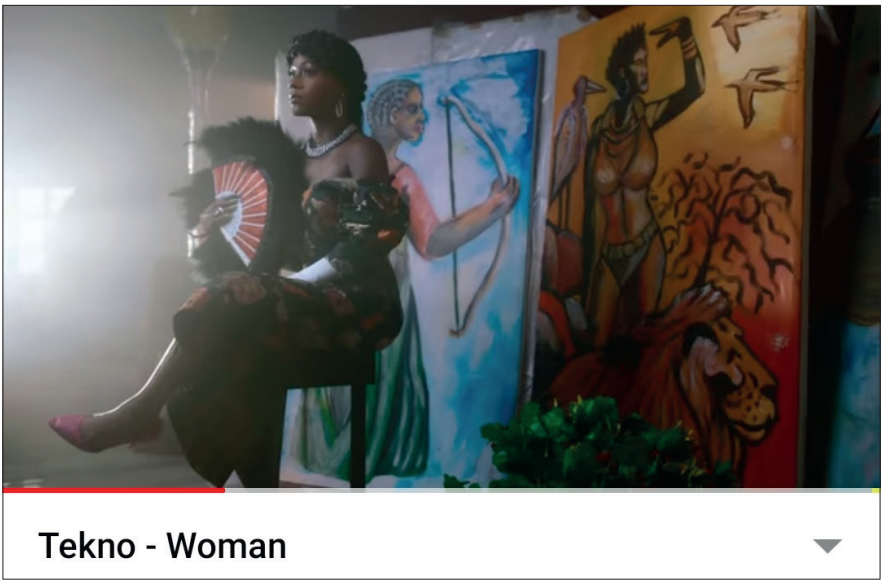

Figure 5c. Pictorial representation of Beauty and Elegance in the video

Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

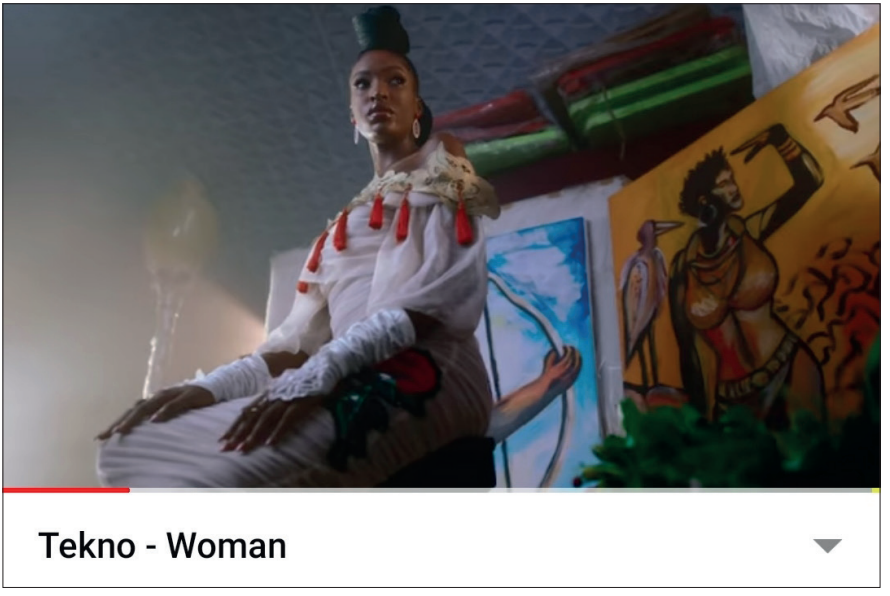

Figure 5d. Pictorial representation of Beauty and Elegance in the video

Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

African women multitask in many areas of life as managers of their homes and other endervours they engage in as teachers, administrators, leadership, professonals in areas such as science and technology. Figure 6 captures an image in the music video that attest and exemplify the inate ability of women to engage in carying out different functions requiring divers skills at the same period. This attests to the helping and multidimensional chacteristics of the woman as she has the capacity to do several things including what men think is exclusive of them.

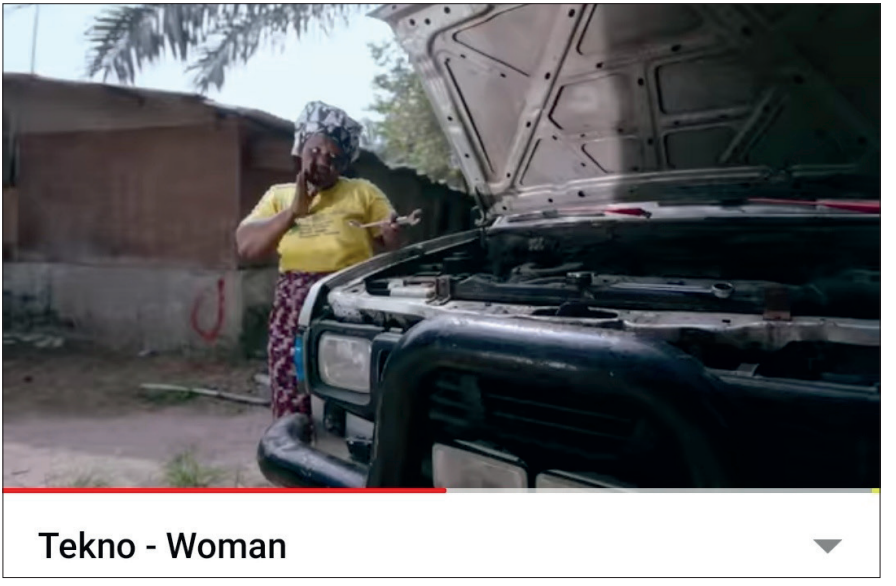

Figure 6. Pictorial representation of a hardworking Woman

Source: YouTube, TeknoMilesVEVO, 2021

The very final verse calls on men to treat women with love, kindness and equality. The verse explains the relevance of women in providing comfort through cooking and eating together and drinking. Women can make delicious meal for our comfort and help in maintaining the progress of the family.

[Verse 2]
I treat my baby equally
She cook for me nkwobi
Sometimes we dance and drink pami o, not matter the economy

Shey we be family
Something happen, you can call on me
I'm like "Women sweet like melody"
Play them like do re mi

Indeed, the role of women in providing comfort for the survival of man as captured cannot be overemphasized. This explains the different pictorial projections as captured in the music video.

Conclusion

The interpretation of the song in this analysis from the video is quite unique and highly revealing. The use of images dominated by women who attempt to dramatize the lines in the song is novel and supports the issue of women identity. The use of adorable words like teacher, lover, helper, tomato, and president demonstrates the positive image associated with womanhood in spite of wrong and stereotypical image. Music helps to engage individuals and groups in a dialogue critical of challenging our presuppositions and promote gender equality. Music on gender equality articulates the understanding of individuals as it helps to integrate different experiences associated with divers' themes and contexts. This phenomenon, without awareness of individuals within the society leads to acquiring norms and values thereby promoting socialization through music. Music as an aspect of culture, defines cultural and collective identities of individuals within a community. It expedites and is significant in terms of telling stories of the past, present and most importantly of the future. This becomes helpful as a means of communicating the truth and exposing aspects of our culture and society that are hostile to women who usually are taken for granted. Music is a vehicle for intervening in gender equity, destroying gender stereotypes that promote the exclusion of women from playing certain roles in the society. Furthermore, it authenticates individual and collective communication as it opens up the opportunity to be heard and visible in an environment dominated by male.

Achieving gender equality interventions mediated through music serves as instrument to work with disenfranchised, especially women as well as minority groups to empower and instil resilience. Music being an integral part of culture helps in socialization and therefore a powerful tool

for inclusion and exclusion. In other words, music becomes an imperative for challenging societal constructs such as gender inequality. There are critical issues in the video that are obviously missing in the video. One expected the director to properly narrate the woman question portrayed in the lines expressed by the singer. However, it is important to note that the release of the video which showcases and celebrates women in different fields of endeavour, whilst advocating their strength, importance was released on the 8th of March 2019 the date that the world celebrates International Women's Day.

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Feminism and Deity Personification in Yorùbá Proverbs

ABSTRACT. In Yorùbá social context, male is seen as comptroller and central in gender status because of the cultural perception that makes male hegemony a priority. If Yorùbá people by chance through their tradition could encroach the social order of the family structure by maintaining the biological dominance of male ahead of female, then it means that women have no say. In the oratory aspect of this tradition however, the construct of women acceptability in terms of their sacred features undermine the biological concept of male dominance. This is the area where Olúpọ̀nà (2011) itemised the role of female goddesses in Yorùbá religion as more of important discussion and that balancing their role with that of male, particularly in the aspect of religion, will improve the cultural variables and etiquette of the Yorùbá people. This paper however intends to look at this balancing through Yorùbá oral proverbs, which personified women symbolically from the angle of deity specific. The paper argues that Yorùbá epistemology through proverbs is a means of deconstructing the usual male hegemony in Yorùbá tradition, and further concludes that ascribing dominance to male echelons is a reflection of social inequality because "what a man can do, a woman can do better". The paper will use semiotic analysis to portray the significant aspect of feminism in the proverbial sayings of the Yorùbá people.

KEYWORDS: feminism, women, Yorùbá, proverbs

Introduction

Within the level of African patriarchal tradition, the status of African women lies very low to that of men as corroborated in one of the Yorùbá saying: *kí ọkùnrin ó tọ̀ àtọ̀rìn, kí obìnrin ó tọ̀ àtọ̀rìn, ẹnìkan yóò ní omi lẹ́yìn ẹ̀ṣẹ̀ ju ẹnìkan lọ* (Let a woman and a man walk while urinating, one of them

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will have messy feet much more than the other). This proverb endorses the practical packaging of men and women through their biological structure of disposing urine, which makes man to be technically desirable in hygiene than woman. This proverb apparently makes man to be more organised and as well culturally elevated through the way its genital is configure. The underline meaning of this proverb ascertains the philosophy of gender inequality that prioritises man ahead of woman. It is worth showing that all animals are born equal, but to say one is equal than the other is an understatement that must be carefully addressed from the context of male/female relationship among the Yorùbá people. This essay is set to underline this focus in the light of Yorùbá epistemological argument for male/female dominance.

Male/female relationship is a gender issue that has attracted copious discussion under which many ideologies have been used to clarify the polemic that guided the subject matter and make it more important and as well challenging (Curtis & MacCorquodale, 1990; Wood, 2009; Cerrato & Cifre, 2018; Oláh, Kotowska & Richter, 2018). The background of the male/female discussion is always directed towards arrays of principles like politics, economic, religion, norms and ethical values. The principles are otherwise structured through cultural precepts influenced by colour, race, origin, history and ancestral mythology. Be that as it may, the question of male dominance is usually engaged through patriarchal factor among the Yorùbá people. This system is a magnified cultural principle which upholds a dictatorial influence on aspects of humanity with particular reference to beliefs and social ideology. This ideology is contextualised in Bateye's "ọkùnrin làdá, obìnrin làgbà" (men are stronger but women are mature), where she identified men as pacesetters but women as the silent achievers that support men discreetly in their various achievements and undertakings (Bateye, 2013). Loud and clear, men are seen in this category of Yorùbá tradition as pronounced achievers due to their overbearing responsibility and favour for various categories of commitments and services. The title *ÀRÓLÉ* (heir to the family) given to the first male child as an approval of its dictatorial and dominance as against the female relevance is a proof to this. Women in Yorùbá tradition are categorised as second tier citizens and not seriously favoured at the front.

Olúpọ̀nà (1997; 2002; 2011) in some of his works identified these lapses and thus recorded that ideal and recognised preference should be extended to women, most especially in the area of socio-religious aspects. This aspect of preference as stated by Bádéjọ (1998, p. 95) could be seen

in Olúpọ̀nà's argument in support for bilateral principle adopted in Onọ̀dó kingship system which recognises compensation for women's lost political power. This system identified an agreement between patrilineality and matrifocality where the social order and the descent system recognises the female power in the enthronement of a king and in some cases a female king made to head the people. In another vein, Olúpọ̀nà (2011) in his book *City of 201 Gods: Ilé-Ifè in Time, Space, and the Imagination*, identified why preference should also be given to women in the priesthood service. Olúpọ̀nà showed why male supremacy should be reconciled in line with female power.

The allusion of the above as established by Olúpọ̀nà is a clear indication and support to how Yorùbá proverbs in some ways clearly personified women symbolically and compliment them with a deified role. These personification and compliments aligned women in Yorùbá land with power directly and also recognised them as first among equal. This work therefore wants to resolve that women in Yorùbá land are not meant to be restricted to complementary roles on the side of male as argued by many scholars, but could also be seen as the type to be complemented by the male as the case may be.

1. Theoretical Framework

The argument of this paper is determined to be contextualised through the aid of semiotic analysis. Dáramọ́lá (2013) described semiology as a science through which life of signs within society are studied. He also declared language as an important instrument that facilitates the exchange of this sign among users. The position of Dáramọ́lá as regards semiotic while quoting Eco shows that the concept of sign encompasses the whole cultural life and can as well be seen as "a-extensive with the whole range of cultural phenomena". Thus, proverb as a means of description and an exchange of meaning device which is culturally inclined is therefore expressed by the use of symbolic signification with reference to the value and ideology of the people. The ideology and value of feminism that are carried in Yorùbá proverbs in a way constitute metaphor equipped with signs that are usually instituted via language description or language code. This is the reason why Yorùbá people will say *Òwe ni ẹsin ọ̀rọ̀, bí ọ̀rọ̀ bá sọnù, òwe làá fí wá a* (Proverb and words are both sought after through each other).

Adéọ̀ṣun (2013) with the views of Harris, identified semiotic as an approach inspired by Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, which shows the importance of context to situation and culture in reconstructing the meaning of a text. Language in this context is as well viewed as the embodiment of the social process in a society through the use of symbols and signs. It is also established that context is very important in the understanding of the symbol and sign because proverbial language is context dependent. Adéọ̀sun, therefore, clarifies that when making symbol and sign analysis in this way, it explains meaning-making as a social context. He further explained semiotic method as the type, which takes cognisance of shared meanings among users of the signs and decodes such signs primarily from their worldview. The perspective of this methodology will be evidence of symbolic analysis in this work because the usage of proverbs among the Yorùbá people are consistent to the analysis of sign and meaning.

2. Existing Literature and Conceptual Discourse

It is quite obvious that feminism is not a novel area in African scholarship. Without much emphasis, it is clear that copious scholars have written so well on it. In "African Feminism Mythical and Social Power of women of African Descent," Bádéjọ (1998) aligned with the understanding of humanistic values of feminism that guided the principles of traditional African values where gender roles (male/female) are seen to complement each other. Bádéjọ (1998) was of the opinion that African feminism recognises the role of women and men in various dimensions, with the views that power and femininity are intertwined rather than antithetical in African worldview. She critically underlined that, the philosophy of gender complementarity or male/female independence was not articulated in the western world to favour the African women in the United States of America.

With humanist feminist ideas, the female freedom and independence in Africa and Yorùbá social context, Balógun (2017) identified the scholarship of western feminist as against the backdrop. He showed that the school of thought classified the image of female gender as the type that suffers repression in the hands of its male counterpart. In his opinion, Yorùbá model is typically a negation of this structure because the same context of gender relationship favours essentially the idea of complementarity.

Olademo (2012) through theological analysis underlined three important feminist discourse. She narrated feminism as an academic method where its discussion transited from androcentric to androgynous models of humanity and language for the supreme being. She also identified feminism as a value system and social vision that view sexism and patriarchy as immoral, but proposing alternative social arrangement that foster equity. This argument opened leadership role in society to both male and female. Lastly, she raised the reason why there is the need to move from prescriptive to descriptive role for women so that they can be relevant in the society. Olademo's last two arguments will be important to this essay because the relevant proverbs that serve as working pattern in this work portray women to be symbolically relevant in the society and as well depict them to have locus standi when it comes to leadership role.

3. Feminism, Spirituality and Gender Discourse in Yorùbá Context

In the opinion of Haralambos et al. (2013) feminist ideologist identifies religion as an ideal instrument of patriarchy. This feminist theorist's position claim that religion has shown more recognition and interest to men at the expense of women. What this infer is that women have less benefits in some religions. But despite this assertion, they still acknowledged that men are inactive than women in the line of religious practices and services (Haralambos et al., 2013). Thus, this identifies women to be seen as vital to religion and spiritual activities than men in the level of spirituality.

The concern for women's position in Yorùbá religion however is as a result of the pattern that has been built on patriarchy system, which designate women figure to a supporting role instead of having primary responsibility. Sugirtharajah (2006) therefore acknowledged patriarchy to be critical of women's plights because they are always being victimised by the system. Olademo (2014) also argued the prescription of mutual interdependency and respect in gender relations in Yorùbá religion. She underlined the factor of human agency in the actualisation of this aim. The human agency according to her is patriarchy. Patriarchy in Yorùbá system in her opinion has acquired the garb of the normative in which women is seemed to be subjected as inferior beings.

Apart from patriarchal influence, the evidence of collectivism as against individualism cannot be overemphasised in the Yorùbá gender spirituality.

This principle according to Pobee (1976) is a means through which the identity of women in Africa is strictly affected due to the evidence of modernity, which has instigated the philosophy of "individualism". This philosophy in his view, resulted from western type of life "foreign religion" which deregulated the immunity and right of women stipulated by African communal settings set up by their culture. Olademo (2015, pp. 304–305) showed that "culture prescribes roles and often guards the moral boundaries of the individual as well as the collective." Here, culture in Yorùbá worldview is seen as determinant in the formation of gender roles as against individualism principle introduced by the foreign religions (Christianity and Islam), which tends to separate women from actualising distinctive role in spirituality.

Individualism in this light can be seen as an agent of identity politics emphasised by Olademo that was impacted by colonial experience, which aided male-gender power at the expense of women. The gender favouritism ascribed to male-gender power in this regard could be as a result of prescriptive role identified by Olademo in the feature of culture as seen in Yorùbá example. This otherwise could be deconstructed in descriptive manner. The descriptive representation of women in Yorùbá religion is here seen in the proverbs to be discussed as the type that carries significant aspect of feminism and as well portray women's potential relevance to Yorùbá religion in the area of signs and meaning.

4. Deified Personification of Women in Yorùbá Proverbs

Proverb is a form of language structure among the Yorùbá people through which codes and patterns of life are investigated. It embraces the cultural oratory act and arts of the people. Olúgbàmígbé (2009, p. 454) identified this by saying that, "in many African culture every man or woman is expected to mature in the art of making speech as he or she advances in age experience". Arágbúwà (2020, p. 4) also explained proverb among the Yorùbá people to be a conveyor of the spiritual essence of the cultures, traditions, values, beliefs, and collective knowledge systems of the people. Proverbs is a cultural tool that makes meaning out of human essence in a thought-provoking manner. Among Yorùbá people, proverb has a sociological function in which roles and activities of individual are analysed and explained. This case is a reality in the aspects of how proverb is used to describe the supremacy that ensued between male and female in Yorùbá

cultural milieu. The significant of proverb can continuously be mentioned on and on.

One important fact about proverb as mentioned by Ọlásùpọ̀, Olúgbèmí and Àjùwọ̀n (2012, p. 11) is that proverb in Yorùbá culture recognises the natural dichotomy that exists between male and female. This claim has a link with the position of United Nations (UN) as enunciated by Akíntúndé (2010, p. 145) in which they embraced the strategies aimed at improving the status of women especially in Africa due to gender imbalance associated with their relationship. Ọlásùpọ̀, Olúgbèmí and Àjùwọ̀n (2012) noted that though the UN gestures may be a way out for women quagmire but from time immemorial, proverbs in Yorùbá culture, demand for gender balance virtually in all spheres of human endeavour. This is what is recognised in the way certain Yorùbá proverbs personified women with the deified status to make their position more sacred and statutorily relevant in the society.

It is recognised by Awólàlú and Dọ̀pámú (2005) that men usually use their physical power and social position to suppress women, especially in religious participation. But despite the passive role that women are subjected to, it is noted that women's position can still be recognised in certain activities that are significant. In the account of Yorùbá spirituality, it is considered that female goddesses and mediums are very prominent. Among the goddesses are Ọ̀ṣun, Ọya, and Ọbà all of which are river goddesses (Awólàlú & Dọ̀pámú, 2005, pp. 291–292). Only that the roles acclaimed to them are mere passive. This is corroborated in the account of oral Ifá divination of *Odù Ọ̀ṣẹ́ tùrá* as narrated by Ọlademo (2004, pp. 49–50). In this *Odù*, Olademo narrated that:

> Olódùmarè, the Supreme Being, sent seventeen primordial deities to occupy the earth, and only one of them, Ọ̀ṣun, was female. When they arrived on earth, the sixteen male deities operated as a team but neglected the only female in all their functions; Ọ̀ṣun was excluded from sacred knowledge, from covenants, and from decision making (2004, pp. 49–50).

This *Odù* identified the fact that, the voice and right of women among Yorùbá people have been subjugated from time immemorial, and this has persisted till date. Despite Ọ̀ṣun's counter reaction as stated below:

> When Ọ̀ṣun could bear it no longer, she congregated the women on earth and formed the *Ìyá Mi* group, a society of powerful women. With their hitherto unusual *àṣẹ* (life force), they interfered with the plans of the male deities. Consequently, there was chaos with humans and nature.

This has not in any way change the momentum in which the right of women is derided or established among the Yorùbá people. The only weapon among the Yorùbá seen in appropriate manner that makes the voice of women to be heard in this regard are proverbs which proclaim the sacredness and freedom of women spirituality. The following proverbs will therefore show the understanding of this work as observed. The attempt is to use semiotic analysis for the emphasis.

4.1. *Òrìṣà bí ìyá kò sí* (There is no deity like mother)

This proverb places woman to be deity specific. The proverb established woman as first among equal in parental role. It indicates that mother is a hero that must be recognised when it comes to prenatal and postnatal challenges that she is faced with. These periods are usually filled with serious challenges that must be endured. The prenatal is popularly considered to be motherhood experience when a woman is caged in the realm of the unknown classified as *abarameji* (that is, an indecisive stage). The stage is recognised as the realm of life and death that cannot be waved when it comes to child birth. More importantly, the Yorùbá will say, *ẹni tí kò mọ iyì ìyá níí sọ ọ̀já nù* (one who could not recognise the sanity of his or her mother will throw off her loincloth). This situation makes women position more important than men because it is a sacred stage of human life applied to a baby and the mother. Yorùbá people believe that the stage is an actualisation of special life force (*àṣẹ*) which woman can activate both positively and negatively while she is in labour. The use of *àṣẹ* by woman is indicated by Olademo up above in this discussion. In Yorùbá context, *àṣẹ* is a life force authority considered to be the language of the *òrìṣà* (the deity).

In this manner, the Yorùbá people will say *Ìyá ni òrìṣà àkúnlẹ̀ bọ* (mother is the deity to be adored). In this proverb, a woman is symbolically seen as emblem of spirituality and personality that describe spiritual godmother and not godfather. There can be godfather in the physical and other context of human display but in rational thinking of the Yorùbá people, there is no equivalent to godmother symbol. A saying in Yorùbá that qualifies this is *ìyá ni ọlọ́kọ̀ tí ó wa ọmọ wáyé* (The mother is the means through which a child comes to the world). This categorically established godmother symbol in the family than godfather symbol. It is a pointer to the fact that a woman is a deity with symbol of authority over her home and the society she belongs in Yorùbá context.

4.2. *Òrìṣà jé kí n pé méjì obìnrin kò dénú* ("Women detest rivals")

This is the second proverb in this rank. This proverb elaborates a syncretic ideology peculiar to religious experience and expression. The term syncretic, according to dictionary meaning applies to combining disparate elements in one system, especially in the forms of religious observance, philosophical systems, or artistic creations. This act or position in spirituality is seriously disliked by any standard to be practiced by the adherents of any religion especially in Yorùbá religion. This position is a classified term which women in Yorùbá setting have adopted to enforce their right when necessary. Though the proverb portrays women as being jealous, but it is an established position that identify respect for a would-be Yorùbá deity from any devotee or follower of any religious affiliate. This as well shows that the right of women is profoundly recognised and established by this proverb because it places women in the same position and standard of recognition like the way deities are referenced among the Yorùbá people. The Yorùbá epistemology that explains this fact is found in *odù Ifá Ọyẹ̀kú Méjì* of oral *ifá* verse. The odu stated that:

Ọkan soso póró lobìnrin dùn mọ lọ́wọ́ ọkọ,	A woman is so good when a man married only one wife
Bí wọ́n bá di méjì wọn a dò jòwú,	When they are two, they become jealous
Bí wọ́n bá di mẹ́ta	When they are three
Wọn a dẹ̀ta ǹ túlé,	They become abusive
Bí wọ́n bá di mẹ́rin,	When they are four
Wọn a di ìwọ ni o rínmi, ni mo rín ọ,	They make jest of each other
Bí wọ́n bá di márùn-ún,	When they are five
Wọn a di lágbája ló run ọkọ wa sùsù	They see each other as destroyer of fortune
Bí wọ́n bá di mẹ́fa,	When they are six
Wọn a dìkà,	They become wicked
Bí wọ́n bá di méje	When they are seven
Wọn a dàjẹ́	They become witches

The context of this verse indicates that infidelity is seriously detested by women in marriage relationship as it is also disliked by the deity in Yorùbá spirituality. Women in this category are seen to carry the identity of deity in their matrimonial homes and likewise in the society where mar-

riage is regarded as sacred. The verse portrays an ideology and symbols replica to what could be proven to be the sanity as expected by any deity from their followers as Yorùbá spirituality is concerned. In Yorùbá culture, it is understood that when a man marries two women, there is the possibility of unlocking the syndrome of jealousy that may be critical to human existence. So likewise, when one is involved in syncretic practices to the deity in Yorùbá pantheon.

Conclusion

This discussion so far clearly maintained that there is a niche created by indigenous proverb for women recognition in Yorùbá society. It is understood that proverbs identify the voice and strength of women to be important in the society and thus they can never be looked down upon. Apart from the conventional rights stipulated by law for women, it is clearly stated in this write up that woman in Yorùbá society are enshrined with natural rights and human dignity supported by the acts of spirituality within their religion and belief system. This shows that women are functional, and the roles allotted to them in society are not totally passive.

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Self-Defense during Communal Clashes: The Case of Pastoralists' Women in Kwara State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT. Women happen to be one of the most vulnerable groups to suffer losses of life and property during communal conflicts. In the midst of the high rate of incidence of communal clashes reported to involve pastoralist/nomads in Nigeria, it is important to investigate how the pastoralists' women manage to defend themselves. This study, therefore, examined the self-defense and escaping approaches of the pastoralists' women during communal clashes involving their husbands. Simple random sampling was used to select 120 respondents in Kwara State. Data were collected using questionnaire and analyzed using percentages. Findings showed that most (96.7%) of the women have witnessed communal clashes and 90% further agreed that women are targets of attack during clashes, however, the majority (79.2%) of the women did not join nor aided their husbands in communal clashes. Regarding pastoralists' women's approaches to defending themselves during clashes, 62.5% run away, 20% beg for mercy, and 17.5% fight back. Efforts should be made to engage both pastoral and host communities to embrace dialogue in resolving issues before it escalates into violent communal clashes.

KEYWORDS: vulnerability, violence, conflicts, women, host communities

Introduction

The Nigerian nation has persistently been in a fierce and seemingly perpetual state of war; where several lives have been lost as a result of violent

movements which have characterized the state. Of great significance is the high and persistent record of conflicts between pastoralists and farmers or with their host communities. A number of publications present climate and environmental factors as major triggers of conflicts among pastoralist communities (Babagana et al., 2019; Abugu et al., 2021). Studies have also argued that climate and environmental factors account for the worsening incidence of conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in northern Nigeria (Elisha, 2017; Ibrahim, Huseyin & Behiye, 2020). The subtle nature of climate change usually blurs its paroxysm to the extent that it is not usually seen as a major security threat. It would be observed that climate change, as a concept in itself, does not reflect threats to national security, but the impact and gradual dynamics of manifestation translate into dire consequences on livelihoods, social order, peace and stability. Nonetheless, it is widely accepted that environmental factors exacerbate conflict (Ducrotoy et al., 2018).

Farmers and pastoralists in many localities and different countries make their livelihood within the same geographical, political, and socio-cultural conditions which may be characterized by resource scarcity or political inequality. Farmer-pastoralist conflicts have been associated with the conflict of land resource use exacerbated by dwindling resources and such conflicts and communal clashes are becoming fiercer and increasingly widespread in Nigeria (Babagana et al., 2019). It is important to note that these conflicts have a direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of those involved; of which pastoralist women are not exempted. These conflicts reinforce circles of extreme poverty and hunger, and destroy social status, food security and affect mostly the most marginalized groups including women and children. Consequently, it unleashes untold obstacles to children's education, thereby resulting in under-development and mass displacement.

Pastoralism presents opportunities and threat to livelihoods at household level because of the nomadic movements of men. Therefore, pastoralist women's livelihoods are often subjected to intensifying economic pressure in conflict situations. In addition, women are often primarily responsible for maintaining household livelihoods as a result of the enormous impact of communal clashes. Thus, women from poor and less developed countries are those who usually pay the price of unequal access to natural and economic resources. As a result of the unfortunate altercations between pastoralists in their host and neighboring communities; wives of pastoralist are left to self-defense as well as their children. According to Hollander (2016), self-defense is an act and skill displayed by potential victims (usually wom-

en) to fend off attackers. It is as a result of these prevailing problems that this study aims at assessing the level of vulnerability to the effect of communal clashes on pastoralist women. Thus, going by the challenges confronted by pastoralist' women, it is paramount to assess the vulnerability of wives and daughters of pastoralists to the effect of communal clashes.

The main objective of this study was to examine the Self-defense approaches of pastoralists' women during communal clashes involving their husbands in Kwara State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to: (i) describe the economic activity of the pastoralists' women, (ii) describe the experience of pastoralists' women during communal clashes, and (iii) investigate the self-defense approaches employed by pastoralists' women during communal clashes in Kwara State.

1. Methodology

The study was carried out in Kwara State, North Central Nigeria. A three-stage sampling procedure was used to select respondents. The first stage involved a purposive selection of two ADP Zones (B and D) from the four zones (A, B, C, and D). The selection of these zones was based on the high prevalence of pastoralists in Kwara State. The two zones have seven Local Government Areas (LGAs) in total (Zone B: Edu and Patigi; Zone D: Oke-Ero, Isin, Ifelodun, Ekiti, Irepodun, Offa and Oyun). Second stage involved a random selection of 3 LGAs in the selected zones. The selected LGAs were Patigi, Edu and Oke-Ero. Finally, the third stage was the random selection of 50% of the total 240 registered pastoralists in the three LGAs selected, to give a total of 120 pastoralists. One woman (wife) of each of the selected pastoralists served as respondent for the study. The decision for the percentage sampled from the population was to attain a sizeable number of pastoralist women from the zones. Data was collected with the use of an interview schedule. Data collected were analyzed using frequency distribution, percentages, mean, and ranking.

2. Results And Discussion

2.1. Economic Activity of the Pastoralists' Women

Results presented in Table 1 showed that the main economic activities of the pastoralists' women (61.7%) were trading, cheese making and trad-

ing. This finding corroborates Okeke et al. (2016) that Fulani herders still dominate the dairy sub-sector in Nigeria. Komolafe et al. (2019) further stated that Fulani men mostly do production through hand milking while their women often engage in the processing through value addition into different products and the marketing. Table 1 further showed that the pastoralists' women's resources for economic activities were primarily from husbands (51.7%) while appreciable percentage (34.1%) sourced for resources by themselves. This finding implies that being married is a favourable factor for accessing economic resources among the pastoralists' women (Table 1). It was also observed that the women combined multiple economic activities rather than focusing on only one type. This is also an indication that the women made a conscientious effort at self-reliance. Apparently, farming or any other singular economic activity is no longer popular among the pastoralists' women.

Table 1. Economic activity of the pastoralists' women

Type of economic activity involved in:	Percentage (120)
Trading only	3.3
Cheese hawking only	13.3
Making cheese only	14.2
Trading, cheese making and trading	61.7
Harvesting only	1.7
Farming only	5.8
Source of resources for economic activities:	
Village head	4.2
Government	0
Self	34.1
Husband	61.7

Source: Field survey, 2019

2.2. Experience of Communal Clashes among Pastoralists' Women

As indicated in Table 2, most (96.7%) of the women have witnessed communal clashes involving their husbands. During the clashes witnessed, 90% of the women claimed they were, often times, the target of the communal attacks because some of the attacks happen when their husbands have gone grazing with the herds and are therefore not around to defend them. This suggests that women and children of nomads are soft targets of the attacks. This corroborates the argument that communal clashes have gender-differentiated impacts as women, by virtue of certain specific

gender roles, experience them in different ways (Amnesty International, 2018). Further responses showed that 97.5% of the women agreed that they were personally affected during communal clashes as the survey also indicated that women complained of sustaining injuries during communal clashes. As a result of the crises, 88.3% claimed they end up protecting themselves. Table 2 highlights the experience of the women as well as the perspectives of pastoralists' women towards communal clashes.

Table 2. Experience of communal clashes among pastoralists' women

Variable	Percentage (120)
Witnessed communal clashes:	
No	3.3
Yes	96.7
Women are targets of attack during clashes:	
No	10.0
Yes	90.0
Personally affected during clashes:	
No	2.5
Yes	97.5
Protects self during clashes	
No	11.7
Yes	88.3

Source: Field survey, 2019

2.3. Self-Defense Approach of Pastoralists' Women

As shown in Table 3, the majority (62.5%) of the women indicated a run-away approach while 20% beg for mercy to protect self from danger of being attacked by their husbands' opponents. This is a mark of powerlessness, and it is not entirely strange to find that women towed this path of self-defense. This suggests the extent to which communal clashes expose the women to dangers; thus indicating from the field survey, that women are victims of conflicts. This further supports the report of Abroulaye et al. (2015) who alluded to the fact that women may experience multiple blows as communal clashes tend to impact women in diverse ways. One is the inability to be able to cater for the children when husbands' have relocated with the herds while another is the inability to defend themselves during clashes. There is also the aspect of lack of emotional support that prevails the women when their husbands are absent for long periods during scarcity of pasture which makes men to relocate with the cattle. These are in-

dicators of high level of vulnerability of pastoralists women, especially in the study area. Indeed, it becomes pertinent to find measures to reduce women's vulnerability during communal clashes.

Another notable approach for protection indicated among a few (17.5%) of the women was to fight back and join their husbands in fighting opponents. This is the low percentage level of bravery and participation of pastoralists' women as combatants in the communal clashes involving their husbands. This is also not surprising as Krause (2019) emphasized that some women support the fighting because they benefit from it. They may get some goods, clothing and money from the looting. However, Krause also noted that participation of women in fighting was often downplayed while the notion of women as victims and peaceful mothers prevailed.

Table 3. Self-defense approach of pastoralists' women during communal clashes

How do you defend self during clashes?	Percentage (120)
Begs for mercy	20.0
Run away	62.5
Fight back and joins husband in fighting opponents	17.5

Source: Field survey, 2019

Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be concluded from this study that pastoralists' women are often the target of the communal attacks involving their husbands and so, the pastoralists' women employed several approaches to defend self because of their high vulnerability to the effect of communal clashes in Kwara State. The commonly used approach by the pastoralists' women is the run-away approach. This study therefore recommends that adequate measures must be taken by concerned stakeholders such as husbands of pastoralists women and community leaders; to forestall recurrent communal clashes involving the pastoralists, so as to ease women and children from the untold hardship they often experience as a result of the clashes. To further mitigate these crises and its impact on the women, there is an urgent need for sensitization on the need to shun soft targets such as avoiding the attacks on women and children during crises; as well as the necessity of embracing peaceful dialogues to prevent women and children from falling into severe economic hardships and social unrest.

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Historical Remembrance as a Strategy for the Re-Invention of Africa in Odia Ofeimun's *A Feast of Return* and *Under African Skies*

ABSTRACT. This paper explores Odia Ofeimun's two poetry collections: A Feast of Return and Under African Skies. The aim is to underscore Ofeimun's deployment of the folkloric tradition, invocative poetry and mytho-historicity as aesthetic designs in the re-invention of modern Africa. The objective is to demonstrate how the foregoing aesthetic designs foreground Ofeimun's African gaze and poetic imagination with which he locates Africa in glorious and heroic moments of the past, just like the Negritude poets did, yet, in his poetic imagination of Africa of the past, Ofeimun shows how the issues of the moment in Africa draw from a complicated past event in Africa. This paper adopts Edward Said's notion of contrapuntal reading as a hermeneutic practise and a qualitative descriptive, analytic method. In the findings, this paper notes that Ofeimun does not offer a superficial or exaggerated romanticisation of Africa's past; instead, by showing a connection between Africa's past with Africa's present, Ofeimun deepens the conversation and debate on Africa's history, epistemology, identity and the subject of euro-western colonialism, particularly in Southern Africa. This paper concludes that Ofeimun's poetic imagination of the past speaks of historical remembrance configured as trance and memory. This historical remembrance is a strategy of re-invention and a panacea for charting a new course for modern Africa today in terms of self-re-conceptualisation.

KEYWORDS: history, remembrance, re-invention Africa, Odia Ofeimun

Introduction

There is a paucity of critical appraisal on Odia Ofeimun's two poetry collections *Under African Skies* (Hereafter *UAS*) and *A Feast of Return* (hereafter *AFOR*). Available literature such as Nonyelum Chibuzo Mba's essay, explored the theme of "Masterminding the Return and Politics of Gender in Ofeimun's *Under African Skies* and *A Feast of Return*". In the literature, Mba argues that, "*A Feast of Return* is basically proverbial and has a lot to do with the recollection of memory, masterminding the return and

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the relationship between the dead, the living, and even the unborn. It is a sequel to Ofeimun's *Under African Skies*" (p. 40). Mba stresses further that *UAS* is a "clamour for significant change [in Africa] characterised by gender equity" (p. 4).

Cecilia Kato in another essay titled "The Poet's Dance Steps: An Analysis of Performance as Actual Poetry in Odia Ofeimun's *A Feast of Return* and *Under African Skies*" stresses that *UAS* is a historical document that "(testifies) to centuries of repression and resistance that came to an end with the release of Nelson Mandela" (Kato, p. 153). Kato stresses further that *AFOR* is "Africa's journey through history presented in a dance drama" (p. 156). Kato contends further that *AFOR* "draws attention to the need to nurture high artistic standards as well as create the right political and economic setting for national creativity" (p. 156). The views of Mba and Kato are quite germane, but there are crucial issues they overlooked, such as how history constitutes memory or a form of remembrance necessary for the re-invention of Africa.

Methodology

This paper adopts Edward Said's notion of "contrapuntal reading" (see *Culture and Imperialism*, 66) as a critical framework within a qualitative, descriptive and analytic research method in the exploration of these poems. It offers deeper insight into the two texts by its argument that every text bears some relation to the common discourse of its society. The process by which every text bears this relation is through its formal devices.

Formal devices establish a structural and semantic relation between a poem and ideology. The formal devices constitute the surface structures of a poem, and within these surfaces, structures are underlying social meaning and ideology, which are the deep structures. Importantly, formal devices allow a poem reader, through a contrapuntal reading, to perceive and uncover the underlying contours of the unsaid ideas from which poetic structures emerge.

Thus, a contrapuntal reading for this essay is crucial as it offers us an opportunity to interrogate Ofeimun's two poems beyond their obvious or surface level meaning. It permits us to extend our critical query to issues that might have imbricated the poetic formation yet not obviously stated; to question the "truths" within the poems, unearth the veiled messages,

and bring them to the illumination of light. This form of reading unearths "what was once forcibly excluded" (Eagleton, 1976, p. 66–67).

A contrapuntal reading does not overlook lexical disjunctions or word entries, instead, it seeks to show how disjunctions, words entries offer clarity to the theme of a text. For instance, from the collection *UAS*, in the poem "ANTHEM OF THE OAK", words like "forest" and "alone" as we can find in the excerpt, "we make a forest/even when we stand alone" (Ofeimun, p. 4) are disjunctive, and antithetical. Other disjunctives in *UAS*, are evident in "MOTHERSONG I", such as "hunters to the hunted", "…The perceived to the perceiver" (Ofeimun, p. 9), and from the poem "ISIKUTI" in *UAS*, there is "…the bitter leaf that sweetens life" (Ofeimun, p. 17).

From such antithesis we see a pattern which foregrounds ideologies which are not obviously stated but are reproduced in the texts and naturalised through the encoding power of Ofeimun's poetic language use. Thus, to read the surface meaning of words in the poem alone is to ignore veiled ideologies and histories. The histories are veiled. They constitute the real ideological "foldings", and they are the "real history alongside [texts]" (Eagleton, 1976, p. 74). A contrapuntal reading provides a reader with the critical tool and ability to see these histories. It prevents a reader from being blind and critically docile. It alerts the reader to be conscious of a text's social commitment and political undertones, such as Ofeimun's poetic production in *UAS* and *AFOR*.

Findings and Discussion

UAS and *AFOR* offer a unique form of African gaze to the discourse on Africa, African identity and modern Africa. The poems in the two collections incarnate a vanishing tradition of oral poetry in Africa similar to Okot p'Bitek *Songs of Lawino*. The poems are crafted in the dithyrambic-elegiac mode, and they also draw extensively from the African ethnophilosophical worldview and contemporary history of South Africa.

There are layers of meaning underneath the structures of the two poems. For instance, *UAS* and *AFOR* speak of memory (history), poetry (imagination or trance) and African philosophy (afro-logic). They also speak of the ability of a people (South Africans) to thrive amidst a history filled with sad memories. The poems invoke the past and speak to the present experiences of African nations, as evident in the poem "ANTHEM OF OAK" in the collection *UAS*. In "ANTHEM OF OAK" Africa's experiences are described as

"a dance on a crossroad" (Ofeimun, p. 3). Yet, at this crossroad, and amidst the inherent travails within it, Africans are encouraged to celebrate their roots, "We dance at the crossroads/Celebrating our roots/In the unity of nations" (Ofeimun, p. 3). Ofeimun projects an optimistic vision of a united Pan-African continent in the poems. This is amidst the current sad state of Africa, a far cry from this optimistic vision. For Ofeimun, Africa today is still at its potentiality; it is like a continent on a wilderness journey of reconciliation with itself and towards the quest for unity and the harmonization of its diversity. This is evident in the poem, "ANTHEM OF THE OAK" which fabricates a conceptual metaphor of a united Africa. This idea of unity is seen in terms of the continent's unity-in-diversity, emanating from the many cultural and geographical nodes though homogeneous, from which all African nationalities stand and draw strength.

Importantly, Ofeimun offers a solution to how this unity and harmonisation of Africa's diversity can be achieved. This is through the awakening of historical consciousness and the need to evolve a new sense of African identity. For Ofeimun, Africa's history and identity were truncated by euro-western interruption through agencies of colonisation such as advanced military firepower, commerce, education, and religion. But through trance and memory, Ofeimun takes Africa through a self-re-conceptualisation process. This is a mechanism to re-awaken the historical consciousness and appreciation of Africa's identity. Hence, Ofeimun's aesthetic designs in *UAS* and *AFOR* are informed by a social commitment to bring back to life through oral performance a reinvention of Africa, using myth, legend and history as poetic repertoire.

Versification of History, Myth and Legend

Some of the sources Ofeimun draws inspiration from in crafting his poem include: the legend of Dingiswayo, Mzilikazi, Shaka Zulu, Nelson Mandela, Moshwheshwe, Manthatisi, and Nkrumah of Ghana; the myth of Mazugawa and historical events like the Mfecane/Difaquane war, the Boer war, the Great Trek, the scourge of Apartheid. To a large extent, these sources informed the emergence of South Africa as a Rainbow Nation. They also provided Ofeimun with poetic insight into his craft.

On the premise of these sources, the poems can be seen as myth, legend and history in verse form, recalling Africa of the past to connect to an Africa of the present and future. A great part of the poems is in met-

aphorical codes and allusions which serve as clues and props. This calls for alertness to fully appreciate how these clues and props—the aesthetic design—construe the search for a new philosophy of identity necessary for the re-invention of Africa.

We intend to excavate the top layer of meaning of the texts in order to embrace the "truths" within the poems. These "truths" are cloaked, implied or disguised in words. They are the "latent content in disguised form" of the text (Eagleton, 1976, p. 90). For instance, while we may not be concerned with the idea of dance (as a form of movement or choreography) and trance (clairvoyance), we are interested in how they conjure meaning not obviously stated within the texts. For instance in the poem "TIGARI", in the collection *UAS*, dance is suggestive of a strategy of harnessing trance, "We dance/To harness the trance/ As the Maguzawa of Gao/ Harnessed it (Ofeimun, p. 7). Dance is also a purifier, "the Tigari dance/ to purge with fire/ and renew the earth" (Ofeimun, p. 7). This dance is informed by the trances which connects with memories of our great civilisation, and root, as evident in some poems in *UAS*, such as "ANTHEM OF OAK", "We dance at the crossroad/ Celebrating our roots/ In the unity of our nations" (Ofeimun, p. 3), in "SECOND VOICE", "We dance to defend memory/ Against the winds of chance/ We dance the dance of the Great Oaks (Ofeimun, p. 5), and in "TIGARI", "To harness the trance/ As the Maguzawa of Gao Harnessed it" (Ofeimun, p. 7). The mention of the Maguzawa of Gao, the Priest of the Agadi, and the Ga of Ghana within the Tigari dance calls attention to strategies Ofeimun engages to re-invent histories of a people, culture and ecology truncated by colonial presence.

The Maguzawas, as mentioned in the excerpt, are humans with clairvoyant power and the capacity for vision in the Ancient Hausa Kingdom. They were quite popular until the religious colonisation of Hausa land by the Fulani, which brought about the fall of the Sefewa dynasty in the 11th century (A.D.). The signification of dance is thus beyond the body's movement to the rhythm of the music. Instead, it is a strategy of connecting and reclaiming the past. This reawakening brings a sense of awareness. This is why the process is described as "awaken in a trance" (Ofeimun, p. 7).

Other histories which the "dance" allows the dancers to connect with, are captured in the poem "WARRIOR" in the collection *UAS*. In this poem, Ofeimun mentions Toussaint François. His full name was Dominique Toussaint Louverture and he was the Haitian general and leader of the Haitian Revolution. He was a leader of the growing resistance during his time against colonial incursion. Ofeimun also mentions names like W.E.B Du-

bois, Marcus Garvey, Kwame Nkrumah, and Nelson Mandela (Ofeimun, p. 38). These names share a historical affinity with Africa is terms of their participation in the anti/post-colonial liberation struggle for the soul of Africa and Africans.

Ofeimun's engagement with history in the poem is construed as an act of tracing the stories of the sun as shown in this excerpt, "trace the unblinking lore of the sun" (Ofeimun, p. 2). The sun as used in the stretch of utterance is suggestive of Africa while the lore is a story of Africa's past.

In tracing history, one should be alert to the various perspectives or sides to the histories and lore of Africa. There is more than one historical narrative of Africa's past. There is the history of Africa from the perspective of the colonizers and the history of Africa as told by Africans is evident in oral tradition. We must stress that every history produces its own knowledge, narrative and accepted form of truth. This is crucial, especially for peripheral spaces—third world countries and former colonial areas—struggling to regain selfhood and re-articulate their essence. The process of retelling histories is a strategy of offering another truth to extant truths.

Mytho-Historicity, Politics and the Re-invention of Africa in *UAS* and *AFOR*

Ofeimun notes that *UAS* was "brought to fruition as an experiment between the fusion of poetry and dance in order to project an African mood in an event which marked the fifth centennial of Columbus' discovery of the "New World" (viii). The foregoing is also evident in the preliminary pages of *AFOR* (ix). There are thirteen poems which are intricately connected in *UAS* while in *AFOR* there are fifteen poems. The poems intersect present day society with memories of the pristine pastoral village-life, untouched by euro-western modernity. In four poems from *UAS*—"MOTHERSONG I", "ATSIA-MOTHERSONG II", "ISIKUTI I" and "ISIKUTI II"—we are shown the African worldview of nature, and the serenity and peace which characterised moments in Africa prior to euro-western incursion. In *UAS*, Ofeimun valorises the African earth, and calls attention to the fact that we can learn a lot from our traditional past in the handling of present day issues. This occurs through an understanding of the African ontology of life on earth as bound by a symbiotic ritual. This ritual includes both physical and spiritual actors (ancestors, the living, the living dead and the unborn).

This is a ritual of earth worship as we see in the poem "MOTHERSONG I", where the earth is venerated:

> We owe our poise
> To mother earth
> Who trapped storms in sea shells
> To forestall blood sacrifice
> So that we may not be sacrificed (p. 9).

In *AFOR* the poem "BANTU POEM I" resonates this same view, as evident in the excerpt, "Because we do not want to offend/The earth on which we must lie,/We return as pure lyric" (5). The ecological undertone in "BANTU POEM I" has great significance for us today in Africa, as it speaks to an Africa's ecological imagination. It also points to the earth as one of the witnesses to events on earth. And humans can always look upon the earth as a source for memory, the retrieval of the past and reclamation of the present. In the poem "ISIKUTI I", in *UAS*, the earth is imagined as "the cradle of our paddles and our hoes" it is the source where "We reach for bitter leaf that sweetens life" (Ofeimun, p. 17). Pay attention to the Oxymoron and metaphorisation of the earth, both as the portal which birth the beginning of mankind ironically this portal brings bitter and sweet experiences. While in *AFOR*, in the poem "LIBATION II" the earth is construed as a procreative force "let our roots deepens/ to green the earth with fruit" (Ofeimun, p. 3).

Ofeimun is alert in his engagement with myth in his re-construction of the African primordial past as evident in his mythic imagination. His alertness foregrounds ecological issues such as climate change and drought induced migration which have become testaments of our modern tragedy in Africa, as seen in the poem, "SOHU/HUSAGO", in *UAS*:

> In the days of famine
> When forests succumbed
> To drought in wet seasons
> And the soil hardened its nerves
> To the plea of sweat (Ofeimun, p. 23)

The excerpt above speaks to an abnormality. It is supposed to be the wet season, instead there is drought; a severe dryness when it ought to be raining. This depiction can be construed as speaking to a present challenge humanity faces due to geologic transformation accelerated by industrial-

isation, and the emission of carbon, sulphur, deforestation and urbanisation. This ecological consciousness is also reflected in the poem "BATA", in *UAS* in the subjunctive "so that our earth/may not be taken by surprise" ("Bata", p. 1–2). Interestingly, the line in the poem "BATA" invokes the myth of Sango, to make a suggestion on how the climate change tragedy can be averted.

> We welcome Sango's dance
> The roll of Bata drums cavorting
> So that our earth may not be startled
> So that our earth may not be ruined (Ofeimun, p. 23–24)

Even though the poem shares an intertextual affinity with Wole Soyinka's *Idanre and Other Poems*. It also reminds us of Soyinka's exposition on the myth of Ogun, in his essay the "Fourth Stage: Through the Mysteries of Ogun to the Origin of Yoruba Tragedy". In this work, Soyinka articulated the tragic consequences when the harmony between nature and human existences is violated. It is important to also stress here that Ogun as depicted in the poem "BATA", in *UAS* is synonymous to the Gaia force in Greek mythology and Ani/Ala in Igbo cosmic universe. The ecological changes described in "BATA" are consequences of humans violating the earth/human symbiotic relation in line with the norms of Sango described in "BATA" as "Sango dance" (Ofeimun, p. 23). The poem "BATA" also speaks of the four cycles of existence articulated by Wole Soyinka. This is the relationship between the living, the living dead, the unborn and the ancestors ("Fourth Stage", p. 366). Though the earth does not belong to the four levels of existence, it is a realm a dimension of habitation different from the ethereal realm of spirits and ancestors. The ancestors mentioned, refers to those Ofeimun calls our fathers and the need for African not to forget their father, as their legacies speak. This is evident in the poem, "LISZOMBE", in *UAS*, "No we never forget our fathers/ Alive or when they die/ They are buried deep in the cranium" (Ofeimun, p. 27).

The performances in *UAS* are permeated with musical pulse sustained by choruses as we see in the repetition of "we dance" in the poem "ANTHEM OF THE OAK", "FIRST VOICE", "TIGARI", "ATSIA:MOTHERSONG II", among others (Ofeimun, pp. 3, 5, 7, 15). The movements in the poems are distinctive, and also shares both stylistic and thematic coherence with other parts of the collection. The central pre-occupation of Ofeimun is the notion that myth making is a strategy of reclamation of Africa's identity. It

also engenders historical consciousness among present day Africans. This is because most of what is recorded in *UAS*, points to the past. The purpose of such engagement is to help us resolve the conflict of identity Africans experience today. It also helps modern Africans come to terms with present day reality. In the light of postcolonial studies, myth making is very important as a strategy for self-reclamation. It is important because what has become known as euro-western modernity and narrative about Africa was that Africa as a people has no real history and civilisation and whose physiological attributes are in the similitude of wild beasts. This engendered a false identity and left the people at a liminal space (see *Home and Exile*, p. 27).

The foregoing narrative denigrates the African person and physiology, projects him/her as an Other, and justifies Africans' enslavement as a form of accepted truth. For the re-invention, reclamation and recovery of an identity to be possible, the African needs to come to terms with his/her history, philosophy, and civilisation. The notion of an African without history and civilisation became the Doxa in western epistemology, such that it was impossible to tell an African story outside the emergence of the European to Africa and their notion of modernity. This false truth negatively invented an Africa that is most times treated as an exotic or demonic other that Ofeimun sets out to correct through mytho-historicity as a strategy for reinventing Africa.

And on the nature of truth, Satya P. Mohanty sheds light on the limitation of represented truth due to its contextual, social or discursive nature. Mohanty argues that "…truth…[is] socially and discursively constructed and their validity and applicability are necessarily limited to their particular contexts or situation" (p. xi). In the various presentations of truth, in new media, magazines, critical works, public opinion, CNN, BBC, the European notion of truth is presented as the main or real doxa. However, we must be wary of truth projected as absolute since it may be coloured with bias, as stressed further by Mohanty, particularly in its formation or creation. This is because in the words of Mohanty, "meanings [truth] do not exist as such but are produced; what we thought we knew was an illusion of meaning[truth] is an effect of our own subjective desires or our political positioning" (p. 29).

The use of metaphor by Ofeimun provides a geophysical mapping of Africa as we can see in the opening poem "FIRST VOICE", in *UAS*. There are mentions of "Deep South, Cape to Lakes/ The Fouta Djallo to the Nile" (Ofeimun, p. 2). The depiction of Africa's geography and landscape is im-

portant for the African imagination as it projects a positive ecological self. The geographical areas mentioned in "FIRST VOICE" in *UAS*, point to the north, east, west and south of Africa, with its deltas, mountains, plateau, rain forest belt, veld and savannah (Ofeimun, p. 2). In the poem "SECOND VOICE", in *UAS*, it is also referred to as "… the four wind" (Ofeimun, p. 5). Ofeimun aims at such geographic imagination as the re-fabrication of knowledge, identity about Africa, the image and worldview of Africa against the Conradian heart of darkness, and the imagination of Africa in Daniel Defoe Robinson Crusoe.

In the poem "SECOND VOICE", in *UAS*, Ofeimun makes reference to memory, "We Dance to defend Memory" (Ofeimun, p. 5). Memory here refers to incidence of the past, which are numerous. The question now becomes, which of the memory? We see this as speaking to Africa's collective history and memory, to the traumatic encounters between Africans and Africans, Africans and Boers, and Africans and British. Ofeimun's use of memory is archaeological. It offers us a chance to interrogate ideas, and knowledge in Africa before the present, culture, civilisation, invention, geography, people, ecology, art, inventions through retrospect. For instance, there are mentions of Africa's centres of great learning and civilisation in "SECOND VOICE", in the collection *UAS*, names like Meroe, Mali, Sidamo, Kumbi-Saleh, Djenne, Sankore, and Zimbabwe are mentioned (Ofeimun, pp. 5–7). Ofeimun's reconstruction of such memories is a form of Afrocentric leaning. His strategy is ahistorical and anti-colonial to western epistemology. It also provides an innovative way of questioning how history has been told to legitimise western supremacy to undermine Africa's essence.

Ofeimun offers ways of reinvention. The first is through myth and history portrayed through dance, memory and trance. These media provide Africans an opportunity to revisit their past and rewrite it. The second way is a geographical reinvention. What this suggests is that Africans need to rename, their geographical spaces; while geographically displaced people who were pushed out of their nations such as the English speaking part of Cameroun, the Yoruba speaking part of the Republic of Benin, the Fulani herdsmen scattered all over West Africa are cases in point and should be given a sense of belonging. The third way is epistemological. What this implies is that Africans need to rewrite and tell their own stories, themselves, for themselves and for the rest of the world. In producing this knowledge, Ofeimun offers an epistemology rooted in the idea that civilisation is not strictly domiciled in one particular region like Europe. A good example is what has been described as Pablo Picasso's ingenuity in terms of his mod-

ernist art form: cubism, which was informed by the civilisation of African art as underscored in the following essays: Chinua Achebe's "The Truth of Fiction", Leopold Sedar Senghor's Negritude: A Humanism of the Twentieth Century", and Abiola Irele's "In Practice of Alienation", among others.

By engaging history, Ofeimun debunks what Mbembe calls a "universal grammar" with which Africa has been narrativised in western discourse (p. 9). Ofeimun's position is contrapuntal to the Doxa and established orthodoxy of the geopolitical space (Western Europe). European discourse erases the possibility of a knowledge distribution that emanates from other local histories (Ghana, Yoruba, Mali, Zimbabwe, Djenne). Conversely, it has engendered the emergence of counter discourses like Edward Said's Orientalism, N. Y. Mudimbe's The Invention of Africa.

Ofeimun's poetry continues in the project of decolonisation embarked on by the likes of Franz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Nelson Mandela, Marcus Garvey, and W. E. B. Dubois. These are scholars who debunk the master narrative or historicity that favours or privileges Europe. There is a pedagogic undertone in Ofeimun's *UAS*, as it also intervenes in the nature of education we provide for the African child. The school should encourage their memory (history) of self and philosophy (logic). In the poem "Warrior", in *UAS*, the full articulation of the resistance struggle for the decolonisation of Africa is shown. Warriors here refer to Africans who stood against the marauding force of colonisation from Europe from Asia.

> We know more than blood rivers
> The rivers that Toussaint swam
> When the morning of the struggle took to open seas
> Rivers that Dubious saw
> When our century opened its eyes to the sun
> Rivers that Garvey sought to dam
> With two hundred million gone
> In the shipwreck of our sky (Ofeimun, p. 38)

In other stanzas of the foregoing poem, the name Nkrumah, Mandela are also mentioned. The purpose of such mention is to call attention to the struggle for the emancipation of Africa from the shackles of both external and internal colonisation.

A way of decolonisation suggested in the poem is evident in part one of *AFOR*; the poems "LIBATION I" and "LIBATION II", offer us an opportunity as readers to understand the custom of ancestor worship—that is, giving homage to ancestors—common within various part of Africa. In Africa, an-

cestors are venerated and also summoned via libation. The libation usually begins with a prayer by an elderly person in a community, using water or wine or liquor. It is a call or summons for ancestors to participate in community protection and other public functions. In the poems "LIBATION I" and "LIBATION II", the prayer is offered to the priestess of memory.

> We have to you, Priestess of memory
> On dream-tracks seeking the measure of a new day
> We have come to awaken our dead
> Because we love the unborn (Ofeimun, p. 2)

The purpose of this libation is borne by the need to re-invent a new self or to decolonize oneself. We must be alert to using the first person pronoun in the plural sense, "We". This refers to a collective voice. The libation is made because the present moment appears blurred and blind as the personae are, "in the shrines that blind history has nourished" (2). The blind history here refers to history of Africa as told by the likes of Trevor Roper. Blind also suggests that Africans lack true knowledge of their history. This has kept Africa at the liminal state, thereby denying Africans true selfhood. Thus, as a form of looking back to look forward, libation has a semiotic function transcending mere pouring of wine to include going back to one's root and source of knowledge to draw meaning. This enables the personae—"we"—to understand the past as "we are plodding back in time / because we love the unborn" (Ofeimun, p. 2).

The collection *AFOR* reminds the reader of the poem "Idoto" in *Labyrinth and Paths of Thunder* by the late African poet-activist Christopher Okigbo. The group of Africans offering this libation include cultural exiles, prisoners, as we see in the poem "BANTU POEM I", in *AFOR*, "we have come from exile/ diverse prisons and location" (Ofeimun, p. 4). In the third stanza of "BANTU POEM I", in *AFOR*, the ritual of libation and the feast in which it is carried out (the feast of return) is for the purpose of remembrance, "it is our feast of remembrance" (Ofeimun, p. 4) for the living, the dead and the unborn.

These exiles are culturally illiterate and unaware of the mighty deeds of Dingiswayo, of Shaka, or of Moshwheshwe as we see in *AFOR*, in the poem "Dingiswayo". We see a reference to history, of greatness and honour of the legendary Zulu chieftain—Dingiswayo—who mentored Shaka Zulu. This is crucial for Africa, since it provides proof of an African history replete with statesmen and nation builders, with glory and honour prior to the era of slavery and the infiltration of Africa by colonialists. In *AFOR*, the motive of

the colonisers is described in "DINGISWAYO", as "Powered by greed and impatience/A cannibal rash breaking the hymen of peace" (Ofeimun, p. 6). The colonialists are described as breaking that which holds peace in Africa, that is, the culture, norms, and taboos. The colonialists came and broke the bond of unity in Africa.

> From the Kalahari
> to the Tugela River and Delagoa Bay
> Strange drums and rattles descended
> As the white swallows fell
> Upon the beauty and bounty of our land
> seeking cattle to pillage
> They coiled like adders of the night
> In search of slaves (Ofeimun, p. 6)

While the poem "DISGISWAYO" narrates the incursion of colonialist "SHAKA I", in *AFOR* points to how Dingiswayo was vanquished and how Shaka takes over the fight against the colonisers:

> They took the lion, they forgot the cub
> They took Dingiswayo, they forgot Shaka
> Now the time is ripe to make the earth heave
> time to play for enemies to pay (Ofeimun, p. 9)

Still on the poem "SHAKA I", we are shown how Shaka strived to unite his people and nation, under the slogan that "we must build a strong nation" (Ofeimun, p. 9). In "Shaka II", from the poem *AFOR*, we see the eulogy to Shaka as a statesman, for "he was the chief /to whom all chiefs had to bow" (Ofeimun, p. 11). The drive for nation building in *AFOR* continues in the poem "A COMMONER'S CHANT", and in the poem "DIFAQUANE" the praise and eulogy move from Shaka Zulu to Mzilikazi, "Like Mzilikazi, the greatest General of them all/Fiercer than Shaka, from whom he plucked his nerve/He could tame buffalos and hold the guts of python" (Ofeimun, p. 14). A greater part of *AFOR* is committed to the oral tradition of southern African people. It explains the family feud and political manoeuvre of Mzilikazi, the son of the Kumalo chieftain Mashobane, whose territory later becomes the Zulu kingdom. Ofeimun also captured a violent upheaval inspired by Mzilikazi among the South African chiefdoms of the interior, which produced political consolidation in certain areas but left much of the central plateau practically uninhabited. This is captured in the poem "DIFANQUANE", in *AFOR* as evident in the excerpt, "He took to the open

velds, our Master-builder/Carrying many migrant nations on his back" (Ofeimun, p. 14). The line "he stood up to the white men roaming our land" (Ofeimun, p. 14) refers to immigrant Boers, or Afrikaners from the Cape seeking lands beyond the area of British control. The reference to Manthatisi refers to the great South African female leader of the Tiokwa people, the daughter of a chief. She became popular during the Mfecane and Difawuane wars.

In *AFOR*, The poem "MOSHWHESHWE" is an oral narrative on Moshweshwe (ca. 1787–1868). He was a South African king and founder of the Basotho nation. He is generally regarded as the doyen of southern Africa's diplomacy and champion for peace in the 19th century. Moshwheshwe is a leader driven by the need for the good of his people:

> All I want is for my people to sing
> The songs that never heard of war
> Songs beyond the pain of war
> Songs that will not divide our people
> Songs at home to strangers as to kin (Ofeimun, p. 19)

The idea of peace, continues in the poem "Lobengula". While in the poem "APARTHIED" we see one of the most horrendous forms of internal colonisation, which appeared in Africa known as Apartheid in 1948. This was after the Afrikaner Nationalist Party came to power in South Africa. The poems "APARTHEID: DEMOLITION DAY" and "APARTHIED: MOTHER AND CHILD" capture the travails of Africans in southern Africa at such moments. These two poems offer us a peep into the scourge of Apartheid. The black populations were subjected to various forms of government control and segregation stage by stage. This manifests in form of the racial discrimination against the blacks, in "the slum clearance Act" (Ofeimun, "APARTHIED: MOTHER AND CHILD", p. 25), the raids and demolition of black areas, "Bulldozer droning like monstrous insects/ ready to pound our hovels down to dust" (Ofeimun, p. 25), in areas like Sophiatown, Grahamstown, Sebokeng and Kwamashu (Ofeimun, "APARTHIED: MOTHER AND CHILD", p. 25). There is also in "APARTHEID: MOTHER AND CHILD", strategies the Apartheid regime in South Africa legislated sex, and racial breeding through the "Immorality Act" (Ofeimun, p. 27) which prevented sexual interaction between blacks and whites. From the poems "LIBERATION STRUGGLE", and "THE ROUND TABLE", in *AFOR*, we see the poetic construal of the activism and protest in South Africa in a bid to curb the monster called Apartheid:

We have been chosen by an age of struggle
To testify, to testify, to testify
We have learnt to join voice to voice
To stop our hearts from weakening
I and my acolytes of memory
Bound by a common backcloth of resistance
We testify…we testify (Ofeimun, p. 29)

Martin Meredith provides an interesting account of the struggles against Apartheid which the poem portrays as evident below:

> As the tide of African nationalism swept through Africa, white-minority government in southern Africa tightened their control, determined to bring it to a halt and to keep political power and wealth in white hands. To the white populations of South Africa, South West Africa, Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, the notion of African rule spelt disaster (p. 116).

It is important we place the emergence of Apartheid in historical perspective in spite of the evil it unleashed in South Africa. The Afrikaners who came into political power introduced Apartheid as a strategy of survival considering the challenges they have faced as migrants in Africa. According to *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Encyclopedia* the Afrikaner are South Africans of:

> Dutch origin or Huguenot settlers of old Cape Colony (founded in 1652)… they established self-sufficient patriarchal communities, developed their own language and subculture…they fought a bitter war with the British over right to govern frontier territories. Though defeated, they retained their old language and culture and eventually attained politically the power they had failed to win militarily. Having dominated S. African politics for most of the century, they were obliged to give up national power. Much of the country's economic wealth remains in Afrikaner hands. Today they number about 6.4 million (p. 21).

During the era of Apartheid, the Africans and the British teamed up to protest against it. The poem "LIBERATION STRUGGLE" in *AFOR*, shows that the protesters include children "who held the sun in bare hands" (Ofeimun, p. 31), students "who had no choice but to fight" and "set the township ablaze/ to light the path of peace" (Ofeimun, p. 30), women, men, white sympathisers who "had to fight in solidarity" (Ofeimun, p. 30). The

unifying and rallying word of the protesters and activists were "Amandla" and "awethu". "Amandla" means power and "awethu" means to us. Thus, for each time "Amandla" is mentioned, the people scream "Ngawethu" which means to us, or power belongs to us the people of South Africa, and not to the government whether white supremacists or their black conspirators. The poem "ROUND TABLE" talks about the process of dialogue initiated after it was obvious that the blacks in South Africa were adamant for a new South Africa for all South Africans, whether white or black. We see this in "We want liberation as a round table/ Where the wrongs done shall be righted" (Ofeimun, p. 36). This is based on a painful understanding that no one racial identity can offer full expression to what South Africa has become, a rainbow nation represented by the flag colour of red, gold, green and black colours. And that is why in the poem "THE ROUND TABLE" we see:

> We carry
> Our red, gold, green and black colours
> To turn arguments in conversations
> To go beyond the scorched harvest
> Bleeding millet and stolen gold (Ofeimun, p. 37)

"BANTU POEM II" offers a conclusion for a narrative which began in *UAS*, and continued in *AFOR*. It is presented as a journey into the history of Africa, and her experiences as a continent. A travel into the history of South Africa as a nation:

> We have journeyed far
> In the belly of time
> With feet of a million years
> Renew our eyes in fresh legends (Ofeimun, p. 38)

Ofeimun's engagement with the history and lore of Africa particularly that of South Africa, points Africa to the glorious moments of the past, just like the Negritude poets did, yet, in his engagement, he seeks to remind us of who we are for the purpose of living for today. Who we are as a continent emanating from:

> pride of the uBantu-from the Guinea Coast
> And the many-rivered debts
> To the Futa Jallon and the Kilimanjaro,

We who have braced the great floods of the ages—
The Nile and the Niger,
The Zambezi, Mfolozi and the Congo
We who have followed the ancient knowers (Ofeimun, p. 38)

Conclusion

This essay shows how Ofeimun engaged the resource of myth and history to recreate an African identity. The two poems are related. *UAS* begins and ends in *AFOR*. They both share similarity in tempo, yet *AFOR* is more musical than *UAS*. While history myth and politics are common in both collections, *AFOR* provides a musical tempo fitting as a great end for a story which began in *UAS*. It is important we note that our reading transcends mere looking at history to include identifying those events in history that informed the emergence of the texts. Thus, our method of reading could be said to be historicist in nature. And what has it got to say to the present state of Africa? It speaks of reinvention, of trans-modernity and also of charting a new course, not by an exaggerated romanticization of the past per say, but drawing inspiration from a past to chart a new course for the present. Apartheid has been dismantled, but there are still ethnographic conflicts in Southern Africa; this poem reminds us how such conflicts began, right under African skies.

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Situating Otherness in Chimeka Garricks's *Tomorrow Died Yesterday*

ABSTRACT. In 2010, Chimeka Garricks published his debut novel, Tomorrow Died Yesterday. Years after its publication, the novel has received little scholarly attention. However, it is a highly significant novel on Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta region. Its portrayal of the region has both aesthetics and topicality. This paper examines the depiction of otherness in Chimeka Garricks's novel. It argues that the nature of resource politics, as represented in the novel, triggers and perpetuates otherness in the Niger Delta. It also posits that otherness can be both a product and producer of violence and forms of resistance.

KEYWORDS: Garricks, otherness, hegemony, resistance, oil politics

Introduction

Though oil politics regularly calls attention to itself as a subject of tension and contention, the depiction of this subject in Garricks's novel has not got the attention it deserves. Garricks's work is an important novel that adds to the corpus of literary works on one of the world's richest deltas. The pessimistic tone of the novel's title is consistent with the region's history. Across centuries, the region has been a victim of global power equations that are tied to resource extraction and transfer: the transatlantic slave trade, the hunt for palm oil and ivories, colonialism, etc.

Thus, Garricks's *Tomorrow Died Yesterday* implies that the region's precolonial and colonial agony is still starkly manifest in its postcolonial experience. It is a grim story with a contemporary force or historicity full of gore and grief. Otherness is an element in the text. Scholars have observed that identities are constructed to operate as dichotomies or binary

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opposites. Andrew Okolie has explained that identities have little meaning without the "other" (2003, p. 2). So, by defining itself, a group defines others. Power is implicated here. When groups do not have equal powers to define the self and the other, the consequences reflect power differentials. The dichotomies of otherness are made to look so natural that we often believe them to be so, perhaps because they take after the natural binary opposites in life and nature itself: day and night, light and darkness, up and down, and so on.

Jean-Francois Staszak says that otherness "is the result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group ('Us,' the Self) constructs one or many dominated out-groups ('Them,' Other) by stigmatising a difference—real or imagined—presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination" (2009, p. 2). In Garricks's novel, otherness defines the relationship between the oppressed and their oppressors. The novel also indicates otherness in the modes of resistance that oppression provokes. Thus, this paper takes a two-step approach to discuss otherness in the novel.

Contextualizing Otherness

Garricks's perspective on the question of oil politics in Nigeria, is conveyed through *Tomorrow Died Yesterday*. In this context, it is the common people of the Niger Delta region versus the predatory group which comprises some leaders of Asiama (chiefs), the government, and the oil firm. Otherness, as projected by the predatory group, calls to question the humanity of the people of Asiama. In other words, the indigenous or native Others are denied their rights to personhood, peaceful existence, and access to natural resources, amongst other things. The subjugation of the Asiama people aims to withhold from them the right to benefit from the riches of their homeland and/or prevent them from participating in the geopolitical discourse that should naturally concern them.

The activities in the novel are deeply and precisely rooted in the oil politics of Imperial Oil. Its gas flaring and other forms of pollution have destroyed the social and economic life of the Asiama people. The flaring is harmful, of course. However, in keeping with its character, the government has turned a blind eye to the pollution of the environment. The government even provides Imperial Oil with soldiers to safeguard their operations and intimidate the people. The novel equates this gas flaring with the

Biblical hell, as conveyed through Tubo's statement: "Of course it's hell-fire, Amaibi!" Tubo says (p. 69). He also notes that "The pipe leads straight down to hell. If not for the fire coming out of the pipe, you can go down, go really deep, and see the devil himself" (p. 69). The comparison with hell is unequivocal. This passage is meant to help readers imagine the magnitude of the people's pain as they suffer from pollution, climate change, deforestation, and loss of aquatic life, among so many other ills.

The situation causes some individuals in Asiama to resort to diverse strategies and acts of engagement. Some adopt violent militancy as represented by Doughboy, the leader of the militant group known as the Asiama Freedom Army (AFA). His ruthlessness becomes well-known. He acquires a reputation for invincibility, built on bullet-defying charms. According to him, it is "a very effective way of sowing terror in the hearts of men", and it has "fuelled wild rumours and added to my myth: my own manipulation of my publicity" (p. 5).

There is also Amaibi, Doughboy's former schoolmate, who as an activist seeks dialogue with the government. He believes that dialogue is a means of settling the issues in the region. Regrettably, he is subjected to a great deal of government-sponsored persecution for attempting to question the government's exploitative interest in the region. And there is Joseph Peter, popularly known as Tubo. He lets us into some of the backstage deals carried out by government representatives and Imperial Oil. Given that Tubo is a staff of Imperial Oil, his revelations are quite informative and they provide first-hand knowledge of how the oil company operates. In his evaluation of Amaibi's prosecution by the government and Imperial Oil, he concludes that "Amaibi was, in many ways, more dangerous than the likes of Doughboy. He [Amaibi] was respected, informed, articulate, and always had a platform to rage from" (p. 11). Clearly, one of the author's major feats, as will be discussed later, is to juxtapose Doughboy's militant approach with Amaibi's.

Early in the narrative, the Amanyanabo and his Council of Chiefs sell Ofirima Island to Imperial Oil without recourse to or consultations with the people. The irony is that, in truth, Ofirima Island does not belong to only the chiefs. It is a public property. By selling the island, the chiefs dispossess the entire community of its fishing bay, and this forces the community's fishermen to relocate. The action also deprives young boys of "Maracana Stadium," their collective playground. This example of dictatorship and betrayal reflects the insensitivity of the heavily-beaded local chiefs and their Amanyanabo. The appropriation of a communally-owned property (arrogating to

themselves the right to negotiate, sell, and disburse the proceeds as only they deem fit) indicates how the Amanyanabo and his chiefs demonstrate their otherness. The Amanyanabo and his chiefs are the ruling class, they represent the state, they belong to the hegemonic forces, and they have placed themselves against the lower class (the subalterns).

Following information from Soboye about the sale of Ofirima Island, his younger brother, Doughboy, wonders where their father was. If all the fishermen have relocated to "Maracana Stadium", then their father should be there. Soboye proudly tells Doughboy and his friends: "Papa went to the Amanyanabo's palace to curse the Amanyanabo and his chiefs to their faces" (p. 65), to speak truth to power, so to say. Another truth, however, is that it will take more than random acts of talk, cursing or rant to bring about and sustain a change in power. Even Mpaka seems to realise this at some point in his development as a character when, toward the end of the book, Kaniye tells us that Mpaka has "decided that raining loud curses on them [the Amanyanabo and Chiefs Council] was no longer enough. Now at the jetty, he was trying to convince me to sue them for 'incompetence, stupidity, abuse of power and corruption". The triple-mark at the end of the quote is gramatically appropriate because there is a quotation within a quotation. (p. 250).

Although Mpaka represents the masses, it will take a much more concerted and coordinated effort for counter forces to supplant the ruling idea of the day and enthrone a new form of leadership. That is where Doughboy and Amaibi come in. That notwithstanding, small acts of defiance such as exhibited by Mpaka, Soboye's father, fertilise and wet the earth for stronger resistance to take root or sprout.

Like Mpaka, there are dissenters who prick the council from within. As events later turn out, Sir James (father of Kaniye and Dise) and two of his loyalists are later thrown out of the Chiefs Council and denied administrative power in Asiama. Catechist Akassa, Amaibi's father, is also technically barred from attending the council's meetings. If Sir James and Catechist Akassa can be described as forces of progress and voices of reason, it is because they are on the side of the people, and it is for that reason that they are removed from the Chiefs Council. Because Sir James and Catechist Akassa will not partake in corruption and sleaze, which is the order of the day, they are not allowed in the council. For the Chiefs Council, the two represent an opposition within the hegemonic class and the class moves quickly to protect itself by checking the "threat" that Sir James and Catechist Akassa represent. Both men are pushed to the periphery where the others (the outsiders) exist, away from the core where the interest of the powerful thrives.

There is also otherness based on ethnicity. An example of this plays out in the scene where Doughboy confronts the bodyguards of Brian Manning before Manning's abduction:

> "Where are you from?" I asked.
> "Nigeria, sir…" I shook my head. He knew that wasn't what I wanted to hear.
> "Sorry sir, Kano State, sir." He knew he couldn't lie. His accent indicated he was from the North.
> "Hausa man." I lowered my voice. I didn't want my anger to show. I continued slowly. "How can you, a Hausa man, be my brother? When your people were stealing our oil money all these years, was I your brother then?"
> I turned to another one who was face down on the floor. He was in the navy uniform. I kicked him hard on his ribs.
> "Hey, you! Where are you from?"
> "Eh…eh…Ekiti State, sir."
> "Yoruba man, are you my brother? My people have the oil, yet it is your people that have all the jobs in the oil companies. Your people refuse to employ my people. They say we are not qualified. Yoruba man, answer me—are my people not qualified?" (p. 5–6)

Militants, like Doughboy, perceive Nigerians of other ethnic extractions as threats, invaders, and oppressors of the Niger Delta region. However, the militants are not alone in this. It is a pervasive practice all over the country. It is not preposterous to say that, in Nigeria, wherever two or three persons of different ethnic groups are gathered, they know what ethnic otherness means. Canci and Odukoya argue that ethnicity "is seen as the most basic and politically salient identity of Nigerians" (n.p.). Otherness based on ethnicity is one of the fundamental causes of Nigeria's numerous setbacks. Given that ethnic otherness is weaponized by the state and its control elements, it is clear why Doughboy speaks so bitterly about his people's ethnic disadvantage.

From the Asiama community's perspective, the soldiers that are deployed to the region are invaders. The soldiers act with brazen impunity, callousness, and lawlessness because they are backed by power. In Nigeria's power dynamics, the South is perceived as the weaker other, and Asiama's delta region is treated like a conquered territory. Gorimapa, Rodman, and their ilk from the North are shown to be aware of this and they believe in its veracity. They know too that they are rooted in hegemony against the subalterns, the Asiama people.

When the army attacks Asiama, the soldiers get away with all the atrocities they commit. It makes a commentary on the balance of power in Nige-

ria. The ruling class will not hesitate to abuse the state apparatus to keep its hegemony and safeguard its profiteering. In other words, the growth and sustenance of violence and militancy, as forms of subaltern response, are triggered by the activities of the government and the oil companies. Asiama's masses do not believe that the country is theirs because the government treats them as outsiders. The government and the oil company oppress Asiama (and deny its people basic citizenship rights) because otherness is a weapon of control in the hands of hegemony.

Violence and Activism: Character Contrast as Otherness

At this point, it is important to take a more critical look at two major characters in the novel, Doughboy and Amaibi. It is necessary to examine their modes of engagement, violence and activism. It is another case of otherness. Same environment, similar experiences; but different approaches to a social problem. Yet, both characters are rooted in the story's milieu; both are shaped by society.

Doughboy is a product of his environment. He tells Dise, in the interview he grants to her: "The Slave Trade ended centuries ago, but I was born and raised in a different kind of slavery…What pushed me to become what I am? The slavery pushed me. The system pushed me" (p. 221). Doughboy represents the voice of the people. His militancy symbolises the decibel of the people's voices. His militancy also expresses the people's frustration with the state and its agencies.

In portraying Doughboy, the novel explores the psyche and sensibilities of militants in the Niger Delta. It presents them as an alternative approach to mere peaceful protests which are known to have been broken violently by the government in the past. It makes militancy more potent than random curses and shouts, such as Mpaka's, which have achieved little. Doughboy is a well-wrought character. He is complex in a humanly plausible way. He is a blend of kindness and violence. He is so selflessly kind to Belema, but he gruesomely murders Snow White. Early in the narrative, his courage, strength of will, and ruthlessness are revealed. As a young boy, in his conversion with his brother, Soboye, he keeps innocently referring to bunkering, which he has just been introduced to, as stealing. Nevertheless, he grows to be in charge of Chief Ikaki's massive bunkering operation. His early tendencies to bullying, dominance, and violence make this growth and transformation from Doye to Doughboy believable, even inevitable.

Doughboy's personal history and the tragic history of his family are meant to draw sympathy to him, almost justifying his cause as a militant. However, it is necessary to note that it is the weaponization of otherness against the people of the Niger Delta by the government and the international oil companies that have created the monster that Doughboy turns out to be. As a realist, Doughboy is aware that his actions may not change anything, but he is hopeful that they can inspire his people "to stand up and take what is rightfully theirs" (p. 220). Moreover, he does inspire his people.

In spite of Doughboy's activities, the novel shows that violent militancy cannot be the only approach to the problem. There is a need for intellectual activism. It has its own level of effectiveness. There can be another pathway to social engagement through a combination of activism, concerted media effort, public relations, and an excellent legal process. Amaibi is an example of this approach. He is, therefore, Doughboy's alter ego, and his suffering and victory (in the court) indicate that the novel shows that his approach is more enduring.

Amaibi is a man of ideas. He has developed and grown from within his society within the subaltern class. Amaibi is a leader with all the hallmarks of great leadership. He is understanding and accommodating yet firm with his convictions. He is fiercely loyal and can be trusted to stay the course. He has a forgiving spirit (like his father, who easily forgives the soldiers that blinded him). When a prison warder spitefully spits in front of Amaibi, and Kaniye gets angry with the man, Amaibi admonishes: "I said let him be. After all, I'm the one he is doing it to, remember? If I can forgive him, then who are you not to?" (p. 148).

Amaibi is honest. Kaniye advises Amaibi to lie in court to save himself from possible incarceration. Amaibi remains firm in doing the right thing. He prefers the path of honour and integrity. He tells Kaniye: "It takes the hardest form of courage, courage with conscience," to do the right thing (p. 210). And that is not the first time. Years before, when Amaibi was still very small, his father is believed to have told him: "Today, my son, you followed your conscience. It takes courage to do that. Always remember, courage without conscience is foolishness" (p. 75). It is this upbringing that makes Tubo tell his white bosses at Imperial Oil that Amaibi cannot be bribed.

Amaibi has always been a defender of the helpless, a voice for the subaltern. He is sensitive to the environment. When Doughboy needlessly kills a crab with a stick, Amaibi loses his temper for the first time in his life and gives Doughboy the fight of his life. He feels contrite after the fight and

he has the presence of mind to apologise to Doughboy. His early tenderness is matched with brilliance. As a smart kid on his way to becoming a sound intellectual, Amaibi is the one who explains to his young friends that the flame which Tubo refers to as hell fire is, in fact, a gas flare. He later grows to become an "environmental consultant and activist, a lecturer at the State University, and one of the most brilliant scientific minds in the country. He is known to have had a Ph.D. in Petroleum Geosciences from Imperial College" at "twenty-one" (p. 11). His expertise makes the fishermen rally around him. He is the soul of the struggle. Tubo best captures his impact and significance: "He had testified twice as an expert against oil companies in two oil spill cases, rubbishing the testimony of the opposing experts in the process" (p. 11).

Nevertheless, if Amaibi is the soul or, to use a more physical equivalent, the head of the struggle, then Dise and Kaniye are the arms and legs. When Amaibi is carrying placards and leading protests, Dise provides the PR and media knowhow that gives activism its edge and bite, and Kaniye provides the legal expertise necessary to keep the struggle alive. Amaibi synergizes with Dise and Kaniye. Thus, Amaibi, as a team player, works with partners who share a commitment to a lawful method of resistance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Garricks's representation of the oil crisis in Nigeria's Niger Delta region shows that there are oppositional forces, each reinforcing the dynamics of power and control through otherness. The region combatively challenges the oppressive action of hegemonic forces. Lack of employment opportunities and social mobility has caused many youths in the region to resort to violence like Doughboy.

Violence can easily become decriminalized in the eyes of the masses who believe it is proper to get even with the state and its instruments of oppression. This explains why the masses in the novel see Doughboy as their hero and many aspire to be like him. It is good that the novel offers Amaibi as Doughboy's other because it presents another character and a different mode of engagement. This conforms with Gramsci's stance, as Thomas Bates explains, that revolutionaries "must learn to distinguish between behaviour which is revolutionary and behaviour which is simply criminal. For even if criminality may be a form of rebellion against the existing order," we cannot "ennoble it with ethical approval" (p. 365).

Indeed, the novel uses characterization to great effect. Through characterization and other narrative techniques, Garricks has been able to explore the implications of otherness in Nigeria's Niger Delta. Characters serve their group interest and reveal their otherness. We see, for instance, the brutalisation of fellow Nigerians (Asiama citizens) by the military based on their perception of Asiama. It is the height of otherness when a powerful class unleashes the army on unarmed citizens. In a state that has failed to give its component units a sense of integration, otherness will be a trigger for state aggression and terror as it will be a provocation for uprising amongst the oppressed. That is a marker of a nation-state that, as Chinua Achebe says, is moving heedlessly "towards a world of bad systems, bad leadership, and bad followership" (p. 140).

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The Place of Pragmatics in Language: President Buhari's Speech on IPOB Paradigm

ABSTRACT. The meaning of any sentence depends on many factors which include the situation and context. This is however the purview of pragmatics that was hitherto a subset of semantics until recently. With the introduction of pragmatics, utterances are no longer randomly made, because, it could be misunderstood, as they have more meanings than they appear to have on the surface. The proscribed indigenous people of Biafra have been one of the major concerns of the ruling class in Nigeria. Both the Nigerian president and some state governors have ceaselessly given the arm forces orders to clamp down on the members of the IPOB, wherever they are found. This research applies John Langshaw Austin's speech act theory, Grice's Maxims, Samuel Ichiye Hakawata's Snarl (angry) and Purr (gentle / kind) in its analysis. This paper analyses one of the speeches of the Nigerian President on the proscribed IPOB using the pragmatic features such as: componential analysis- analyzing the components of the sentence, the pronominal. This study applies qualitative method in the analysis of the pragmatic features in the President Buhari's speech on IPOB. This paper discovers that the statement of the president was characterised with more of angry words than snarl words. It therefore recommends that leaders of fragile democratic countries like Nigeria should apply more of the snarl words than purr, fuming and irritating words.

KEYWORDS: language, president, IPOB paradigm, words

Introduction

Language is said to be the distinguishing factor between humans and other animals, as it is the means through which they communicate with one another. However, in language, there are situations in which utterances are made without recourse to the context of usage or the environment, leading to some form of misunderstanding. This is the reason for the introduction and study of pragmatics, said to be an aspect of linguistics which studies language use in context. Charles Morris defined pragmatics as the relation of signs to their users. Pragmatics is seen as a theory that is interested in the "conditions for the correct use of expressions and constructions of a given language" (Ken-Maduako, 2003).

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According to Nwala (2015), the term pragmatics is of both the Greek and Latin origins, meaning the study of the practical aspect of meaning, fully equipped with the knowledge of the environment, the style of the individual, and the state of mind of the individual. It is seen as being interested in the ability of language users to pair up utterances with the context of usage in mind (Tamunobelema, 2018). Pragmatics as a field of study is more interested in the connotative meaning and correctness of an utterance than the denotative meaning and truthfulness of the utterance. This simply means that utterances make sense beyond what they say at the surface meaning. The speaker usually decides the tone to use with recourse to the attitude of his audience and the purpose of the speech is equally important as it determines the choice of words and synthetic patterns to adopt (Ken-Maduako, 2003).

Theoretical Framework: Speech Act Theory, Snarl and Purr Words

The speech act theory which was propounded by Austin in the year 1975 talks about the power in every speech made by individuals. According to him, every speech performs a specific function and are divided into locution, illocution and perlocution, where locution is the spoken or written word, illocution seen as the intention of the writer and perlocution the future response expected from the receiver of the message as a result of what he or she has heard or read. Grice Maxims is essential to this work as it talks about the essence of communication which is meaning sharing. The maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner are essential in pragmatics analysis. Hakawata's snarl and purr words as propounded in 1991 is a theory in language analysis where the words are divided based on the individual words that make up the sentences. Snarl words are angry words while purr words are kind and gentle words.

Background to the Proscription of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)

Almost fifty years after the Nigeria civil (BIAFRA) war that lasted for thirty months, the agitation seem never to end. The war that started in July, 1967 and ended in January, 1970 saw the death of so many people,

mostly women and children. The war stated as a result of the decision of the decision of some people from the Igbo part of Nigeria to secede from Nigeria. The trouble started when a then military officer by the name late Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, came on air to announce a separation of the then Eastern Region to form their own nation with the name Biafra Republic.

In recent times, there has been a renewed agitation for the Republic of Biafra by some aggrieved people of South East, led by Nnamdi Kalu. With the rate at which the group was growing in number and popularity, it became pertinent for the people at the helm of affairs to defend the Nigerian nation. This led to the proscription of the group as a terrorist organization on the 20th of September, 2017. President Buhari's Speech on the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).

President Muhammadu Buhari who came back to Nigeria after a long medical treatment in Britain, gave his speech on Monday, August 21, 2017. President Mohammad Buhari spoke on the nonnegotiable unity of Nigeria. During a nationwide broadcast he said:

> In 2003 after I joined partisan politics, the late Chief Emeka Ojukwu came and stayed as my guest in my hometown Daura. Over two days we discussed in great depth till late into the night and analyzed the problems of Nigeria. We both came to the conclusion that the country must remain one and united.
> Nigeria's unity is settled and not negotiable. We shall not allow irresponsible elements to start trouble and when things get bad they run away and saddle others with the responsibility of bringing back order, if necessary with their blood.
> Every Nigerian has the right to live and pursue his business anywhere in Nigeria without let or hindrance. I believe the very vast majority of Nigerians share this view.
>
> This is not to deny that there are legitimate concerns. Every group has a grievance. But the beauty and attraction of a federation is that it allows different groups to air their grievances and work out a mode of co-existence.
> The National Assembly and the National Council of State are the legitimate and appropriate bodies for national discourse.
> The national consensus is that it is better to live together than to live apart. Furthermore, I am charging the Security Agencies not to let the successes achieved in the last 18 months be a sign to relax. Terrorists and criminals must be fought and destroyed relentlessly so that the majority of us can live in peace and safety.

The Analysis

Since the Indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) were proscribed as a terrorist group, war was declared on them by the federal government and the military. According to Ken-Maduako (2003), during wars, leaders speak comfort to their people, encourage their soldiers and abuse their enemies. President Buhari sees the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as an enemy of the Nigerian state. This was why he and the service chiefs declared war on them: Therefore, we are going to reinforce and reinvigorate the fight. We shall tackle them all.

In trying to buy the mind of some easterners and convince them to stop the sensation struggle, President Mohammed Buhari brought in the man the Easterners all respect, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu. He tried to persuade the people to stop the agitation and that the problem of Nigeria had been solved through their discussions when he said that:

> In 2003 after I joined partisan politics, the late Chief Emeka Ojukwu came and stayed as my guest in my hometown Daura. Over two days we discussed in great depth till late into the night and analyzed the problems of Nigeria. We both came to the conclusion that the country must remain one and united.

In the above statement, we find the use of the first person singular pronoun 'I', to indicate personal effort. We also have the first person singular pronoun 'we', to show communal effort and solidarity. He went further to deliberately employ 'verbal strategy' to show that he was talking with the consent of other peace-loving Nigerians:

> The national consensus is that it is better to live together than to live apart.

Again, president Buhari tries to talk the people into sticking with Nigeria at all cost. There is also a case of 'settled' and 'not negotiable'. Remember that the IPOB is seeking for a negotiation in the form of a referendum to enable them get their own country called Biafra. This shows the president's stand on the issue and how passionate he is against the separation of the nation:

> Nigeria's unity is settled and not negotiable.

Let us do a componential analysis of these words:

"Settled"	"not negotiable"
+ Agreement	- negotiation
+ concensus	- agreement
+ unity	- concensus
+ calm	- calm
+ Peace	+ force

Trying to be patriotic, he said:

> We shall not allow irresponsible elements to start trouble and when things get bad they run away and saddle others with the responsibility of bringing back order, if necessary with their blood.

Again, he uses the first person plural pronoun 'we' to show solidarity and 'they' to show the other people as outsiders. He addresses the IPOB as 'irresponsible elements', and troublemakers, because he sees them as the enemy of the nation. Ken-Maduako (2003), during wars, leaders speak comfort to their people, encourage their soldiers and abuse their enemies. He used the word 'elements' to describe them. Remember that the IPOB are humans with the desire to have a better life in their own country. If we are to examine the term 'element' through the componential strategy, we will have:

"IPOB"	"elements"
+ human	- human
+ struggle	- struggle
+ agitation	- agitation

He also brought responsibility and irresponsibility together:

"responsibility''	"irresponsibility"
+ responsibility	- responsibility
+ accountability	- accountability

He performed a perlocutionary act when he persuaded the military to live up to their responsibility. He also used his utterance to perform an action of instruction.

> I am charging the Security Agencies not to let the successes achieved in the last 18 months be a sign to relax.

President Buhari who was just returning from a long health vacation came with so much anger and hatred for the IPOB movement and just could not hold it back. In the words of Ken-Maduako (2003), language brings out our animal nature and habits. He used the words 'terrorists' and 'criminals' to refer to the agitators to show the level of hatred he has for them and to justify the proscription of the group.

> Terrorists and criminals must be fought and destroyed relentlessly so that the majority of us can live in peace and safety.

Doing a componential analysis of the words 'terrorist' and 'criminal' is imperative in this case to show the case of redundancy:

"terrorist''	"criminal"
+ crime	+ crime
+ extremist	+ outlaw
+ violence	+ civil disobedience

This shows that the sees the IPOB as a treat to the nation and that is why he declared total war on them and this led to the killing of over fifty innocent citizens of Nigeria. President Buhari as a politician flaunted the Grice's maxims of quality, quality and manner. In the words of Firth (1964) in Ken-Maduako (2003), language is referred to as the operator, switchboard and wiring that controls our social current and power. This means that, we regulate what we say using language. In his speech, the president did not give detailed information on what he discussed with late Odumegwu Ojukwu, he only gave a summary:

> In 2003 after I joined partisan politics, the late Chief Emeka Ojukwu came and stayed as my guest in my hometown Daura. Over two days we discussed in great depth till late into the night and analyzed the problems of Nigeria. We both came to the conclusion that the country must remain one and united.

We shall do an analysis on what Hayakawa (1964) in Ken-Maduako (2003) calls snarl words (angry) and purr words (gentle/kind) in President Buhari's speech.

Snarl Words	Purr Words
–	terrorists
–	criminals
–	irresponsible
–	elements
–	trouble
–	destroy

The chat above clearly shows that President Buhari's speech on IPOB was filled with anger, hate and violence:

> We shall not allow irresponsible elements to start trouble and when things get bad they run away and saddle others with the responsibility of bringing back order, if necessary with their blood.

Findings and Way Forward

This paper discovers that the statement of the president was characterised with more of angry words than snarl words which have never helped in solving Nigeria's problem but have rather compounded them. In a way forward, it recommends that leaders of fragile democratic countries like Nigeria should apply more of the snarl words than purr, fuming and irritating words.

Conclusion

Language is as powerful as the word 'powerful'. It can be used to build as well as pull down. In the words of Ken-Maduako (2013) "people first make a mess of themselves then they make a hell of noise (p. 114)". The agitation of the IPOB resurfaced as a result of the feeling of marginalisation and the rate of poverty and hunger in Nigeria, since the emergence of President Buhari. The best approach to the resolution of the agitation of the IPOB is a round table discussion that will see the people airing their grievances and making suggestions on the possible solution to their agitation. Like the saying goes, "kind words can be short and easy to speak but their echoes are really endless" (Mother Teresa).

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