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## **IN DENIAL OF FEMINISM: A CRITIQUE OF ZULU SOFOLA'S *WEDLOCK OF THE GODS*.**

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### **Abstract**

*It is not controversial to state that women have suffered untold hardship especially from the days of creation to the present. It is not also controversial to state that certain aspects of our tradition continue to deny women their right; continue to dominate women and oppose them without recourse to justice and/or her needs at any material time. Although the bulk of our tradition remains unwritten, their practice have been undaunted, more so when writers document such practices in their works. Interestingly, Zulu Sofola's play **Wedlock of the Gods** presents this scenario and as if that is not bad enough, Sofola has constantly denied feminism or that she is not one. Although this is well within her rights to do so, but the crux of the matter is that the play is replete with feminist tendencies worth considering. This paper criticizes **Sofola's Wedlock of the Gods** by primarily identifying feminist tendencies or the lack of it in the play. Using the modernization and radical feminist theories, the paper argues that Sofola rather than deny the ramifications of feminism by aligning herself to patriarchy, could have exonerated the actions of the heroine-Ogwoma, in her right to choose who to love and marry. The paper concludes that women must continue to fight against practices despite the challenges, not even death should pose as a hindrance.*

**Keywords:** Feminist, Feminism, Critique.

### **Introduction**

#### **Conceptualising Feminism as a Discourse**

I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is. I only know that people call me a feminist, whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat or a prostitute (Rowdothan 8).

This epigrammatic opening, at once triggers off a feminist discourse. This is because the question what is feminism? Or who is a feminist? Which many scholars do not have clear cut answers continues to generate controversies. Does Rebecca West assertion play out in our everyday life? Why do most people especially women not want to be identified as feminist?

Does society assume a feminist to be- unmarried, divorced, or separated or even a single parent? Can a woman under a man not be a fighter for the rights of a woman? Is it wrong for women to fight for their rights or demand for what belongs to them, refuse sexual exploitation at their places of work or even in their matrimonial homes? These questions continue to interrogate the feminist discourse and it seems to avoid this stigmatization woman bluntly refuse to acknowledge that they are feminists.

Interestingly before the term feminism came into usage, phrases such as “women movement,” “the woman question,” “women liberation,” were used. These were informal association of groups of women who had come together for a variety of reasons and with varying emphases to express and act upon their concern over the discrimination they were subjected to because they were female. These formal and informal association existed in various communities where women met together to discuss issues that relate to their marriage, children, husbands, farms and business, and how to forge ahead. All these women movements had one goal - equality. Equal educational opportunity, equal job opportunity, equal work for equal pay, and equal freedom from household tedium, equal control over sexual and reproductive functions.

For instance, in the 1890s women believed that they had a moral duty to improve society by gaining power through the franchise. Women's mission at this point was to bring their specific value into the political arena and make a better society. The Encyclopedia Americana records that the right to vote became the basic demand of feminist movements because the elections were considered to be the fundamental act of political life. The vote was essential because in the political arena, basic decisions are made that shape the patterns of society in which women live. Therefore, if women gained political power, they could use it to eliminate other forms of discrimination. (102). Women for instance, receive less than one-tenth of the world's income but do two-thirds of the world's work. Although earning less than men, they work longer hours, 2-5 hours more in developed countries, 5-6 hours or more in Latin America and the Caribbean, and as much as 1-15 hours or more in Africa and Asia. When house work and childcare are taken into account, women on average have 60-70 hours per week. According to John Illah in his article “Ochideche and self-empowerment: Otobi rural women” the daily chores of rural women in Africa, for instance stretches from 4.45am-9.30pm.

...between these hours, the woman is engaged in such physically and emotionally draining activities as taking care of

the infants and pre-school children, cooking, washing and cleaning the home and compound grinding cereals, mending, and laundering clothes, fetching wood and water ... (103).

It is amazing, how much labour goes unpaid. If women who form more than half of the world's population are continually subjected as beasts of burden, the development and growth of society will be static; Gastau Geiger a Swedish sociologist observed that "the position of women in society provides the exact measure of the development of the society" (Sullerot.14). Flora Nwapa observes that the woman's role is crucial for the survival and progress of the race this is true of all women across the globe, be they black or white... examples of the crucial role Igbo women play in their communities is the powerful role of women as Umuada (all daughters born in a clan, married or not, and wherever they may be) in burial and title-taking ceremonies and in peace-making, where they constitute the final court of appeal. Also there is the role of women as Umunwunyeobu (wives of the clan); women's various roles as priestesses and members of age-grades. Every member of Umuada knows where she belongs and what is expected of her. Members possess individual and group power but rarely act individually. For instance whenever there is a quarrel between husband and wife, parents and children the Umuada and the Umunwunyeobu intervened, as priestesses. Women wielded tremendous power in healing and predicting the future (527).

There was the exerting influence of the queen mother in some parts of northern Nigeria such Kano, Borno, Sokoto in decisions concerning choice of brides for their sons and in the running of state affairs. Bolanle Awe observed that in early Hausa society, women were the rulers as Magajiya. Daura for instance descended from a long list of queens –Queen Amina of Zaria is an example of such great rulers. In Borno women occupied offices such as Magira (Queen mother). Gumsu and Magaram, the official elder sister of the Mai (ruler) wielded tremendous power and influence. Other political offices were the Uwar Soro (the lady of the chamber), Mai Daki (owner of the room). Awe also observed that not only were women free to hold certain political offices within the government as mentioned above, they could rise to the highest position of the Sarki (8-14).

Bolanle Awe describes Kambassa as "a remarkably liberated woman, to use the expression of the modern champions of women's equality with men. She did not allow anybody to tell her what she could do or could not do. She did not believe that certain things were reserved for men and barred to women". No wonder she created a record in the history among the Niger Delta states as

the only woman to become amanyanbo (ruler) However, it is interesting to note that although women were not chosen to be rulers they were respected in their social system as the most important members such that children belong to the family of the mother and that of the father. In the religious sphere the supreme being or God was regarded as a woman. (29-35)

Among the Yoruba the position of the Iyaloja (leader of the market women) is a highly revered one; the Iyaloja not only superintended over the market but was a major political rallying point during election. Bolanle Awe notes that women were actively involved in trade and commerce, Efunsetan Iyalode for instance was conferred the position of the Iyalode one of the highest title a woman could hold because of her wealth and influence; though she did not go to war she made her contribution by giving guns and ammunitions to warrior chiefs on credit. She was also conferred with the position of Mogaji (leader) a rare honour for it is a position that is reserved for men. (75-76)

Looking critically at these activities and achievements of women, one question that arises is what is feminism? The word feminism has its origin from the Latin word "femina" meaning issues pertaining to women. Denying the term feminism or being a feminist seems not to hold water since in actual fact most women (Africans and non-Africans) whether consciously or unconsciously were/are engaged in this function of discussing the fate of the woman and constantly redefining the position of the woman whether as daughter, wife or mother. Though it cannot be fairly argued that every traditional 'group action' of African women was feminist in nature but any action group that seeks the rights and privileges of its members is feminist in nature. The term feminism is just a word that codifies or an umbrella that houses the various activities of women across the globe. The words-struggle, liberation, freedom, seems to run through all feminist discourse. This suggests a political nature of feminism perhaps even warfare and this is probably why most African women shy or bluntly refused to be labelled feminist because the African woman is not configured to initiate or seem to be engaged in any form of restructuring that would displace the man. The Aba women's riot of 1929, which women themselves call "women's war" where women bluntly refused taxation and the achievements of Olufunmilayo Ransome-Kuti in abolishing the payment of water rate and taxation by women are examples that quickly come to mind. These woman staged protest against the colonial masters, engaged in direct confrontation in manners likened to what we see today-#bringback our girls.

So many definitions of the concept have emerged that continue to raise so many controversies, for instance In an introduction to Helen Cixious, Julie Jasken opines that Helen Cixious defines feminism as: "That infamous "f" word that makes even those of us who consider ourselves well inside her wall, a bit uncomfortable..." Within the academic, Cixious explains, feminists have been unfairly labelled as "man-hating feminazi's and guarders of political correctness. (2) Similarly Sarah Daniels laments that feminism is now like panty girdle, a very embarrassing word. Once seen as liberating, it is now considered to be restrictive, passive and undesirable (Goodman 15). Pam Gem opines that "being labelled a feminist creates disadvantages for the artist... but what is the alternative when you seek a just society?" (Goodman 17). These definitions can make one deny being a feminist, to be a feminist does not make you a man hater. No wonder, woman within this field of study deny being feminists at various times, this would be brought to bear during the course of this paper. Others simply say that they are: "...feminists with a small 'f'". Olu Obafemi however, sees feminism in terms of bringing about social change in the relationships between men and women. Therefore, women should not feel apologetic for contributing towards the rectification of a problematic situation especially when the whole affair concerns her well-being. (102-103).

It is really appalling to see woman apologise or even begin by saying that they are not feminist at every opportunity they have, as though being a feminist is a plague or a contaminable disease with serious magnitude. Ama Ata Aidoo opines that whether women writers accept that they are feminists or not, and despite the disadvantages incurred when one is labelled a feminist, "feminism is a way of life, a doctrine to be wholly accepted". Mabel Tobrise says feminism is of a mongrel nature; but is primarily made up of principles and beliefs which guard and are basic to the pre-occupation of its believers. These beliefs are evident as ideology. Ideology, she observes permeates sex, politics, economics, arts, etc., and its purpose is to entrench in ideologues, some faith in those values required for the successes of the group and is valid within it. Sexual ideology is a determinant of the male and female behaviour. It is very intricate and its main precept is that woman is inferior to man and it maintains the order of things, while persuading the powerless that their powerlessness is inevitable. (3)

It is important to note that feminism is not simply a set of ideas. Its point is to change society, to transform the relations between men and women, so that everyone can have a greater chance to fulfil their human potentials. Betty Friedan defines feminism simply that women are people in the fullest sense

of the word, who must be free to move in society with all the privileges and opportunities and responsibilities that are their human right. She explains that feminism is not a theory about women's oppression, but a theory of human rights. It is a stage in the whole human rights movement designed to bring women into the mainstream. (Epstein & Goode 183). In like manner, Angela Miri sees feminism as the popular struggle of women for their liberation from the various forms of oppression they endure. The goal is the struggle by women for emancipation from a subordinate position to an equal position with their male counterpart. (168). Troil Moi sees feminism as a political project dedicated to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism. She distinguished feminism from: (a) Femaleness- a matter of biology and (b) Feminity-a set of culturally defined characteristics. Feminity and femaleness, form the source of differences, which exist between women and men in society. Biological sex stamps us as male and female, while culture tends to divide human characteristics and activities into masculine and feminine. Societies labels some activities masculine and regard them as appropriate for men, for example hunting, farming, warring etc, while others are labelled feminine and assigned to women, such as cooking, washing fetching firewood etc. This apposition based on culture rather than biology is referred to as gender. (3) However, as a political movement Moi argues that feminism has its own history which has unfolded in three cumulative phases:

- i. The demand for equal access to the symbolic order
- ii. The rejection of the male symbolic order
- iii. The rejection of the dichotomy between masculine and feminine as metaphysical. (4)

Moi notes that this history of rebellion and opposition to the social institutions that makes possible the inferiority of women has not been isolated from other forms of social change and this relationship has influenced both the ideology and the organization of the movement. Moi's political stand on feminism was aptly captured in an interview when she said: "...if we don't have anything to do with power, then somebody else will..." (4)Feminism among other things is about the need to reconceptualise power, understand it and differently see the creative potentials in power. Power connotes the capacity or ability to do and achieve what one wants, the means to cause another entity to behave in a manner in which it would not have behaved if the threat or application of action by the first entity were not possible. The position of power is therefore, a position of influence of one over the other. (99) Friedan sees the position of power as a very important one. She opines that if women are to achieve equality with men, they must have political power, women must become directly involved in the political process. This political activity is the "nitty

*gritty*” of self-determination of women. (Epstein &Goode 179)  
Ruth Shelly examines two aspects of feminism.

- i. the first aspect examines and identifies inequalities and injustices in the way girls and women are treated in particular societies and the disabilities and disadvantages which result from these
- ii. The second aspect asserts the value and values of women, the human dignity and worth of each individual women and also the distinctive contribution that women make to their culture (14-15).

Feminism, she explains points to the forgotten or submerged contribution of women in fields apparently dominated by men. If and when women rise up to re-examine and identify the inequalities and injustices in the way girls and women are treated there is no need to apologise. The conclusion of this discourse rests in Chimamanda Adichie's assertion “...if you believe in the social, political and economic equality of the sexes...and you believe in justice and fairness, you are a feminist...we should all be feminists...”(Ref).

### **Denying the Feminist Strand**

Flora Nwapa has made the point that women in Africa are in two minds as to whether they should refer to themselves, or let themselves be referred to, as feminist (Goredema. 37). “I don't think that I am a radical feminist. I don't even accept that I am a feminist .I'm an ordinary woman who is writing about what she knows” (Goredema. 38) .The above quotation by Flora Nwapa sets the tone for this analysis. Flora Nwapa occupies the position of being the first published female novelist in Nigeria. Her fictional universe is a world of women, her central characters are women, most of her secondary characters are women, and her themes revolve round women's daily activities within and outside the home, their cultural and religious inclination, Their observance and beliefs, individual and collective interactions with one another and with men. For instance in *Efuru*, *Idu* and *One is Enough*, Nwapa examines the question of childlessness in marriage, its attendant problems, especially in Igbo traditional society. In *Efuru* for instance she says “it was a curse not to have children... it was regarded as a failure” (Efuru p.165). In *One is Enough*, she says “what is important is not marriage as such but children... a marriage is no marriage without children (p.10). She reveals in her novels that in most African societies it is the woman who is to be blamed for issues of childlessness and she is subjected to all sorts of indignities. Looking at *Efuru* critically, Nwapa presents a very strong willed character that in spite of all

pain and humiliation did not wallow in self-pity but concludes that motherhood is not the only path to happiness and contentment. A woman can lead a life of fulfilment through selfless service to others. After being abandoned by two husbands, Efurum returns to her father's house where she finds peace and dedicated her life to service to humanity. In *One is Enough*, Nwapa presents us with Amaka an educated, loving and industrious woman who after six years of marriage is abandoned by her husband due to her inability to have children. Amaka however, breaks up with him, and has children (twins) for Rev. Father Mclaud, but refuses to marry him even after he resigned from his priesthood in order to marry her, saying "one is enough". Looking at the traditional Igbo society from where Nwapa was writing from what can be more radical than the stand of Amaka? First she was unable to have children for her husband. Any woman in the era and culture Nwapa was writing from was considered to be a man and suffered all forms of discrimination. Secondly, she engaged in adultery/ fornication by sleeping with a Rev. father and having children for him and refused to marry him. Raising children outside marriage was abominable but Amaka dammed the consequences. The issue of husband's potency did not become the issue in the prose, men were never seen as reasons behind the issue of childlessness-it is always the woman's fault. In a more conservative approach, Nwapa presents Idu and Adiewere, who after several years of marriage had a baby boy, but took four years before she became pregnant again, in the course of the pregnancy Adiewere, dies and Idu unable to bear the loss dies after (Yemi Mobola 19-29).

In a speech at George Town University Buchi Emecheta made this blunt assertion "I have never called myself a feminist. Now if you choose to call me a feminist, that is your business; but I don't subscribe to the feminist idea that all men are brutal and repressive and we must reject them. Some of these men are my brothers and fathers and sons. Am I to reject them too? (Goredema 38). Like Flora Nwapa, Buchi Emecheta's central theme in almost all her work is the woman. Her characters however adopt positivistic views in the crisis they face. Adah the central character in *The Second Class Citizen*, rather than just fold her hands in tears and self-pity took the bull by the horn and was able to move on despite all the odds against her- first she arrived when everyone was expecting a boy. Secondly, when it came to schooling, she was dropped in favour of her younger brother. Thirdly, when her dream of travelling abroad suffered a mishap-after working hard and saving enough money for herself, husband and children to travel abroad, she finds rather that she is to stay back in Nigeria; saddled with the responsibility of paying for her husband school fees, looking after herself and her children,

her parents –in –law, and paying her sister-in –law's fees. Rather than engage in direct confrontation and antagonism, she decides to be as cunning as a serpent but harmless as a dove. With that she succeeds in enforcing her wish by getting her parents-in- law to acquiesce to her joining her husband in London. Akunna in *The Bride Price* also showed the same strength and positivism. First her name means “father's wealth” the only consolation of the female child is her bride price”. Secondly, she did not abandon herself to be forcefully married off to a deformed complex ridden Okoboshi but positively contrives a way of escape. Obanje Ojebute in *The Slave Girl* is sold to slavery by her brother Okolie, but rather than remain there, she ensures her release. *In Joys of Motherhood*, she critically examines the rewards of motherhood on which so many premiums is placed through the eyes of Nnu-ego who had been trained in the traditional ways of her people on the belief that children make a woman. “She had had children, nine in all- how was she to know that by the time her children grew up the values of her country , her people would have changed so drastically, to the extent where a woman with so many children would face a lonely old age, and a miserable death all alone, just like a barren woman”. Nnu-ego rationalises that her own reward is not measurable in material artefacts as cars, clothes, and jewellery, but rather is predicated on the satisfaction of bearing them, of being the instrument of their being and education and so of their success. Her joy was to know that she had brought up her children when they had started out with nothing, and that those same children might rub shoulders one day with the great men of Nigeria. That was the reward she expected (Chukuma 3-15).

Zulu Sofola is the first published female playwright in Nigeria. She gives two reasons for the lack of literary output by women in the past:

1. The traditional set-up in Nigeria made it possible for men to be educated at the expense of the woman.
2. Women were more burdened with the humdrum of daily life than men; thus it takes extra effort on the part of the female to write

Zulu Sofola has indeed made that extra effort- she was the first female playwright in Nigeria and the first female professor of theatre arts in Africa and until her death, the head of dramatic Arts, University of Ilorin. She has authored many plays and critical works. She never believed in feminism, Sofola had always argued that it was not the traditional society that undermined the status of women; if anything; women in traditional Africa were well respected. What eroded the dignity of women was modernity. In an

interview she had with This Day Newspaper in 1992, Sofola declared that “the African system had never oppressed the woman.” (Olu Obafemi 60) This, however is contradictory to her earlier claim that the lack of literary output by women was due to the traditional set-up where men were educated at the expense of women. Indeed writing at the period which she did, Sofola would have encountered several problems for it was a man's world, hence one can assume that she had no choice than to write from a patriarchal point of view. Sofola's plays show an uncanny propensity for the magical, the mythical, the legendary and the traditional. Generally, she counterpoises the old versus the young, new ideas versus old. Her attitude seems to favour a preservation of the old even when it is untoward. In *Old Wines are Tasty* for instance, Akuagwu tells Okebuno who, after several years of sojourn both in Lagos and overseas, has become alienated from his people; “it is old wines that are tasty, not the new you have tasted in the Whiteman's country, wines brewed only yesterday, but know our wine so that you may know what to mix it with.” Most of her plays advocate a return to a past that could reasonably be regarded as decadent where magic, ritual and certain over dose of tyranny of age tower oppressively. In her tragic plays, the heroes usually demonstrate a kind of total insensitivity to the voices of reason around them. The characters fate are sealed, they shun all advice and move on inexorably towards their destruction. We find this in *King Emene*; *Old Wines are Tasty* and *Wedlock of the Gods*.

#### ***Wedlock of the Gods: A Synoptic presentation***

Ogwoma had been forced by her parents to marry Adigwu, because they needed her bride wealth to help cure her sick brother, Edozie. She is however in love with Uloko, whom she cannot marry because he cannot afford the money her parent demand. After three years of marriage fortunately for her Adigwu dies and been without a child, she considers herself freed. Rather than complete the period of mourning and be inherited by Adigwu's brother as tradition demands since she has no child for Adigwu, she becomes pregnant for Uloko her lover. Taboos are broken and the parental families are disgraced. Odibei, Adigwu's mother is filled with vengeance for her son, whom she believes was killed by the two lovers. She thus uses her magical powers to kill Ogwoma, only to have herself killed by Uloko who later kills himself to join his eternal love.

#### **Critical Analysis of the play**

In the play, *Wedlock of the Gods*, the prime concern of the playwright is adultery in the traditional setting. Two basic types of adultery can be identified in traditional African societies-legal and illegal.

1. Legal adultery- a man who is impotent permits his wife to have a lover and children from such an affair belong to him .Also a woman who is barren can marry another woman for her husband.
2. Illegal adultery- when a married man/woman has an affair with another married man/woman.

In the case of Ogwoma it is a bit difficult to categorise what she committed under any of these two categorises because her affair with Uloko started after the death of her husband, so in a sense she cannot be regarded as a married woman nor can a widow commit adultery? She is not morally bond to her dead husband however since Adigwu died of a swollen stomach it is either Ogwoma or Adigwu who committed adultery because Ogwoma could not wait for the expiration of the period of mourning before getting pregnant for Uloko.

Anwasia: Ogwoma, it is not a sign of good sense to look dry-eyed and clear –faced after such a forbidden act. No matter how much a woman loves a man, the gods forbid what you have done. You seem to forget that you are still in mourning (p.9). Herein lies Ogwoma's only offense that she had sexual relationship with Uloko during the period of mourning nothing else.

Odibei concludes that Ogwoma is responsible for her son's death when she declares that; "... it is now clear that my son died as a result of the taboos that harlot broke" (p. 16). Ogwoma's only offense is not waiting for the period of mourning to be over before her affair with Uloko. It is however interesting to note that it was not suggested or inferred anywhere in the play that maybe Adigwu could have been the one involved in adultery-in traditional African societies a man cannot commit adultery because he is entitled to marry as many wives as he pleases so the stone is always cast on the woman while the man goes free. For instance among the Yorubas the *magun* (a traditional spell) is only put on the woman by her husband to prevent her from sleeping around while he can engage in illicit affairs with other women. Also, among the people from the Niger-delta when a married woman has an affair her husband is not allowed to eat from her pot or have any sexual relationship with her if he does, death awaits him. The only way to avert this is for her to confess before his kinsmen and the gods. Odibei's statement aptly captures this "Adigwu died of a swollen stomach. A man who dies like a pregnant woman did not die a natural death. Someone killed him. (p.6) If Adigwu did not die a natural death or was killed by someone like his mother suggested

why should his wife be the chief suspect? This scenario plays out in many cultures in Africa, if a woman dies her death is taken as an act of God but when a man dies taboos are broken because somebody must be responsible for his death. Odibei's decision and recourse to magic to avenge the death of her son is the only method of redress and social control known to the society which the playwright handled.

**Odibei:** "I do not allow anything to end in my hands ... (pg. 16).

A cursory consideration of the circumstances behind Ogwoma's marriage, one cannot help sympathizing with her. Firstly, she was forced to marry a man she did not love since as she reveals they "... tied me like a goat and threw me away to man I hated" (p. 18). Ogwoma's mother gives reasons for this.

**Nneka** ...any good daughter with a dying brother would have told her parents to give her away to a husband and use her bride wealth to cure her brother...(p. 18)

This is the core of most traditional societies. Women were a source of wealth, traded like commodities, with no right of their own. The male child was educated at the expense of the female. Credit must be given to Ogwoma because like a good daughter Ogwoma marries Adigwu, fortunately for her, Adigwu dies and she considers herself free.

**Ogwoma:** ...Adigwu is dead and I am free (p. 19).  
But not so fast as Nneka reminds her;

**Nneka** ... Adigwu has a brother... (p. 19).

Even after Adigwu's death, she must marry his brother because she had no child for him hence she must bequest children for him through his brother. Ogwoma tries to free herself from tradition, only to meet her death in the end.

Sofola in this play and all her other plays upholds the subjugation of the female folk in particular and human race in general to old, outdated laws and custom. As a female writer she should have strived for the emancipation of the female race in particular and humanity in general from enslaving codes, icons and ideas. Her uncritical acceptance of tradition is a major influence in her works. The death of Ogwoma, for instance, is the death of the female trying to assert her individuality, as a woman she should have used her poetic

license to alleviate women from such primitive tradition. However, could Sofola actually be empowering the woman? Yes Ogwoma died but let's look at the character of this strong, determined and courageous woman. Forced by tradition to marry a man she did not love, she remained faithful to him praying...I prayed for the past three years for my god to deliver me from this marriage....(p.9). It was only at the death of her husband that she determined to move on rather than allow tradition destroy her again. She married Adigwu to help save her brother's life. This time around there was nothing at stake to keep her bound to tradition so she moved on. Most women lack the will power to do this-move on, but Sofola presents us with a character that does this. So whether she succeeds or not, a great feminist decision has been made-Ogwoma dares challenge the tradition of her people herein lies the position of this paper.

Although Sofola claims that she is not a feminist, her works can be subjected to feminist discussions. This work can be x-rayed under modernization/radical feminist discourse. Modernization feminism believes that men are leaders par excellence. In every society, they unequivocally accept the supremacy of men; they are careful not to attack men both in speeches and action, most of them remember to explain to every audience that "I am not a woman liberal". This could be their strategy for securing social, economic and political tokens at the pleasure of bourgeois men controlling the resources. This is also the views of Emecheta and Nwapa haven revealed so much injustice mated on the woman rather than continue their clarion call they both turn around and declare that they are not feminists. One distinct feature of all their female characters is that they are radical in nature –they disregard all obstacles on their way and make sure they achieve their aim even in the face of death. Sofola presents a very radical character in Ogwoma in fact a character worthy of emulation.

Being the first published female writer, Sofola would have gone through a lot of scrutiny to have her works published. This is because at the time she was writing it was a man's world and she probably could not have written anything different that would distort the status-quo. Irene Salami quoting Palmer opines that male writers have generally communicated a picture of a male dominated society; along this line women in literary works perpetuate a patriarchal order that inhibits women's empowerment. Sofola seems to be perpetuating this male ideology. By the time of her death she had given so many interviews that she is not a feminist and that the traditional system did not subjugate women. However, this is contrary to her view in the play *Wedlock of the gods* since it is not that Ogwoma and Uloko cannot marry, it is

just that tradition would not allow them to marry. The play has thrown up many questions such as; does the death of Ogwoma underscore the feminist tendency of the play? This question requires a dialectical approach; on one hand, killing Ogwoma could mean killing the feminist struggle, Ogwoma's death could mean that females cannot rise above tradition and live, this could be a subtle way of saying "women remain where you are". However on the other hand, whether Ogwoma lives or dies, Sofola has made a profound statement and has thrown many issues in the open for feminist discourses; here-in lies the position of this paper.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has observed that woman suffer and continue to suffer under structure, codes-written and unwritten, culture, tradition imposed on them by society. Any one of them that attempts to violate these traditions is greatly frowned at and meets deadly consequences; infact the paper has observed that no one seems to be on the side of the individual who decides to question these traditions. However one very important point that cannot be ignored and denied is the fact that this has opened the path for these issues to be interrogated and has generated so many discussions on the validity of these practices beyond the widest imaginations of the writer herein lies the focus of this paper.

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## **REALIZING THE FILM DIRECTOR'S VISION: THE ROLE OF A FILM EDITOR**

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### **Abstract**

*The art of filmmaking is a collaborative medium. While the scriptwriter, the director, cast and crew members work during the production stage of a film to set up the illusion, it is through the manipulation of image and sound that an editor can bring their own creativity to a film project. The basis and motivation for this paper is to examine the working relationship between the film director and editor; the synergy between the two that enables the director to realize his vision to tell a compelling visual story. This paper also engages us with the problem of complete objectivity of the director, a difficult task to accomplish in his selection of materials to use during editing as he has been subjectively immersed in the production. Drawing from the Collaborative Theory, this paper examines the roles of both the film director and the editor in post production. Whereas, the film director provides the editor with raw visual properties comprising various viewpoints, camera angles and shot sizes, it is the editor's stylistic choices of shots driven by his objectiveness, including his creative and imaginative editing techniques that bring about the director's intended symbolism and psychological impact the film would have on the viewer. This paper draws the attention of film makers to fact that editing is directing the film for the second time. To gauge the psychological moment and determine where the editor would make a cut requires the same intuitive skill as that needed by the director on location. In order to achieve a common objective and realize the director's vision for a film, considering the fact that editing itself is an artistic collaboration, this paper recommends that film directors should work harmoniously with their editors to compliment each other's styles as the end result of team work can far exceed the efforts of any one individual.*

**Keywords:** Director, Editor, Editing, Camera shot, Film.

### **Introduction**

We learn from film history that the early silent films were in black and white; a one long, static camera locked-down shot. To see motion on the screen with traffic on the street was just enough to amuse the audience as there were no real stories attached to the short films. The duration of the film was

determined by the length of the raw stock film loaded in the camera. Once a camera operator identified a vantage position where he had a clear view of what he wanted to film, he would mount the camera there in a stationary position and run the camera to record the entire event until the film in the camera ran out. The Lumiere Brothers, Auguste and Louis shot one such novelty actuality, a 50 seconds documentary film titled *L'arrivee d'un train en gare La Ciotat* (1896). The film's title in English is *The Arrival of Train at La Ciotat Station*. The entire film was shot from one static camera set up. In the early years of cinema, editing was done in-camera. This required the movement of the camera after a take to a new position in form of a medium shot which gave a much closer view of the subject or object. The resultant effect of such movements was a series of jump cuts from one shot to the next. Subsequently, improvements on the earlier in-camera editing gave way to the physical cutting of the exposed and developed film outside the camera. The ingenuity of film enthusiasts to edit the various shots into sequences of action to tell a visual story was the genesis of film editing which today is a sine qua non in affecting the audience perception of what they watch on the screen. In his films *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) and *Life of an American Fireman* (1903), Edwin S. Porter, an American filmmaker experimented with editing techniques as authenticated by Crittenden, "It was Porter who established that the inter-cutting of different shots not necessarily related to the same time and place could provide a basic for the structuring of narrative through editing (2). After a film has been shot, the raw material undergoes the final stage of production which is known as editing. The film editor selects the different shots, combines them together into sequences in a compelling narrative form which make up a complete film.

There is this popular adage in the film industry that says, "Good artists borrow, great artists steal". This is most apt here because the industry benefits and grows from one another's experience. In his films, *Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Intolerance* (1916), D.W. Griffith advanced his cinematic method and editing techniques. Jullian Holt recons that:

The challenge was to whether the audience would accept the use of close-ups, moving camera and the juxtaposition of images in the new form of motion picture story telling. However, these concerns were unheeded due to the overwhelming enthusiasm and praise for what soon became known as "cinema", which culminated in Griffith's masterful adoption of cinematic and editing technique in his two epic films *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Intolerance* (1916).

<https://researchbank.swinburne.edu.au>>...

Griffith is acknowledged for his immense knowledge of visual story telling through his use of close-up, parallel editing, overlapping action and camera movements. It is important to note that the impulsion to move the camera has given birth to the language and grammar of film as seen in the various types of shots which according to Brownlow is what initiated the art of storytelling through editing. Brownlow concedes that Griffith was the master of editing and his film the *Birth of a Nation* (1915) was the first feature film to exploit fully the power of editing (281).

Later years saw the emergence of the Soviet Cinema with Sergei Eisenstein and Vsevolod Pudovkin as Pioneers of the theories of “montage” which literally means cutting, assembly, installation; which is a unique radical film editing technique. This is achieved through the juxtaposition of shots to arrive at a new meaning with the visual narrative information presented in a condensed manner. As a student under the tutorage of Kuleshov, Eisenstein believed that conflict was the basis of all art hence the use of montage as a dialectical means of creating meaning. Eisenstein's montage theory is vividly demonstrated in his film *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) in the legendary Odessa steps sequence. You may not be wrong to conclude that this type of cutting has evolved into the present day splicing of different shots to manipulate time and space that influence the viewers' perception, emotional and intellectual responses to images on the screen. Similarly, Stanley Kubrick's *A Space Odyssey* (2001) employs montage sequences to show man's initial evolution from apes to humans. With the evolving technologies in science and the arts, more filmmakers have carried out numerous experiments in camera movements, sound and editing. Alfred Hitchcock however was the first exponent to explore this technological ventures in his film *Rope* (1948) a psychological crime thriller. The film editor William H. Ziegler made a total of 10 cuts in the entire movie as well as hidden dissolves, superimpositions and overt hard cuts. The film is famous for its use of extended takes. Today, film editing is highly regarded as an important part of the creative art of filmmaking as it contributes tremendously to shaping the content, aesthetics and our understanding and interpretation of visual narratives.

This brief history of film editing sets the stage upon which we can all appreciate the import of editing as confirmed by Gary Anderson:

Sergei Eisenstein, Alfred Hitchcock and other great film directors have become fixtures in editing history for their

unique methods of framing and sequencing shots and for their innovative pacing and transitional techniques. Like their film counterparts, video directors and editors face three fundamental post-production decisions: They must select the shots they will include in the edited program; they must decide on the sequences of shots that best convey the message they are trying to communicate; and they must determine how to time and space the shots to create the exact effect they are after (9).

The role of the film director who is responsible for the dramatic structure, pace and directional flow of visuals is very crucial as the editor totally depends on the director's ability to translate the written script into specific sequences of visual images and sounds.

### **Why edit a film?**

All professional filmmakers know that films are not shot in the proper order a script is written or the way a story is told. A film may be shot at several locations and out of sequence only to be sequentially arranged by the editor during post production. The story is put together from shot to shot to guide the attention of the audience as they watch the flow of the story without distractions so as to attain maximum impact and entertainment. Ken Dancyger believes that “the art of film editing occurs when two or more shots take meaning to the next level in form of excitement, insight, shock or epiphany of discovery” (xix). An edited film therefore, stirs up the viewer's emotions with wrap attention as the story progresses from the individual shots, scenes and sequences that make up a complete film. Just as a range of choices exists for the cinematographer when manipulating light and using camera, so film editing offers many possibilities. Nathan Abrams opines that:

Editing also helps to clarify situations by joining together shots from different angles to provide us with different perspectives, thereby creating a fuller understanding. This is common during conversations where a shot/reverse shot edit is frequently used. The shots themselves are often “over-the-shoulder shots” in which we see part of the back of one person's head and shoulders and the front of the other person talking to them. The editing provides the understanding of the partial relationship between the characters while also giving information on movement and facial expression (105).

In view of the above, a film director while on location visualizes the shots and directs the cinematographer appropriately on selected camera angles, viewpoints and camera movements. All these are carefully considered aesthetically to achieve clarity, emphasis and vividness that would enable the editor achieve the film director's intended symbolism and psychological impact the film would have on the viewing audience.

### **The film director's role**

The role of a film director is all encompassing. A film director is a member of a production team responsible for the film's artistic and dramatic aspects. He directs the actors and the technical crew. A typical film director creates, translates, improves, interprets and visualizes the script as well as creates over all vision of the film's outlook and appeal. A good director who knows his onions involves everyone in the art of creation because film being a collaborative art expects the director to go an extra mile to win and command that creative professional respect from the cast and crew. Management of human resources is a great plus to a director who empowers his cast and crew to creatively collaborate to achieve tangible results on a production. As recognized in the film industry, a good director is a "jack of all trades" and as such, a film director is expected to acquire creative and technical skills in filmmaking from preproduction to postproduction.

### **The Director/Camera operator collaboration**

As a creative visual interpreter of the script, it is the director who calls for the shots. The "shot" or "take" is the building block of a scene from which a film is made. A single uninterrupted series of frames exposed by a motion picture camera or recording by a video camera from the time a camera is turned on to record and when it is turned off to stop recording an action or an event; from when the camera runs, camera stops is known as a "take" or a "shot". It is the camera operator who records these shots as envisioned by the director. In all creative work of shooting a film, the director ensures that the camera operator shoots the event from various camera viewpoints and angles to avail the editor with enough raw footage to tell a story. The footage covered and given to the film editor is far more than the eventual length or duration of the film itself. The director ensures that the camera operator records from the various selected viewpoints bearing in mind that the communicative effect of each shot is quite unique as it describes the importance of character, his relationship with others in the same scene, his state of mind or his immediate intention. It is necessary to list and explain the various characteristics of the different shot sizes categorized by the size of the image contained therein for us to comprehend that these shots are meant to communicate different

messages to the viewer when they are finally edited into a visual narrative form. These are the primary types of shots frequently used in production.

### **Long shot**

This is a picture, image or object recorded or taken with the camera mounted at a considerable distance from the subject. It is a shot including the whole scene. It is sometimes called an establishing shot since it depicts the entire area where the action takes place.

### **Medium shot**

It is a shot taken with the camera not so far away from the subject as in the long shot, and not so near as in a close-up. However, when photographing a standing person, the bottom of the frame will cut off the person around the waist area.

### **Close-up shot**

This is a shot taken close to a subject and covering only a small area. When filming persons, the shot displays the head only. This could also be any detailed shot where the object of interest takes up the majority of the frame as details are magnified to fill the screen.

Kindem and Musburger corroborate that:

The director's aesthetic intentions regarding combination of images are fully realized during editing. A good editor is both a practical problem-solver, who comes to grips with the limitations of the visual material that the director has provided, and a creative artist, who sometimes reshapes and improves the material through the use of imaginative editing techniques (22)

The above thoughts by Kindem and Musburger justify the need to give the film editor enough material to use while editing as inadequate coverage will only lead to chaos at the editing stage because not enough film footage was made available to the editor to work with. To avoid such professional oversights, most film directors resort to the master shot or master scene technique so as to have enough coverage of the scene from different perspectives.

### **The master shot/master scene technique**

This shooting style gives the film editor much more than required film footage as the scene is covered from various viewpoints and perspectives. The

scene starts with a long shot which establishes the relationships and position of characters within the frame and the environment. The action in this scene is recorded from the beginning to the end in one single take. Next the action is repeated and covered from a different camera angles with a new shot size. The whole process is repeated as in the long shot where the camera runs from the beginning of the action uninterrupted to the end. The same process is repeated in a close up session where necessary close-up shots are recorded. In view of the fact that the same action can be repeated almost indistinguishably, it is also possible to secure the cut-in shots as well as cut-away shots which would come very handy for the editor in the post production process. The master scene shooting technique also enables the camera operator cover an event from different viewpoints by using such camera angles that would involved the audience in sharing a particular character's perspective on the action. Such a viewpoint is deliberate as it enhances the viewer's identification with the character's psychological or philosophical point of view. The film editor can only perform 'wonders' if these shoots are provided by the director while shooting on location. St. John Marner reckons that a chosen viewpoint is one of the most dramatic tools a director may use to assist the editor capture visually the importance or insignificance of a character on the screen:

The viewpoint selected by the director is an important dramatic tool at his disposal. The angle at which we look at characters in a motion picture is itself a significant part of the narrative since it is capable of describing the importance of characters, his relationship with others in the scene; his stage of mind; or his immediate intention. For this reason, knowledge of significance of camera angles is an essential part of the director's vocabulary even though he will have an operator to place the camera (115)

From the above, it therefore follows that the visual effect of each shot is quite distinct and has its own place in the dramatic texture of the film as seen in the following camera viewpoints.

### **Normal viewpoint**

Camera is positioned at eyelevel of the actor either subjective or objective.

### **High angle shot**

The camera is placed high above looking down at the character it tends to diminish the character's strength and importance thus making him look weak, vulnerable, unremarkable, impotent, harmless etc.

### **Low angle shot**

The camera is placed low and tilted up to the actor thus making the audience look up to the actor or object. This signifies importance, power, authority, strength, impressive, potent, menacing, victory etc.

These are some of the creative choices open to the film editor while editing but the film director must provide the footage to enable the editor realize the director's vision and tell the story in a visual manner that would be captivating enough to appeal to the emotions and satisfaction of viewers.

### **The film editor at work**

From the Russian film theorist Sergei Eisenstein, we understand that the basic principle of montage (cutting) is collision. Eisenstein wanted shots to shock the audience, to make them feel what he wanted them to feel. Out of this collision, the audience would "Synthesize" the meaning he intended. The word editing is used as a synonym for cutting. The editing process of a film places high demand on the editor to acquire, organize, review and select, assemble, rough and fine cut, picture lock, master and deliver the film for distribution and exhibition. This process involves the separation and joining together in a narrative visual story form all the shot materials provided by the director. Dan Selakovich supposes that "an editor has to know film grammar, screen structure, acting, directing as well as the tools that we are known for: pacing and emotional impact. A director shouldn't cut his/her film because of this: objectivity". At this juncture, both the film director and the editor sit and work together in the editing studio with the understanding that the end result of two of them working harmoniously together can far exceed the effort of any one individual.

The script writer writes the story, the film director translates those written words into a visual narrative but it is the film editor, who is the final story teller. He works together with the director to put finishing touch to embellish the entire efforts of the cast and crew into a film. Marc Hardman is both a writer and film director. According to him:

As a writer and director, I always want to have a good editor on my films... may be ESPECIALLY as I write and direct! A good editor is your greatest collaborator on telling your story and a close relationship is vital. Complete objectivity is impossible for the director. Even down to small but vital details such as the physical geography of the set. The director has spent hours on the set or location with the actors and knows every inch of it.

However, only the editor can view the raw material, the rushes and know if that physical geography is clearly represented...or if it indeed needs to be. The editor's mind is only married to the characters and the story, where as the director's can sometimes be married to cool shots, attractive locations or the 'lead's best side!' The editor is there to maneuver them away from these distractions and back to the story.  
<https://shootingpeople.org>>view

The above views expressed by Selakovich and Hardman both of whom are film directors and editors testify to the fact that film directors may be so emotionally attached to both the shots, actions and the entire performance during the shoot that they may be set at a disadvantage of not being objective in their choices of shots hence the need for a second opinion which is the film editor. This strengthens our earlier position that filmmaking is best done in collaboration as professionals would agree that good creative collaboration can only be achieved through mutual professional respects geared towards the success of the film to the delight of the director, editor and the viewing public. Film editing may therefore be seen as an artistic collaboration a director needs to communicate the vision they want. When a director works alongside the editor, it makes for a stronger understanding and comradeship to which the end result is a fantastic film. No wonder then that in the professional world of filmmaking, directors patiently sit with their editors and work hand in hand which confirms the old adage, 'being too close to the trees to see the wood' is a truism that another pair of well horned and skillful eyes is always best.

The responsibility for editing a film lies squarely on the ambit of the editor. While shooting on location, the film director ensures that the cinematographer takes the shots from different angles, viewpoints in order to view an event from different perspectives. It also enables the film editor to select these shots and combine them smoothly into sequences which create a finished motion picture film. In making transitions from one shot to the next is very important that the cuts are not noticeable as it is not only distracting but also affects pictorial continuity as Annttte Kuhn observes; "continuity editing establishes spatial and temporary relationships between shots in such a way as to permit the spectator to 'read" a film without any conscious effort, precisely, the editing is 'invisible' (40). It is therefore essential that shots support each other and flow smoothly from one to another and that our attention is not drawn to the edit points. An editor's job is no more limited to the joining up of scenes than a poet's to the rhyming of words. Both are

essential functions as well as mechanical stages in a creative process. According to Kevin Brownlow:

The director controls the action and judges the point at which it should occur. So does the editor. The editor's field of operation is narrower, because he has to work with what he has been given. If a director is dissatisfied with the contents of a scene, he can augment, or subtract from it, and then reshoot. The editor has to put up with what he has, or discard it. But by careful placing and selection, he can transform an inferior scene into a perfectly acceptable one. With the director and the cameraman, the editor is one of the three major contributors to the quality of a motion picture; he is capable of destroying a well-directed film and of rescuing poorly directed material (23).

Mark Travis believes that a good film editor is one who listens, a supporter and a healthy challenger who the director should engage early enough for the success of a film project. He asserts:

Involve your editor as a collaborator and guide in your story telling process long before you hit post production; dream together about the looks, rhythms and designs of each scene. Let each potential editor tell you the story of your film as he sees it visually. Have him speak in emotional rhythms, pacing and patterns. Editing is more than just cutting your picture; it's overseeing the assemblage of your entire movie which includes the music and sound effects. You want an editor who understands and appreciates the power and significance of music and who has an ear for sound effects, both realistic and non realistic (133).

The working relationship between the film director and the editor is paramount to the success of a film project. This collaboration is necessary because a good film editor through pacing, choice of shots, use of sound and tempo can create tension, which engages the audience. Besides, film as a collaborative medium cannot be successfully created by a single consciousness. It is in this wise that this paper highly recommends that the director of a film should intentionally engage and pull the creative and technical know-how of the cast and crew together to put on the screen the exceptional entertainment that would thrill and hold its audience spellbound.

## **Conclusion**

In concluding this paper, it is pertinent to stress that knowledge of working tools alone does not make one a good director, editor or camera operator. How these instruments are used as tools to visually communicate and affect a people's psyche as demonstrated in the use of montage, juxtaposition of images and the psychology of camera angles is a clear indication that creative camera shots are an effective way to enhance visual communication. To ensure that the film editor actualizes the director's vision there has to be a bond of collaboration between the two in terms of professional needs. While the director wants a perfect edit that is flawless, the editor requires shots that are professionally composed from different camera angles and viewpoints with enough materials to select from as editing offers many possibilities to the film editor. It is often said that if you give film footage to different film editors without any direction, you should expect five different versions of the story. From the foregoing, it is very clear and imperative that a film director works together with the editor during post production; with creative synergism, the director's vision for a film will be potentially realized.

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## **MUSIC PROMO AND MARKETING IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

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### **Abstract**

*The rising influence of social media in music promo and marketing is an increasing concern among musicians in Nigeria. The purpose of this article is to analyze how social media influences promo and marketing strategies for attracting audiences in Nigeria. The Nigerian music industry has gained global recognition since the emergence of social media. Social media has changed the manner and ways, music communities interact with themselves in terms of advertisements, music promo, and music marketing etc. Music practitioners have also created a closer community between themselves and their followers. It has redefined and shaped the music marketing strategies likewise the social media has enabled the digital marketing of indigenous music to the world with just a click of a button. Amongst the diverse social media platforms on the internet, the focus here is on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube, how they are deployed in promoting Nigerian musical content to the world. The conclusion reached is that social media has completely changed many business tradition including music promo and marketing. Many Nigerian artistes have taken advantage of this business model to sell their music to the world.*

**Key words:** Music, Marketing, Digital

### **Introduction**

The success of artistes is hardly any longer measured in how much money is made on their albums or during a tour. Today, artistes are expected to have not only a presence in the real world but also in the world wide web known as the internet. Fans are now demanding relationships with their favourite bands because of these social networking sites.

From its early days in the late 1980's through the early 90's and onward, the internet has rapidly metamorphosed from being a platform for mainly sending/receiving emails and the World Wide Web to a highly complex multipurpose social media as we have it today. In its early days, the internet might have not provided a wide platform for music production and consumption perhaps until the advent of the social media technologies. As the digital age encroaches on daily life, consumers are demanding the music

industry to keep up with the unfolding changes and challenges. The creation of social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, Myspace, Twitter, Wechat, Palmchat, and a host of others have allowed music to go beyond the shores of Nigeria with just a click of a button and also promote and sell musical products and services to the world.

Before many people got connected to the World Wide Web, the music scene in Nigeria was a very different place. Twenty years ago, consumers relied more heavily on CDs, The Charts, and the radio. It was difficult in those days to market music in Nigeria. Some of the marketing difficulties musicians had to grapple with include:

- i. Moving their products to other parts of the country,
- ii. Taking much efforts to take a music tour in the country and gaining popularity,
- iii. Musicians bore the cost on their shoulders as there were a few record labels in those days that managed musicians and the booking of events,
- iv. Getting constant airplay on radio and TV stations.

However, social media has become an invaluable tool in music promo and marketing. It enables music makers to connect with consumers and to gain fame and fortunes.

### **Traditional Music Promo and Marketing Model**

Saddie Stafford states that “the old model for the music industry allowed the artistes to make the music and then pass it off to their respective record labels for onward promotion, distribution and marketing their work to the masses” (12). Music marketing's goal promotes the artiste and the music promotion promotes what the artist does. Music promotion in the time past consist of printing of posters, flyers, radio spots, distribution of records across the country and erecting billboards. Michael Margiotta states that “From the early 20th through the early 21st century, the music industry maintained roughly the same business model. This traditional model included the mass production, promotion, and distribution of recorded material. Record labels would identify and develop artists, record music in professional recording studios, manufacture physical albums (vinyl, cassette, or CD), promote the albums in traditional media, and distribute the albums via physical record stores.” (5) As noted above, some of the traditional media outlets used in those days were the television radio billboards and human interactions.

One of the record label that thrived before the advent of the digital age is Rogers All Stars which was founded in the 1970s by Romanus Nwaemena

Okonkwo. The label signed some artiste such as Bright Chimezie, Prince Nico Mbarga and Rocafil. Prince Nico signed on to Roger All Stars as a result of a fallout between him and his former label EMI due to the cease in production of his Album. All the artiste in the label have to follow the traditional way of music promo and marketing.

### **Digital Age and the Social Media**

Adeyinka Tella opines that “the digital age otherwise referred to as the Information **Age**, a historic period in the 21st century characterized by the rapid shift from traditional industry that the Industrial Revolution brought through industrialization, to an economy based on information technology (71). The Information Age is formed by capitalizing on computer microminiaturization advances. This evolution of technology in daily life and social organization has led to the fact that the modernization of information and communication processes has become the driving force of social evolution. Some of the notable features of the digital age include:

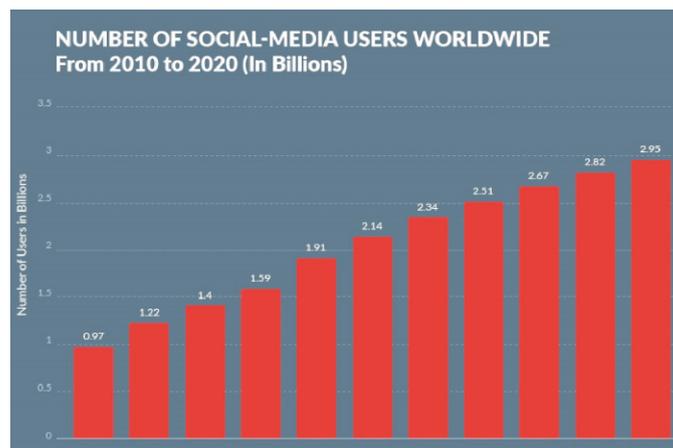
- (i) Interactive: it allows users to interact with the computer and people. This could be in terms of media fluency, collaboration, exchange of ideas and experiences, the decline in face to face interactions etc.
- (ii) Global: there is interconnectivity around the globe, which removes traditional geographical barriers.
- (iii) Technological: this provides limitless avenues to acquire knowledge and threads to personal wellbeing and cyber security.
- (iv) Innovative: it gives room for efficient problem solving, digital evaluation, creativity, expansion of job requirements, inquiry learning etc.

Danah and Nicole Defines Social network sites as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site” (221).

The social media plays an important role in mobile app marketing. Social media helps users to reach a much wider, sharply targeted audience, who are bound to be interested in what has to be offered to them. What makes social media sites unique is that they enable users to articulate and make visible their social networks. This can result in connections between individuals that are not necessarily looking forward to meeting new people; instead, they are primarily communicating with people who are already a part

of their existing networks outside of the social media e.g. classmates, co-workers, family members, etc. Due to the attractive nature of social media platforms, they are designed in such a way that many individuals find it difficult to stay away from them because, perhaps of their addictive features. Nicholas Johnson writes that social media has become an incredibly seductive realm throughout the globe. Through its many enticing forms of communication and entertainment, it attracts steady followers from virtually all age groups on a regular basis (par 8).

Johnson also asserts that active social media users now registered at around 2.51 billion people globally. Moreover, the number is still growing on a daily basis. It is been postulated that this numbers will keep rising annually (par 13). The chart below gives the number of social media users from the year 2010-2020 (sourced from Live Stats).



The chart below shows the total number of social media users and their ranking as of December 2016 and was sourced from Internet Live Stats.

Rank	Most Popular Social Sites	Estimated Monthly Users	Penetration
	<b>TOTAL INTERNET USERS</b>	<b>3,494,000,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
1	Facebook	1,790,000,000	51.2%
2	YouTube	1,000,000,000	28.6%
3	Instagram	500,000,000	14.3%
4	Twitter	313,000,000	9.0%
5	Reddit	234,000,000	6.7%
6	Vine	200,000,000	5.7%
7	Ask.fm	160,000,000	4.6%
8	Tumblr	115,000,000	3.3%
9	Flickr	112,000,000	3.2%
10	Google+	111,000,000	3.2%
11	LinkedIn	106,000,000	3.0%
12	Pinterest	100,000,000	2.9%
13	VK	90,000,000	2.6%
14	Classmates	57,000,000	1.6%
15	Meetup	27,500,000	0.8%

The statistics above, suggest that social media networks have formed their own hub on the internet activities.

### **Migration of Music Marketing to Social Media**

As the business canvas of many enterprises have evolved from the analogue business model to the digital platforms where virtually every aspect of business is conducted online, so also music business (marketing and sales of records) seem to have move with the new trend. Gordon Hui notes that “As the Internet of Things spreads, the implications for business model innovation are huge. Filling out well-known frameworks and streamlining established business models will not be enough. To take advantage of new, cloud-based opportunities, today's companies will need to fundamentally rethink their orthodoxies about value creation and value capture.” (par 1)

The Internet more so the social media has created a seismic shift in the music industry. Traditional physical marketing outlets, while still important, have been augmented with a variety of social media marketing, sales, and distribution outlets, all of which require their own specific marketing approaches and strategies.

The Social media has become a cornerstone of the artiste-fan relationship today. It has given musicians the opportunity to reach out to their fans directly, thereby developing a connection with the consumers of their music (something that was not possible in the past), and even sell music. Social media really puts a musician's career in his own hands.

Margiotta opines that while traditional advertising, public relations, and direct selling still exist and remain essential, social media is becoming an increasingly important tool used in the promotion and marketing of musicians. (13) Social media gives the artistes a chance to take advantage of new online tools, which may actually enhance their soon to be or released projects such as singles, videos, tour dates. Fans (new and old) will have a new method of communication with artistes, and artistes will have a new set of tools at his/her disposal to explore the art. Some of the importance are:

- a) Size (Social Media has millions of users globally)
- b) Reach (It is possible to make a mark globally and do it quickly using social networking sites because of its wide coverage).
- c) Boost website traffic (Social Media helps in redirecting web traffic to the artist domain)
- d) Branding (Artist can brand themselves via social media as there are many other multi-million naira companies that have branded themselves via social media)
- e) Transparency (Everything that happens on social media has no cheats and its full evidence of proof of existence)

Social Media Marketing offers three distinct advantages. One, it provides a window to music marketers to not only present their music to customers but also to listen to their fan's grievances and suggestions. Two, it makes it easy for musicians to identify various peer groups or influencers among various groups, who in turn can become their evangelist and help in the promotion of the artist. Moreover, all this is done at nearly zero cost, as most of the social networking sites are free. All one needs are a smart device with internet connectivity and it will do the job.

It also gives musicians on low budgets the ability to find out what people are saying about them and their music, without paying large sums on research. With their ears to the ground on social media, musicians will be the first to know if their music appeals to their fans or not.

#### **Music Promo and Marketing Using Social Media Platforms.**

*Margiotta* states that “the development of social media on the Internet has considerably transformed the way people communicate with one another” (9). Social Media has become an overwhelming tool in the hands of many business promoters likewise in music. Social media is an umbrella term that includes social networking sites, creativity work sharing sites, blogs, and forums. Different platforms of the social media give musicians a unique way to connect with their fans. However, with each new platform comes new rules, formats, and strategies.

As both a new promotional tool and a venue for consumer-generated communications, social media is becoming increasingly influential in the creation and realisation of a musician's image. A variety of social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and interactive artist websites, are used to manage promotion and monitor publicity of stars.

This new media form is becoming increasingly influential on consumer behaviour in the marketplace, specifically in awareness, obtaining information, developing opinions, and purchasing behaviour. Consumers are substituting traditional media and means of advertising, such as television, radio, magazines and newspapers, for new media that give them instant access to information at their own convenience. Mangold and Faulds opines that “due to its consumer-generated nature, social media is perceived as a more trustworthy source of information than traditional advertising and communication. Therefore, consumers are turning to social media platforms to obtain information and make purchasing decisions” (362).

i. **Facebook**

Founded February 4<sup>th</sup> 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg along with four fellow Harvard College students and roommates, Facebook today is credited to be the world most populous social media site. As at December 2016, the number of Facebook users was up to 1.7 billion users. Facebook has many features that allow musicians to identify, relate and interact with their fans. Some of which are newsfeed, friends, wall, timeline, reaction buttons ( like/dislike/comment), messages and inbox, notification, upcoming events, groups marketplace and a host of others. There are several sponsored advertisements that is displayed to a certain group of people within a locality.

When Facebook created the marketplace feature on its app, it gave many users the opportunity to post free classified advertisements. Musicians also use it to market and promote their music. Again, they can give a direct web link to their music in online stores where their consumers can purchase them from either iTunes or eBay. With Facebook, theartiste canremember fan's birthdays and either message them or post a birthday message on their wall. With the wide coverage that Facebook has, musicians can market and promote themselves first hand to the whole world in just an instant. Some important factors that musicians use on facebook are, they post web links for song downloads, short videos of what they are up to and upcoming events. Facebook Live is another avenue as musicians can pick a time to broadcast a short live set of rehearsals sessions in the week leading to up-coming events.

Engaging your fans on Facebook is an important tool in marketing and promoting music. Rather than having heavy text posts, musicians should alternate between shorter text posts, pictures, and videos that often creates a higher engagement rate. The posts should relate to their music, and they could ask fans questions which are always a good way to increase fan engagement on Facebook.

ii. **Twitter**

Twitter began as an idea that Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey had in 2006. Dorsey originally imagined Twitter as an SMS-based communications platform. Groups of friends could monitor what each other were doing based on their status updates.

Amanda MacArthur writes “during a brainstorming session at the podcasting company Odeo. Jack Dorsey proposed this SMS based platform to Odeo's co-founder Evan Williams. Evan and his co-founder Biz Stone by extension

gave Jack the go-ahead to spend more time on the project and develop it further” (par 4).

In its early days, Twitter was referred to as "twtr". Software developer Noah Glass is credited with coming up with the original name twtr as well as its final incarnation as Twitter.

Musicians have taken twitter to be a tool of communication with their fans on a daily basis. This gives the fans the idea of what the musician's daily life looks like. Twitter can be a great way to not only keep fans informed about their favourite musician's news but it can also make them feel closer to the whole process when they tweet about things they're working on as they do them. Since musicians would want to use Twitter to promote their music, label or other music related business, they can also look for music fans. Journalists, artists and other industry names, they are also excellent targets as the musician may get rapid popularity and followers.

The whole idea of twitter is to draw attention to the musician's personality by making him popular and trending. Twitter grows in popularity by the day and is still **one of the biggest traffic sources** for sites all over the world, and in every niche, one can imagine. Thus, it is obvious that going viral on Twitter can *greatly* help an artist in getting some much-needed traffic. Musicians tweet about an upcoming event they have to ask their fans and followers to retweet it, and by doing so, their tweet will be asking their followers to *also* retweet the artist post.

### iii. **Youtube**

Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, who were all early employees of PayPal, founded YouTube in February 2005. Mohit Saharan writes that *“Hurley and Chen developed the idea for YouTube during the early months of 2005, after they had experienced difficulty sharing videos that had been shot at a dinner party... YouTube offered the public a beta test of the site in May 2005, six months before the official launch in November 2005. The site grew rapidly, and in July 2006 the company announced that more than 65,000 new videos were being uploaded every day and that the site was receiving 100 million video views per day”*(par 2).

YouTube is the number one music-streaming platform in the world. It is the second search engine in the world. It is slowly replacing radio, MTV, and many other platforms for music discovery. Schepp and Schepp write that

“...today it has become the world's most popular online video site and it is the world's third most visited website after Google and Facebook. With users watching 4 billion hours' worth of video each month and uploading 72 hours' worth of video every minute. YouTube is now an international phenomenon with more than 200 million visitors arriving at the site every month” (122).

YouTube has played a significant role in jumpstarting the careers of many musicians such as Justin Bieber, and the Korean Pop star Psy. Today it is not only an online video community but it has also become a serious revenue source for musicians.

#### iv. **Instagram**

According to an information sourced from Instagram's website “Instagram was founded by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, and was launched in October 2010 as a free mobile app, exclusively for the iOS mobile platform via the Apple App Store, but was later released for Android devices two years later, on April 3, 2012. In late 2012, Instagram was purchased by Facebook for \$1 billion.

There have been many speculations about what the true definition of Instagram is. However, Flashstock defines Instagram as an online mobile photo sharing, video sharing, and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos...it is also a platform for brands to share their unique points of view. (sec 2) This means that musicians can utilise this platform to market and promote themselves to the world. The 21<sup>st</sup> century generation has become incredibly proficient in filtering traditional and digital methods of advertising. Some of the most sought after target markets are systematically screening out advertising by consuming content online. With Instagram, one can reach the consumers music at their home front and share your memorable experiences.

Instagram currently has about 150 million monthly active users and is also a leading photo community that is changing how musicians engage and communicate with their fans. Instagram is a powerful marketing tool that musicians should be using fully. The success of an artist on Instagram is measured through interactions as well as his follower count. Musicians should post things that their fans will enjoy and cannot get them elsewhere. Such post could include exclusive pictures of birthdays, family, studio sessions, tours, and sometimes even short video clips of their daily activities are all sure means of getting the attention of Instagram. Instagram provides a

unique interactive ecosystem for the artistes and their fans. Because of the platform's visual component, Instagram allows music marketers to convey their song stories differently. Through the use of pictures and videos, music artistes have the opportunity to engage their fans with media that is less inhibited by language barriers. This means that branded content on Instagram resonates with consumers in a way that words seldom can by appealing to an emotional level.

### **How Musicians Can Earn From YouTube**

A channel trailer is the first video people will see when they visit your YouTube channel. Therefore, every active artiste should have a dedicated YouTube channel. YouTube has been turned into an essential vehicle for driving independent artiste revenue. In addition to sales you generate through your video promotion, there are now two more ways you can earn money directly from your music on YouTube: CD Baby's sync licensing program and YouTube's Partner Program, both of which pay artists.

*CD Baby*, the world's largest digital distributor of independent music, is a company run by musicians for musicians. They have paid out more than \$250 million to artistes all over the world. *CD Baby's Sync Licensing Program* — pays the artiste ad-share revenue for any video on YouTube that uses your music. In addition, your music will be included in a catalogue of pre-cleared songs available to music supervisors for sync placement in film, commercials, TV, video games, and more. *CD Baby's* partnership with music licensing firms makes it possible for all *CD Baby* artists to make money from YouTube at no additional cost.

Many Nigerian artiste have found different ways to interact with their fan base, gain popularity through the promotion and marketing of their musical content via social media platforms particularly YouTube. The likes of P-Square, Davido, Cobhams Asuquo, Tiwa Savage, Yemi Alade, Burna Boy Olamide, Flavour, Timaya, Falz, Simi and a host of others have benefited through this gesture. P-Square, in particular, has more of the privileges YouTube gives. In 2009, P-Square's music was used in MTV's soap opera *Shuga* and they were handsomely rewarded for it. Uduak Okon writes "...Now we gotta talk money. First, MTV staying alive hit film *Shuga* which you should watch synchronises P-Square ...song in their movie below. This one hour drama has been a hit. There is so much involved on a legal aspect with synchronisation agreements" (par 3).

YouTube has shown the power of online video, and it has helped the average Musician gain a tremendous podium for being heard. It has also given the small business owner a very powerful tool to market themselves. YouTube is likely not to have a competitor in the nearby future because of the way it has evolve into something much bigger than just sharing videos.

### **Challenges of Social Media Marketing**

Online marketers have an enormous task in their journey to establish online brands. One major concern that musicians face in promoting and marketing themselves on Social Media is that it can either make the musician a superstar over night or tarnish his image. In the case where there is a small misrepresentation of the artist, reactions will begin to trail and fans will begin to condemn the artist. Most often people are always looking for ways to get any news that will misrepresent a celebrity just to mar his/her image on Social Media.

### **Piracy**

One of social media's characteristics is share ability, specifically how easy it is to share links and content via youtube, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and other social media conduits. With the ability to easily share embedded information, the ability to share copyrighted work has risen as well. Social media has indeed helped spread piracy in some respects, but it is also arguable that social media may hold the key to quelling the piracy trend. By streaming content to users from the source, some companies have found ways to monetize despite piracy.

Ben Parr states that “the final answer is probably a combination of both. New technology can be utilized in many ways, depending on who is using it. Those intent on pirating content will find ways to use social media to their ends, but that's no reason to see it as a threat to media companies (sec 8).

### **Affordability of Gadgets**

One cannot deny the fact that the cost of acquiring, running and maintaining the gadgets that are frequently used in these interactions are expensive. Many Nigerians do not have the luxury of enjoying power supply let alone affording android/iPhone phones, tablets, computers and their data subscriptions.

### **Conclusion**

Ultimately, as a musician, one should focus on the basic fundamental things about social media. It is one of the best ways for word-of-mouth publicity and

with firm control over that, one may be a superstar. Social media can do many things for musicians in terms of marketing and promotion, also developing a strategy that they can use annually for various accomplishment and how social media can help in executing those plans. One of the benefits of a social media strategy is the fact that the available tools can be customized for their particular needs. The artist can choose to concentrate his/her efforts on the sites that suit them most.

It is very apparent that we live in a society where technological trends are taking over. This can only mean that technology and social media are gradually changing cultural orientation. Millions of people are turning to social media to conduct their informational searches, develop opinions, and make purchasing decisions. Therefore, a strong social media presence is crucial to successful marketing and promotion of an artiste. The artiste should promote and market their music via social media by providing information using a variety of media formats that can stimulate a social media-based conversation and develop an artist-fan relationship by engaging fans. They should also find safer and better means of giving out their music so as to avoid piracy. The overall realisation of an artiste image relies heavily on its representation in the social media marketplace.

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## **TRAUMATIC RECOVERY: A PSYCHOANALYTIC CRITIQUE OF RAPE IN 2BROKEN**

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### **Abstract**

*Rape is an epidemic plaguing Nigeria and the world at large. These incessant rape incidences, as a matter of concern have become a controversial subject represented in Hollywood, Bollywood down to the contemporary Nigeria's film popularly referred to as "Nollywood". There seems to be a subconscious attitude that says rape is part of the experience that women should undergo. Owing to this, rape victims wallow in self-pity, with no determination to rise above humiliating conditions. This paper therefore, focuses on the representation of rape in Nollywood and explores how female rape victims navigate, negotiate and recover from trauma in the stigmatized margins of long standing patriarchal narratives. In order to effectively discuss and examine the problem under investigation, the paper adopts qualitative method and film content analysis to tease out the representation of rape and the coping mechanism used to recover from this inimical act. The paper collates data from the selected Nollywood film 2broken. This paper, anchor on trauma theory and psychoanalytical theory to explain victims' response and how they tried to extricate themselves by using several coping skills in order to navigate and negotiate their return to normalcy and from the damaging effects of rape. This paper therefore, recommends that female filmmakers should be at the forefront using their creative works to promote women as humans worth living. They are also to devise practical narratives using the protective device known as defensive mechanisms as responses on how these victims negotiate coping skills and navigate their recovery from traumatic experience. In conclusion, this paper posits that putting an end to rape, involves more than individual acts. Hence, it is imperative that female filmmakers should unanimously speak through cinematic codes and*

*techniques to bring to the forefront, the severity of rape, challenge the culture of silence and further promote psychological and emotional support group to enable rape victims overcome their traumatic challenges.*

**Key words:** Rape, Trauma, Defensive mechanism, Coping skills, Nollywood

### **Introduction**

The magnitude of violence against women is alarming. One of such devastating forms of violence against women is rape. The subject of rape is a hotly debated topic not just in Nigeria but globally. Rape has become a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the society. Sadly, women are the most affected of this crime. Renisson Callie (2) affirms that “91% of the victims of rape and sexual assault are female and 9% are male” (as quoted in National Sexual Violence Resource Centre for Info & Stats for Journalists). In Nigeria today, the rise in rape cases is alarming. Daily, women are raped, beaten and coerced into sex. Amnesty International's report on Nigeria indicates that “on a daily basis, women are beaten, ill-treated for supposed transgressions, raped and even murdered by members of their family” ([www.amnesty.org.uk](http://www.amnesty.org.uk)). In corroborating this fact, Achunike Hillary and Kitause Rimamsikwe note that rape prevalence, has had a baffling upsurge which has gone up from 12.5 percent to 80 percent in Nigeria (32). It is a pathetic scenario as women are forcibly raped and abused on the streets, markets, institutions of learning, homes, religious organizations and these cases are severally reported daily in the media. No wonder Crawford Mary and Unger Rhoda state that “the greatest risk factor for sexual victimization is being female” (454). It is on this note and with displeasure that the prevalence of sexual violence in Nollywood film cannot be dismissed.

The wide ranging detrimental effects rape causes to women are inexhaustible. These consequences have been disastrous as women have suffered social, psychological trauma which result in unquantifiable anguish, anger, low self-esteem, sadness, desperation, fear and tension, sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy, suicide amongst other social ills. In view of this, “many rape victims suffer serious mental health consequences” (Tjaden Patricia and Thoennes Nancy iii). To this end, Bloom Sandra notes that these victims begin to exhibit some behavioral traits which she lists as psychiatric disturbance including post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression, dysthymia, suicidality, self-mutilation, sleep disturbances, substance abuse disorders, learning disabilities, conduct disorders, delinquency, aggression, increased health risk behaviours and inappropriate sexual behaviour (23). However, Crawford and Unger, observe

that many of these victims develop coping strategies to protect their personal integrity and dignity. According to them, these women used realistic, future-oriented fantasies to find relief from their pain and to escape their identity as victims (446). Hence, some focused their energy on academic achievements, others used creative outlets (e.g. writing, drama, music, dance) to enhance their ability to cope (446). Crawford and Unger therefore, assert that the ability of these victims to cope demonstrates that “survivors have strengths as well as vulnerabilities (446). This is against the established notion which points out that “the passive woman is taught to regard herself as impotent, unable to act, unable even to perceive, in no way self-sufficient” (474).

Sadly, Shaka Femi and Uchendu Ola bring to fore how the Nigerian woman is depicted in Nollywood films, by re-echoing the words of Gregory Austen who describes the Nigerian woman as “the sacrificial lamb of moviedom” (5). She is likened to the proverbial lamb led to the slaughter which utters no complaints. This indicates in the metaphoric sense, a person sacrificed for the common good of all who goes quietly, passively, unable to act and without seeming to perceive the dangers of the situation. A large part of the problem however, is that women, over time have been depicted in narratives as victims of rape who simultaneously are inhibited and undermined with no attention paid to her recovery process. Shaka and Uchendu capture it succinctly thus “more often than not, films rely on cultural stereotypes in the construction of victimization, characterizing women as seductive and scheming or vulnerable and naive” (5). Accordingly, they observe that the explanation for this depiction is not far-fetched as they point out succinctly that Nollywood representation of women is an extension of the patriarchal fictional construction which dates back to classical Greek drama (5-6).

Furthermore, Shaka and Uchendu note that “all women begin as victims. From infancy, she is a victim of patriarchal brand of socialization which conditions her mentally and physically as a willing slave of man; as a recreational facility to man; as an ornament or a piece of art work to be viewed and admired” (5); a situation whereby women are victims of a predatory male who possesses no respect for womanhood. In essence, the woman is objectified and meant for male pleasure and perversions. Nollywood acknowledges the harm inflicted by rape but the strength and resilience demonstrated by these victims to navigate their survival and live well after the rape experience is not given the deserved attention to unveil its sociological, psychological and health implications, It is in cognizance of this fact that little attention is paid to how rape victims recover from trauma as a result of rape.

Apparently, there is a need for this “sacrificial lamb” to rise above her humiliating condition. It is against this backdrop that the interest of this research has been ignited.

It is in the face of this emerging challenge that this paper delves into Nollywood to unravel the phenomenon of rape as showcased in the film *2broken*, raise questions about the issue of having to deal with the psychological impact around rape victims, which undoubtedly accounts for their withdrawal and isolation, having not spoken about their experiences, with the aim of unearthing how rape victims in Nollywood films are able to demonstrate inner great strength and determination to forge ahead and negotiate coping skills that will navigate their recovery from such traumatic experience.

### **The Concept of Rape**

Rape is a type of sexual assault that is perpetuated against a person without the person's will or consent in order to engage in sexual intercourse/penetration through an act of coercion or physical force. The term “rape” is found in ancient Greek word “rapere” to mean “steal”, “seize” or “take by force” (Akinwole Oladele and Omoera Osakue 5; Brown Suzzane 6; Osakue Omoera, Olugbenga Elegbe and Doghudje Roselyn 129). It entails taking, seizure, plunder and snatching that which does not rightfully belong to a person through the act of force, deception etc. In this case, rape here involves the stealing of a woman's pride. On this note, Chiazor *et al*, share that rape is “a denial of a woman's self-preservation; the intrusion of her privacy, an inhuman and violent act which leaves the victims ashamed, humiliated and afraid” (7765). Corroborating this fact, Anderson Michelle, describes rape as the “dehumanization, objectification, and domination” of victims (641). This is granted that, the idea behind the act of rape is to treat the rape victim as purely an object with a sexual function with the intent of conveying the message to the victim that she is not a person but a being without respect. Akintunde Dorcas, in quoting the Family Health and Population Action Committee (FAHPAC) in Nigeria, defines rape as “an act that involves forceful and unconsented sexual intercourse with a female victim by one or many male(s) acting under the influence of drug, peer group and occultic influence” (19). It is therefore, understood to mean the forceful sexual penetration of a person with or without the person's consent.

By this token, Akintunde traces the remote and immediate causes of rape to lack of good moral, dressing in sexually provocative attire, lack of knowledge of sex education on the female's part and drug abuse (19). From the

foregoing, the reasons given as to why rape happens in no particular order include: alcohol consumption, substance and drug use and abuse, misogyny (hatred for women), reading and watching pornographic materials, uncontrolled sexual desire, patriarchy (male domination), indecent dressing, poverty, revenge and punishment, spiritual reasons amongst others. This aptly summarizes the causes of rape; as rape is a complex problem whose causes are multifaceted boiling down to the fact that people who rape do so for a variety of reasons. Some school of thoughts however, apportion the blame heavily on the woman for whatever misfortune has befallen her. They have it that women who dress provocatively, drink alcohol or go to some place with a man is asking to be raped (Basow, Susan and Minieri, Alexandra 480; Wegner *et al* 1021-1023; Maier Shana 1415). By this assertion, it becomes clear that rape is not a one-sided thing and blame should not be apportioned to one gender. This is because all parties are involved in provoking rape.

Regrettably, Yeseibo John observes that what informs rape most often is the desperation and quest for solution such as getting married, prosperity (poverty alleviation), and barrenness. These ill-informed congregants desperate for spiritual resolution of their problems imbibe the Pentecostal tenets. Such problems as listed by him include “getting desired men as husbands (in the case of women) to closing the gap between dreams and possibilities” (149-150). Resultantly, these women fall into the hands of these predators (so called men of God) who take advantage of the women's situation. They device devious means and engage the victims in the process which Yeseibo terms “deliverance”. Through this subtle means combined with the misinterpretation of the scripture in the name of 'Holy Kiss,' 'Spiritual surgical operation' and deliverances from spiritual husband who they attribute the blame as to why the single remains “unmarried” and the married, 'barren'. In this case, deception and fraudulent means were used to get consensual sexual intercourse which is considered rape even though brutal force was not involved.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Trauma theory, described by Bloom Sandra represents a comprehensive biopsychic-social and philosophical model for understanding the effects of overwhelming stress caused by rape (5) and explains the complexity experienced by rape victims with such complex nature of traumatic events (6). It is common that rape victims experience high level of distress following the rape experience and these feelings and syndrome are highly devastating. She therefore, believes that trauma theory represents how this

overwhelming stress of assault alters the psychobiology, personal adjustment and explores the consequences of these changes on the physical, mental health and social adjustment of these victims (1). To have a full grasp of what trauma does, Vander Kolk Bessel believes that traumatization occurs when both internal and external resources are inadequate to cope with external threat (393). Bloom refers to this psychic trauma as “a sudden, unexpected, overwhelming, intense emotional blow or a series of blows that assault the person from outside which is quickly incorporated into the mind” (6). The *psychoanalytic theories* on the other hand, suggests that certain ideas and thoughts which are threatening to us are repressed, that is, pushed out of our awareness into the unconscious (280). This theory uncovers and exposes the psychological and traumatic effects of rape on its victims, and provides explanation on why these traumatic individuals find themselves giving in to the concept of learned helplessness; a phenomenon used to explain why victims are conditioned to accept pain, discomfort, suffering without finding a way of escape. To this end, Bondi Liz argues that psychoanalysis offers a distinctive way of thinking about the human mind and how it responds to psychological distress (3). The psychoanalytic theory therefore, suggests that there are protective devices of the unconscious known as defense mechanism that rape victims turn to in times of such distress in order to deal with and lessen the intensity of negative impulses and rescue them from such untenable physiological state. These protective devices include: rationalization, projection, sublimation, reaction formation, displacement, denial and regression. In this respect, the trauma theoretical framework helps us to understand the ways in which victims respond and how they try to extricate themselves by using several coping skills in order to navigate and negotiate their return to normalcy and away from the damaging effects of rape.

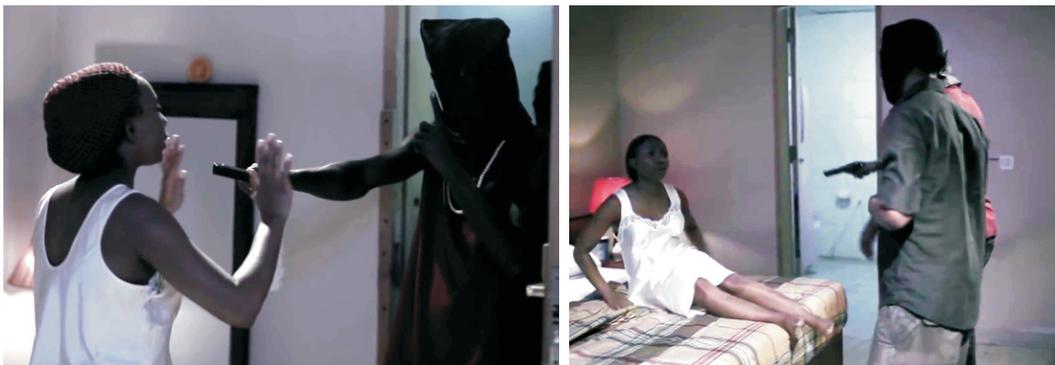
### **Synopsis of *2Broken***

*2Broken* follows the narrative of Bolu, a young girl whose fiancé dies in an accident on their wedding day. Afterwards, she finds out that she is pregnant. In a bid to save her parents (who are pastors) the embarrassment, she moves out of her parent's house. Subsequently, she gets raped by armed robbers in her home with her little baby beside her. Everything takes a new dimension after this humiliating experience as Bolu becomes distanced and traumatized. Bolu develops a sense of worthlessness which results in her being suicidal. However, she battles her unconscious, becomes defiant to self pity and depression. Thereafter, she reconciles with her parent and with their support, she sets up an NGO charged with helping rape victims like herself.

### **Critical Analysis of *2Broken***

The narrative opens with Bolu (Belinda Effah), being dressed for her wedding. Her bridal train is excited and everyone is busy in preparation for the wedding. However, the happy mood immediately changes to a confusing scenario as Bolu is startled at the news of the death of her fiancé who is involved in a car accident. Bolu becomes hysterical, and weeps bitterly.

In the next scene, Bolu discover she is pregnant and decides to move out of her parent's house in a bid to save her parents who are pastors, the embarrassment. Her father, who is the General Overseer of a church, is highly disappointed and angry with Bolu who kneels, cries and begs. She receives no response from her father, hence, she moves out of the house. Against all odds, Bolu gives birth to a baby boy, IJ. Months later, armed robbers invade her house and in the process, she is raped amidst pleas and the cry of her little son that fell on deaf ears.



**Picture 1: Bolu at gun point with the armed robbers**

Afterwards, just after the episode of rape, Bolu goes to take her bath which suggests the act of literally washing off the rape experience. This is granted of course that the humiliation and shame experienced by rape victims' results in the reaction of feeling contaminated by the rapists; a feeling of having been defiled, dirty, and impure. This is in line with the submission that the most commonly reported psychological effects suffered by rape victims include shame and guilt, fear, disgust, distrust, feelings toward the perpetrator and anxiety (Crawford and Unger 446). These victims go through the experience of shame to guilt and then anger. Hence, with this feel of embarrassment and desecration, Bolu goes to wash off as a means of cleansing and hiding her shame behind a painted mask of normalcy. From thence onwards, the traumatic experience impacted heavily on Bolu as the way she thinks, feels

about situations and other people was profoundly altered. This follows the order of Rape Crisis Scotland Resource's postulation which affirms that rape is traumatic and that "many survivors of sexual violence experience emotions including shock, fear, anger, shame, guilt and betrayal. Aftereffects can include panic attacks, flashbacks or nightmares which increase distress and make it feel as if there is no way of moving on from what happened" (3). As a result, Bloom points out that some of the symptoms exhibited by these traumatized persons are known to be "persistent physiological hyper arousal and hyper activity with increased muscle tone, low grade, increases in temperature, increased startle response, profound sleep disturbances, regulation problems, anxiety, and abnormalities in cardiovascular regulation" (11). Her friend, Amira (Omotu Bissong) notices this change in behaviour as Bolu becomes angered at the slightest provocation and responds arrogantly to situations as should be in normal circumstances. It is not out of place then that Bloom injects that this traumatic experience impacts the entire person "the way we think, the way we learn, the way we remember things, the way we feel about ourselves, the way we feel about other people, and the way we make sense of the world and are all profoundly altered by traumatic experience" (2). Bolu becomes distanced from everyone and writes a diary which she titles *2Broken*. The title, *2broken* has a strong connotation which suggests an act of helplessness; wherein a toxic and noxious psychological feeling is attributable to rape victims. It is basically, a condition whereby a victim's wall of defense is shattered and broken with feelings of vulnerability and powerlessness. Bloom reiterates that in such traumatic situations, the victim is both helpless and powerless: Helplessness goes against our instinct for survival... Worse yet, repetitive exposure to helplessness is so toxic to our emotional and physiological stability that in service of continued survival, we are compelled to adapt to the helplessness itself, a phenomenon that has been termed "learned helplessness". (12).

It is not surprising then that Bolu left with feeling of powerlessness, takes to writing a diary which is one of the identified forms of defense mechanisms, in the psychoanalytic theory. She uses the concept of sublimation; to redirect her negative impulse unto a socially acceptable medium which translates into a worthwhile literary piece. In this diary, Bolu decides to recount her experience which becomes the basis of the film *2Broken*. The *Psychoanalytic theories* note that "sublimation entails redirecting or channeling our undesirable emotions and thoughts into a socially acceptable activity" (283). Furthermore, the *Psychoanalytic theories*, observes that "many famous composers and poets also are good examples of those utilizing this defense mechanism" given that, "their mental anguish is

redirected into wonderful works of art ( 283). This goes to say that advantage can be coined out of disadvantage. Hence, they sublimate by channeling their negative emotions into their works of art in order to avoid potential self-harm and the outcome is a production of worthwhile literary works.

Next, Bolu's friend Amira (Omotu Bissong) sets her up on a date with Ugo who is currently also having issues with his wife Ndidi who was raped in his presence. Consequently, Ndidi suffers from the traumatic experience but Ugo is not left out of this plight, as he constantly suffers from the intrusive images from the flash back of his wife's rape experience. This disturbing intrusion has to a large extent ruined their relationship. This is in line with Jones *et al* postulation that the family members of rape victims are also at “considerable risks of psychological damage particularly when they have been made to watch the violence and have been powerless to protect the victim, or as has been the case they were forced to participate in the rape of their family members” (2). Through a flashback, the incidence of Ugo being present, yet powerless to protect his wife Ndidi from being raped became a haunting experience. In this flashback, Ugo is seen trapped and pinned down, at gunpoint by some members of the robbery gang in their house. As a result, Ugo is seen weeping bitterly at his inability to save his wife from the rapists.



**Picture 2: Ugo weeps as he watches his wife being raped**

Consequently, the psychological effect had a large toll on Ugo and Ndidi's relationship as their marriage hits the rock. Thus, Ugo finds solace in the company of Bolu. Next, Bolu falls in love with Ugo but with no prior knowledge of his predicament. Meanwhile, Ndidi takes on to boxing as a form of survival

coping skill. In the course of her training, she punches the bag harder than required. Even when asked by her instructor to stop, she continues as a way of letting off her vengeance on her rapists.



**Picture 3: Ndidi and her coach in the course of her training**

This is supported by Bloom Sandra and Farragher Brian's assertion that "rage at others comes to dominate the picture and these are the ones who end up becoming significant threats to other people as well as themselves" (121). However, Ndidi's rage which is directed on the punching bag is symbolical as it is a form of displacement, a form of defense mechanism in psychoanalytic theory which entails her transfer and redirection of aggression towards the punch bag rather than the source of her displeasure which is her rapists. In essence, since she cannot readily lay hold of her rapists, metaphorically, she punches and vents her anger on the bag which to her represents the rapists.

Subsequently, Bolu and Ugo's relationship continues to blossom until Ugo lets out the cat from the bag and reveals his wish to return to his wife, as he is determined now than ever to make the relationship work and also help Ndidi recover from her trauma. This news leaves Bolu devastated and betrayed. She breaks down weeping uncontrollably. Resultantly, the powerful images of her rape experience through an intrusive flashback come flooding in. She begins to re-live the traumatic experience all over again. This is in line with Bloom's assertion that "flashbacks are likely to occur when people are upset, stressed, frightened" (16). Therefore, their mind become flooded with the images, emotions and physical sensations associated with the original trauma. These disturbing memories intrude into the conscious from time to time especially when triggered by a similar event and stir up feelings about events of the past. She collaborates this fact by her assertion that these powerful images, feelings and sensations do not just go away due to the fact

that “they are deeply imprinted, more strongly in fact than normal everyday memories” (16). Hence, the subconscious keeps holding onto this painful memory, which is reenacted in the form of flashbacks. Bloom explains the concept of flash back thus:

A flashback is a sudden intrusive re-experiencing of one of those traumatic, un-verbalized memories. During a flashback, people become overwhelmed with the same emotions that they felt at the time of the trauma. Flashbacks are likely to occur when people are upset, stressed, frightened, or aroused or when triggered by any association to the traumatic event. Their mind can become flooded with the images, emotions and physical sensations associated with the original trauma. They feel like the traumatic experience is happening again and they may have difficulty separating the past from the present. Often they do not recognize the experience they are having as flashback but instead feel that they are “losing their minds” or having a “panic attack” (16).

In other words, flashbacks occur as reminders of the previous sexual assault experienced by rape victims. This thereafter, evokes a release of traumatic memories thereby producing overwhelming negative emotions such as rape, guilt, despair and shame. Bloom notes that “when someone experiences a flashback, they do not remember the experience, they re-live it,” (17). To this end, Bolu becomes hyper aroused, sweats profusely and breathes heavily. In this distressed state, she attempts strangling herself in the bathtub.



**Picture 4: Bolu's suicide attempt**

Bolu's action is best explained in trauma theories as one of the natural response to trauma. In the same vein, Rape Crisis Scotland Resources submits that suicide thoughts and feelings are a natural response to trauma (6). As a result of this hurting experience, which reoccurs, the grief and recovery of the victim is inhibited and this degenerates to depression leading to the advancement of suicidal thoughts. In throwing more light to this view, Bloom explains that "as the intrusive symptoms of flashbacks, nightmares come to dominate and traumatize the victims lives, they become increasingly depressed, feel more and more alienated from everything that gives their lives meaning such as their favourite activities, other people, their sense of direction and purpose, sense of spirituality and their sense of community". (19-20). She then observes that it is not surprising then, that slow-self destruction through addictions, or fast self-destruction through suicide becomes the final outcome of these syndromes (20). This entails the end of one's own life through several means such as hanging, fire arms shooting, poisoning, asphyxia etc. Rape Crisis Scotland Resources therefore, submits that the survivor sees "suicide as a way of escaping from overwhelming pain and distress; or as a way of taking back control (3). It is not surprising then that Bolu feels worthless, she sees life as empty and meaningless thus, with this detachment and alienation, Bolu attempts to commit suicide by strangling herself.

Bolu finally becomes defiant to depression and self pity. This resolve is manifest in a succeeding scene as Bolu sets up a rape recovery centre, a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) which she names "war against rape starts with information". From the name of the organization, it is obvious that *2 broken* foregrounds that information as well as shared experience is the ultimate key towards healing. This is granted that, sharing one's experience remains the biggest step towards recovery as it serves as therapy to ease bottled up tension. This is given that for recovery to take place, the survivor must first open the wound, once this experience is exposed; it is no longer a secret and holds less power over the victim. It is on this note that Bolu tells her parent of her encounter of rape. Therefore, *2 broken*, discourages the culture of silence and secrecy and encourages rape victim to speak out if true recovery is desired. Bloom however, laments that the "cries for help" of these victims fall on deaf ears. She inputs that "instead, we judge / condemn, exclude and alienate the person who is behaving in an asocial, self-destructive, or anti-social way without hearing the meaning in the message" (22). The whole point is that the traumatized person is cut off from the emotional and physical support, which the society ought to help with and trapped in speechless terror.

Another crucial lesson gotten from *2 broken* is that there is no hopeless situation. The film reiterates that one should never be derailed by situations and disappointment, as a single idea can make a difference. Indeed this is what Bolu did by setting up a nonprofit institution charged with helping victims of rape like her to come out of depression. Though Bolu passes through a hopeless situation, she serves as a role model of what it means to bounce back from a past filled with hurt, and hopelessness. Through her experience, she is able to inspire thousands of women that there is no hopeless situation. Indeed, it is based on this notion, that Bolu started an NGO as a channel set up to provide a platform to help rape victims engage, share experiences to ease their pain and also encourage others on how to overcome their traumatic challenges and negotiate their recovery and rehabilitation. This film also campaigns that there is no reason to suffer in silence as speaking out about rape experiences empowers the victim to end the power of the rapist. This, without a doubt is what emboldens both Ndidi and Bolu to speak out in the provided platform. Bolu is captured extremely happy that finally someone buys into her vision and then the film concludes with a caption “Yes, we can be raped but we refuse to remain rape victims. By this assertion, this film points out that the word “victim” is a wrong choice of word rather it should be survivors” granted of course that despite the rape experience, these classes of persons having been knocked down are resilient and able to stand up and fight against all odds for their recovery.

This is granted of course that giving a listening ear to the victim is one of the certain ways of helping her to re-establish control over her life. Bloom notes that the consequences of not grieving are enormous as our society has difficulty with grief. Thus, Bloom interjects that “unresolved grief prevents recovery from both psychological and physical problems that are the outcome of exposure to traumatic experience” (42). Hence, she suggests that though the recovery from trauma is painful, “to heal, survivors must open up the old wounds, remember and reconstruct the past, resolve the accompanying painful emotions and reconnect to their internal world and the world around them (42). A crucial lesson to be learnt here is that unless this culture of silence is broken, recovery would remain a mirage.

### **Conclusion**

Inferring from the analysis so far, the truth is that no woman is immune to rape; whether single or married. Therefore, there is a call for action, to say no to sexual violence with reference to rape as it erodes the dignity and worth of a woman. Therefore, it is unacceptable and Sexual voidance and information about rape can no longer be swept under the proverbial rug of silence.

Hence, every woman who suffers from rape, need to go inward, deep within, get rid of the shame and blame felt as victims and recognize those factors that keep victims silent as evident in *2broken*. This narrative strategically portrayed the rape prevalent in the Nigerian society with much emphasis paid on the trauma these women undergo. It also points out that all traumatized persons develop their own peculiar defense mechanism that aids them to cope with their traumatic experience.

Again, as long as the society is quiet in a world which resonates with the cries of abused women, it has failed in its intervention of curbing rape. The society is therefore, called up to bind up the bruises of women who have suffered not only from rape but from the passive violence of the society, which has failed to recognize their situation and intervene on their behalf. *2 broken* therefore, campaigns for a support group for rape victims; flooded with love and support gotten from true bonding. *2 broken* advances the call for a support group as a safe heaven that provides holistic approach towards promoting rape awareness and support victims with psychological and emotional support to become survivors and overcome their traumatic challenges. This is given that this avenue, laced with healing powers is geared towards helping members to gain a sense of control and empowerment. Here, they talk freely and honestly with no feeling whatsoever of being judged; the members feel less lonely and are able to reduce feelings of anxiety. This is granted of course that these groups provide victims' bonding which is a necessity. Having walked in each others' shoes, the members are able to flood each others with the needed love, support that will help victims recover as well as promote the support needed for the reduction of stigmatization. Thus, *2 broken* advances the call for support groups for rape victims in order to stop stigmatization.

In conclusion, this paper posits that putting an end to rape, humiliation, abuse and oppression involves more than individual acts. It requires working together to challenge this scourge and all other sexist practices. Hence, it is imperative that filmmakers especially the female filmmakers should unanimously use their activism, knowledge and creative works to bring to the forefront, the menace of rape and further highlight the negative effect it plays in the destruction of society. It is expedient therefore, that Nollywood based on its efficacy and as a powerful medium, and the female filmmaker should use their creative works to promote women as humans worth living. The world's perception about women as inferior beings useful for domesticity, sex and nothing more should be discouraged. No one but the Nigerian female filmmakers themselves can bear the responsibility to speak in their own

voices through cinematic codes and techniques to tell their own stories the way that is most appropriate and suitable, to challenge the scourge of rape and the culture of silence. In respect to this, God's presence submits that:

Nigerian feminist authors and film makers have the ability to exterminate the patriarchal structures that have bound the woman socially, culturally, politically, financially, and educationally. If the woman's dilemma must be totally circumvented in the future, then no one else should take the lead but Nigerian women themselves. Only then could they be extricated and the male film makers will unconsciously follow suit (65).

This goes to explicate the fact that female filmmakers have the ability and will power to implement change in the cinematic industry through their creative cinematic codes and to liberate themselves from patriarchal structures that have held the woman bound in all spheres.

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#### Filmography

Title of film: *2Broken*.  
Screen play: Lani Aisida.  
Director: Simon Peacemaker.  
Producer: Simon Peacemaker.  
D.O.P: Abdulahi Yusuf.  
Year: 2015.  
Language: English.  
Company: Rbliss Productions.  
Starring: Belinda Effah, Omotu Bissong, Iyke Michaels, Princess Chineke.

## **RESTORING THE IVORY UNTO THE FADING TOWER: AN ENCOUNTER WITH BAKARE OJO RASAKI'S *ONCE UPON A TOWER***

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### **Abstract**

*Several studies have overtime argued the fact that, theatre has been an instrument in mediating for/of political development. Right from the classical works of Aristophane's **Lysistrata** that explores the melleponasian war between Greece and Sparta where the women sex starved their men, up till the contemporary works of Ngugi wa' Thiongo's **The Trial of Dedan Kimathi** and Femi Osofisan's **Once upon four Robbers** to mention a few. These works have proactively and reactively engaged the political terrain of their respective societies through drama/theatre. it has been observed that since independence, the plights of the masses have perpetually declined from bad to terrible, as exploitation and oppression by the high and mighty freely occupies the Nigerian space. It is against this backdrop that, this research attempts to explore the issues of corruption, exploitation and subversion of justice in the political terrain of Nigeria and the corruption syndrome in the Nigerian tertiary institutions especially as it affects the masses as evident in Bakare Ojo Rasaki's **Once upon a Tower**. The study adopts content analysis and hinges on Marxism ideology that explores the class struggles and political dichotomy. The study thus concludes and recommends that; drama is a potent instrument of/for social change, as such, artists should write more on the socio-political issues bedeviling the country so as to provoke change in the decadent status quo.*

**Keywords:** Theatre, Politics, Nigeria, Marxism, Corruption.

### **Introduction**

Theatre and politics have been in collaboration right from the emergence of theatre, the Greek city of Athens for instance made Theatre a state affair and mandated the citizens to participate in it. This trend, witnessed at the theatre of Acropolis to honour the Greek god Dionysus, gave theatre an unmitigated advantage to influence politics. Same trend was witnessed in Rome, Medieval etc. At the wake of the renaissance however, theatre wasn't made a state affair mandatorily but rather, its content, form and thematic explorations explored the length and breadth of politics across all levels of societal and human endeavours. Suffice to say it that the arts has been proven beyond

theoretic and dialectic postulations to be a veritable medium of expression of man in an attempt to function in his society. Theatre, like every other art takes a cue from this to dive into humanity and existence in an attempt to create a smooth rapport with supreme beings (Soyinka 84, Ogunba 10, Sofola 13, Rotimi 28). The classical works of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripedes are pointers to these facts. However, technological innovation and explosion of experimentation that characterized civilization and globalization demands, influenced theatre to delve into pressing social issues, from the classical era, Aristophanes first explored the issue of social change and politics with *Lysistrata*, as we see a strongly willed platform to influence society- the women had to take drastic decision to mediate uninvitingly into the Mellopponessian war by depriving their husbands of sexual intercourse.

In this light, having become exposed to western civilizations, the Yoruba operatic theatre itinerants under Hubert Ogunde who is credited to have later founded the African Music Research Party performed improvised scripts that is hybridized with foreign and native contents, these contents gradually grew from folklores, customs and rituals to satiric contents that berates echelons of power at the political space- among which we find *Yoruba Ronu, Aso Ebi, Bread and Bullet, Strike and Hunger* etc to mention but three. Ogunde's writing and style later influenced new breed of writers, who have been exposed to western education in and beyond the shores of Africa, returned and began publishing their works after independence, their works however treated issues of colonial enslavement and neglect of tradition, cultural revivalism, folklores, myths and legends until later on, their work didn't really explore political issues. Obafemi observes that "both Rotimi and Clark explored the inevitability of man's fate" (118). These are the first breed of dramatists among which we find, James Ene Henshaw, J.P Clark, Ola Rotimi, Zulu Sofola and Wole Soyinka. Their works includes *The Strong Breed, This is our Chance, Wedlock of the gods, Ozidi, Death and the Kings Horseman, A Dance of the Forests, The Gods are not to Blame, Kurunmi* etc.

However, the influx of the second generation of writers shook the political terrain of Nigeria as they radically diverted from the existent ideologies of their predecessors (The first generation) and sought to engage in a proactive/reactive method of combatting political issues, two factors are responsible for this, one is the civil war menace and secondly, these writers are aware of the exploitation and neocolonialism occasioned by class dichotomy/social stratification, and this was largely the overriding ideology in their works. Gbilekaa reports that:

The ideological awareness that has permeated some academic disciplines, particularly the social sciences and the humanities in Nigeria since the civil war (1967-1970) has opened up new vistas in the study and practice of theatre. Since the civil war, some Nigerian scholars and intellectuals no longer examine the socio-political developments in the society alone, but goes further to apply the dialectical materialist approach of Marx and Engels (1).

The Marxian philosophy in Gbilekaa's position is the social revolution/social change ideology to overthrow the decadent status quo, more often than not, they question political terrain by interrogating leadership and governance tilted towards dictatorship, totalitarianism, feudalism etc. These second breed otherwise known as the marxians are concerned with social change, humanistic values, struggles and plights of the proletariat, uneven wealth distribution and other indices of oppression. This is realised as settings, themes, characters and plots in their works. Oladele confirms to this when he says that these works of the marxians are clearly poised for change:

Their themes are clear, capitalism myths to bring about a socialist order. Their plays dwell on the past and contemporary issues in their societies. Plays like Ngugi's *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, co-authored with Githae Mugo, *I will marry when I want*, co-authored with Ngugi Wa Mirii, and Sowande's *Farewell to Babylon* create a graphic picture of the suffering of the masses caused by the ramshackled capitalist superstructure on which their societies are based (10).

There are also in this category of plays issues of racial inequality, social injustice, class oppression, political and economic instability. It no gain saying that the Marxist ideology seeks to interpret socio-political issues within the African context because of the approach it prescribes in its tenets to tackle manifestations of oppression.

Osofisan attests to this when he says "if we must change our societies, if the theatre (indeed all generic forms of literature, oral and written) must fulfil its vocation as an agent of progress, the dramatists(writers) who create it have no option than to pitch their camp on the side of the common people and against the formidable agents of the ruling class" (88). The ruling class has reduced the common man to mere slave, scampering for survival as sicknesses and diseases, famine, hunger and death ravages the land. The

class dichotomy is so glaring in Nigeria that it permeates every cadre of government parastatals, the minority privileged controls and eat up the polity of the majority underprivileged. Saint Gbilekaa sums this up briefly: “the underprivileged are choking under the firm grip of the comprador bourgeoisie pen-robbers selfish and greedy politicians” (63), whose concern is first and foremost their personal and territorial aggrandizement before the interest of the populace and this is contrary to their political office.

### **Theatre and Politics in Nigeria: An Overview**

Aristotle Onassis, the renowned Greek philosopher once said 'Every man is a political animal', as long as you are a member of a society, the political terrain affects you positively or negatively, even the battlefield of the mind where a million thoughts is constantly roaming and by means of deductive reasoning, we choose one over the other because we feel such choice is the best decision and thus, we act upon it so man, from the nature and nurture of his being cannot dissociate himself from politics. Like every other society, the participation of the Nigerian citizen in politics is unavoidable. He cannot shy away from it, even if he pretends not to, Brecht calls him Political Illiterate:

The worst Illiterate is the political illiterate. He hears nothing, sees nothing, takes no part in political life. He doesn't seem to know that the cost of living, the price of beans, of flour, of rent, of medicines all depends on political decisions. He even prides himself on his political ignorance, sticks out his chest and says he hates politics. He doesn't know, the imbecile that from his political non participation comes the prostitute, the abandoned child, the robber and worst of all, corrupt officials, the lackeys of exploitive multinational corporations.

It is therefore, unavoidable for every society to participate in politics because decision making and economy largely depends on it. However, current trends in Nigeria political space since independence is worrisome, the continued looting, bribery and corruption scandal, political instability, human rights abuse, bad leadership, dictatorial governance, religious riots, civil and political unrest, poverty and untold hardship have called on well-meaning citizens to engage in the political discourse to alleviate these problems. Like other disciplines, Theatre artists have sought to take theatre away from its religious ritual content, cultural rejuvenation themes to a more radical, opinionated, idealistic and revolutionary point of view in order to engage issues in the society, and this trend is not new, it has been from ascendancy. Adeniyi explains to us that right from the “folk origins to modern day, theatre

has always reflected the tensions and visions arising from politics” (iii). The political tenure of every republic shapes the ideological concerns of the Nigerian dramatists to engage in every social issue associated with such regime. It is no fallacy then that the Nigerian theatre seeks the betterment of the society by reflecting social issues prevalent in the Nigerian society. Ayakoroma reiterates this when he posits that;

The Arts (Theatre) portray man's efforts to express his emotions and to achieve beauty by the arrangement of words, tones, body movements, gestures, lines and colours. These artistic devices can be expressed singly or in combination (with other arts-visual, fine, liberal) to express emotions, ideas, histories and topical/societal issues (19).

Ayakoroma's position hints us that Theatre is a strong catalyst capable of quickening change in any society especially when it engages in issues of polity and politics, it cannot separate itself from it this perhaps is why Ngugi believes that “writers are caught up and concerned with power struggles of the day; social relationships in literature (Drama) reflecting and commenting on those in society (ix). This infers that the dramatist cannot be separated completely from politics, he is a member of he struggles between the dichotomies associated with class, he suffers from the hard hammer of the ruling class, he drinks from the gall offered the less privileged, he is now left with choice to decide if he has to support the continued capitalist structure or stand for justice with the masses. Ngugi submits that:

Literature (Drama) cannot escape from the class power struggles that shapes our everyday life. Here, a writer has no choice, whether or not he is aware of it, his work (must) reflect one or more aspects of the intense economic, political, cultural and ideological struggles in a society. What he can choose is one or the other side in the battlefield: the side of the people or the side of those social and classes that try to keep the people down. What he or she cannot do is to remain neutral. Every writer is a writer in politics. The only question is what and whose politics (xvi).

This strong position of Ngugi is a conscious call to writers to decide on whose side they are on, since their theatre is artistically powerful, it is a potent tool for social change and advocacy for the masses. Osofisan, in an interview with Ossie Enekwe, submits that his class of dramatists are poised for the masses

to overthrow an exploitive system. He further explained that:

A number of us, the younger generation (second crop of writers) share this perspective....you may say we are leftists without being essentially dogmatic about Marxism. But our essentially socialist leanings and convictions separate us from the older writers by a wide margin..... we wanted to create an alternative tradition....from a materialist perspective. We look at literature as a social force, an ideological weapon (3).

This ideological awareness is the springboard for the emergence of political theatre in Nigeria, a theatre that cuts open the ribs of the powers that be and attempt to sew them back but a different man, they sought to produce socially relevant works that is capable of pushing the masses to fight and revolt for their rights. In lieu of this, Olu Obafemi reports that “the Public reaction to the first two productions of Bode Sowande's *The Curse* attests to the playwright's effectiveness in employing theatre as an instrument of raising social awareness as a critique of the premiere of the production mandated the playwright to send copies of the published play to all African Heads of state” (207). The flagrant exposition and condemnation of the indices of capitalism and exploitation in the society is a socialist ideology that sparkled these political writers to fight for justice. Omotoso has this to say about his theatre in concern for politics:

My basic commitment is to writing as a way of life and also to a specific socialist ideology...one of my aims is to be able to awaken the consciousness of those who have been able to make it, to the realization that we can only enjoy what we have made if those who have not made it enjoy they are..... you drive through the villages and you see this distinction, you see this people whom nobody has ever given any representation, nobody wants to talk about. Most writers have been concerned with the elite and the elite for me, is very empty...That is why there is this preoccupation with characters who are rejected, dejected and neglected. What makes a woman a prostitute, it is the society (qtd in Obafemi 208).

The aftermath of exploitation, Omotosho argued, is the influx of social vices. The thief is made manifest by poverty, the prostitute and abandoned children are the product of class segregation and socioeconomic issues. The once gentle, submissive obedient child becomes a murderer when he is offered money and bullets, frustration and aggression pushes the citizens to forcibly

seek bestial means of survival. These writers call for a proper reexamination, reassessment and restructuring of the social order to create an egalitarian society. A critical look at the works of Hubert Ogunde *Tigers Empire* (1946) - an attack on the colonial rule, *Strike and Hunger* (1946)- a dramatization of the 1945 general strike by workers in Nigeria, *Bread and Bullets, Worse than crime* etc, where he unreservedly swipes at the oppressive, coercive and selfish government policies that were insensitive to the plight of the common man. Ogunde's performance met stiff resistance from the then government and this led to his arrest and detention, there issues raised in these performances provoked national consciousness, promotion of social order and humanism.

Undaunted by this development, the likes of Femi Osofisan, Kole Omotosho, Bode Sowande, Biodun Jeyifo and more recently, Ahmed Yerima, Bakare Ojo Rasaki stormed the political space with more pressing, urgent, unapologetic and lucid oeuvres. These latter plans creatively reflected political tyranny, abuse of human rights, oppression and indiscipline, social and moral decadence, political gangsterism, exploitation, political corruption, social maladies, ethno-religious crises, bad leadership that exist within the ambience of Nigerian society. Indices of these abound in *Shadow on the Horizon, The Curse, Morountodun, Once upon four robbers, No more the Wasted Breed, Midnight Hotel, Birthdays are not for being, Hard Ground, Pari, The gods and the Scavengers, Rogbodiyan, Once Upon a Tower to mention a few.*

These writers creatively strikes the gavel with their pen by not merely making social commentaries, or satirizing these issues but also proposing an ideological standpoint, an alternative route, a solution to these issues, they constantly chastise existent institutions that doesn't favour the masses, they are critically minded but consciously aware that if his society must be better, the truth must be revealed.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study shall adopt Marxist Aesthetics. The rationale behind this stems from the fact that the playtext situates the social stratification between the bourgeoisie and proletariats, the peasants and the aristocrats. Marxism as a literary concept dates as far back as the 19th century. As the name implies, Marxism is derived from the writings of Karl Marx and his mate- Friedrich Engels. In 1846, he made a sweeping submission that "Power is concentrated in the hands of those who have economic control within a society... in every epoch, the prevalent idea is the idea of the ruling class" (Haralambos &

Holborn 713). He dissected the echelons of power as it affects the economy and concludes that there is an abyss between the oppressors and the oppressed, the exploiters and the exploited and consequently, he advocated for revolution- a wave of movement by the oppressed against the oppressor to balance the disequilibrium. The entire body of the society and its structure are controlled by the Aristocrats who owned and controls the means of production and thus, prospered from the sweat of the peasants who toil laboriously day and night without anything to show for it. This is a capitalist structure. Lawal and Olugbade explains that this structure is oppressive:

In the capitalist system, work or labour, is deceitful because, in Marx's view, man likes to be proud of what he creates and in the capitalist society, the fruits of Man's creative ability are for capitalists. Man therefore, becomes estranged from what he produces. He is also alienated from the person who gets what he creates from him to sell at a price very higher than the cost of production, to strengthen and ensure the exploitative connection (126).

This system of the rich getting richer, Marx submits should be overthrown and the table turned such that the dominated can begin to enjoy the dividends of their struggles. He was an avowed adversary of oppression in whatever form. Thus, he joined the proletariat (working class) to advocate for the abolition of class oppression (12). This view made Cox to conclude that

Human beings are social beings who are gifted with the ability to act unanimously to promote interests but capitalist structures under its private ownership and social stratification suppresses that ability by creating a division. However, if we consciously reach a consensus to match production with societal needs, then a true revolution could be birthed (7).

In his popular communist manifesto (1845), Marx emphasised that in every historical epoch, the societal order, the political and economic history of the age is largely determined by the prevailing economic system, by which the necessities of life is produced among which we find shelter, food, education etc, in the quest for survival, human beings find themselves in two distinct classes in the society, either the man who owns and controls the means of production i.e the Aristocrats or the man who toils to make the production efficient- the proletariat. Ojebode sheds more light on this:

The Marxist ideologues believe that all social struggles are economically-based with the resolution that stirs conflicts among the different classes inhabiting a social milieu. The society is divided into two broad classes; the oppressor and the oppressed, who in Marx parlance are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat respectively. Because the former holds the means of production, it becomes dominant and hence oppresses the other (22).

Man, therefore, becomes estranged from what he produces; he is also alienated from the person who would sell what he creates. Hence, in this type of society, the legal rights, which belong to proletariat (peasants) are denied, despite being the class that have the capacity to labour for the commodity, and sell for the capitalists (bourgeoisie). Due to these foregoings, it's not out of place to say that, the concern of every Marxist writer is to depict these oppressive, subjective and exploitive tendencies within the society by exposing the oppressive class and its medium of oppression.

### **Politics and Corruption**

One of the greatest problems ravaging the democracy and political space of Nigeria today is corruption, corruption in its simplest terms could be regarded as an act of dishonesty/inducement, to act wrongly, illegally and unlawfully. According to the World Bank and Transparency International (TI), a leading global anti-corruption watchdog, corruption is the abuse of public office for private gains for the benefit of the holder of the office or some third party. Sadly enough, it is opprobrious that Nigeria, the world's eighth largest exporter of crude oil, a country endowed with nameless abundant natural and human resources, still has more than 70 percent of its population living below the poverty line as a result of corruption and economic mismanagement. Statistics in 2018 revealed that Nigeria took the place of India as the second most impoverished nation. Pathetically, the logic of the Nigerian political leadership class has been that of self-service as some of the leaders are masters in the pursuit of selfish and personal goals at the expense of economic advancement. Adesunloye reports that:

Over the years Nigeria has been plagued with diverse forms of corruption in its political terrain, which are basically leadership oriented. Nigerian leaders have become megalomaniacs; they indulge in bribery, looting, squander mania, money laundering etc. The moment the mantle of power and authority is passed down to them, they grow corrupt with power and mal-

administer the country's resources thereby patterning a dystopian thread in the Nigerian economic and political fabric. These corrupt acts have undermined her government and soiled her image (10).

The current politicians in Nigeria is what John the baptist called “snakes”, “brood of vipers” (Mat 23:33). The political leadership class, in its quest to secure or retain power, suppress opposition, and have access to unlimited funds for personal use, they have sacrificed positive leadership on the altar of corruption. Indeed, from the first generation of political leadership class through the successive military and civilian generation of political leaders, Nigerian political leadership had grown continually in corrupt practices. Dominic and Ibrahim write that corruption has “permeated all aspects of the moral fiber of Nigerians to the extent that before one can get someone to do an official job, there will be the need to bribe the person, or else the work will not be done. These acts are perpetrated by even the very high in society, and the guiltiest are the politicians of the day” (73).

The Second Republic, under President Shehu Shagari, witnessed a resurgence of corruption as the President made little or no significant effort to stop the looting of public funds by elected officials and consequently, this same trend was obtainable for the next thirteen years that cut across political leaders like Gen Ibrahim Babangida, Gen Sanni Abacha, Abdulsalami Abubakar till the Obasanjo led regime, having a deep knowledge and awareness of the decades of systematic corruption perpetrated by the precedent political leadership of Nigeria and the adverse effects it has had on the country's socio-economic, cultural and political growth, established the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), these bodies made contribution during the Obasanjo's regime but were made toothless bulldogs during successive administration of Alh Umar Musa Yar'adua and Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Many Nigeria leaders have helped in boosting the economy of other nations through depositions of the embezzled money in foreign banks, Frantz Fanon once said 'the wealth and prosperity of the European nations are built with the sweat of Africans'. As of 2017, feelers and reports from both local and international bodies reported ministers and political office holders who carted away treasury from Nigeria, among which we find but not limited to; Mrs Diezani Allison Madueke, Patience Jonathan, Col Sabo Dasuki, Babachir Lawal, Sen Musiliu Obanikoro to mention a few. These personalities were arrested and probed by the Buhari led regime amidst claims of a biased anti-corruption strategy of his administration.

Aside these phenomenon, observations from researchers reveals that, political corruption also manifest itself in Election rigging, as politicians who are paranoid with ambition, deploy different strategies to win the election, some deliberately import rifles and improvised explosive devices, hire thugs, pay them huge amount of money, just to cause uproar, disarray and chaos during election. They also kill resistant electorates, steal ballot boxes, empty them and thumb print en masse for their bosses this trend is synonymous to the Nigerian political space. Another strategy is buying of voters card from the electorates and selling of unclaimed permanent voters card by INEC officials to politicians who in turn use them to cast votes en masse in favour of their candidates. Recently, a renowned trend that permeates the political space of Nigeria is voter inducement- 'see and buy'. Many voters are lured with money to vote for a candidate and because of ignorance and ever increasing poverty levels, diseases, hunger, unemployment etc, voters (electorates) casts their votes for the highest bidder, this is politics of corruption.

Another trend in the corruption of the political space is kidnapping of children and women for ritualistic/religious purposes, their organs are harvested and their carcass dumped in the ocean or forest- or in another case, they are made to renounce their faith which undermines the fundamental human rights of freedom to belong to any association. The Chibok school girls in Borno state as well as the Dapchi school girls kidnapped in February 2018 attests to this facts. The corruption of politics and politics of corruption did not end there, it also permeates the education sector as political godfathers, who feel they are in the helm of affairs in the educational sector, freely engage in corruption by cornering contracts, influencing the decision of Nigerian University's commission, and give it to their contacts for monetary and political gains. Equipments and facilities meant for the development of the Public tertiary institutions aren't supplied or in most cases substandard thereby shortchanging the students. One of the consequences of this is decline in the quality of graduates in Nigeria which coincidentally, is her lot today. On the recurrent nationwide strike embarked upon by the Academic staff union of Universities under the rulership of Prof Biodun Ogunyemi, one of the salient reasons for the industrial action is, among other things, rot in the educational sector, incursion of political office holders into university affairs, poor funding of the Nigerian Universities, Ogunyemi lament that:

ASUU's advocacy on the need to stem the continued slide into rot and decay in public universities since the 1980shas fallen on deaf ears. Our experience, as a trade union, shows that successive governments in Nigeria always entered into

negotiated agreements only to placate those pleading the cause – be it education, health, transportation, employment or any other issue of meaningful living. This proclivity of the Nigerian ruling class, irrespective of which wing of the insensitive stock they belong, must be continually be tracked, engaged and resisted by all people of goodwill (2).

Other reason for the industrial action, continued Ogunyemi is the “provision of a platform by the federal government for ASUU to engage Governors on the proliferation of universities, underfunding of university education and undue interference in the affairs of the universities”(2). Away from this, we find some political office holders negotiating their wards into securing admission into the universities by taking undue vantage of their offices by either offering bribe or sorting other means, without such student making the basic minimum prerequisites. Regrettably, there is virtually no sector where corruption of politics and politics of corruption has not permeated and despite the purported continued battle against corruption and consequently, doubts are being raised whether or not corruption can be permanently excommunicated from the Nigerian society.

### **Once Upon a Tower: Synopsis**

The play reflects the upshot of corruption and rot in the political society of Nigeria, as it affect all sectors of the economy especially education. A promising student- Pedro got into Mariapinto University, Nigeriana to study gynaecology but the corruption of politics and politics of corruption came into play as Senator Abdulkadir Ike Anobi, the chairman, senate committee on education used his position to corner contracts for the benefit of his friend Ogbuefi who is a contractor at subsidized rates. Ogbuefi, in turn diverted the funds and didn't supply the laboratory practical equipments thereby contributing to the ignorance of students, one of eventually killed the senator's only child. Professor Kurumbete, provost of the medical college in Mariapinto University, wanted to retain the monopoly of superiority the consequently, frustrated all voices that attempt to resist him. This led to the set up and expulsion of intellect that ought to nurture potential gynaecologists to fruition and replaced them with incompetent ones who bow and tremble a his feet.

Pedro falls in love with Khadijat- Senator's daughter and eloped with her in spite of her father's refusal to accept their relationship. While camping at a friend's house, Khadijat got pregnant and Pedro made attempts to evacuate the baby since he feels he is a trained and certified gynaecologist. Khadijat

refutes abortion and Pedro put drugs in her drink to induce anaesthesia but she dies invariably. Senator jails Pedro and Pedro broke out of prison to murder the powers that turned his promising future to a nightmare.

### **Images of Corruption of Politics and Politics of Corruption in *Once upon a Tower***

The playwright attempt to overthrow the decadent capitalist structure through revolutionary aesthetics to salvage the future of generations yet unborn by questioning the status quo and revealing that the corruption of the political set up is negatively affecting the commoners. The play also satirizes the Nigerian system and how politics, that is meant to represent the interest of the people, has degenerated to politics of corruption, that represents only one's pocket, affluent politicians take advantage of their political affluence/influence to eat up the politic in munches and enrich themselves. This can be gleaned from the assertion of Khadijat when she says thus:

You lie dad, you lie..... But I know your real agenda (faces the audience). Ladies and gentlemen please be our judge. My dad here is the chairman, house committee on education at the senate. He uses his position and his party affinity with the minister to corner ninety per cent of the contract award on education matters. But because of his position as senator, he cannot operate as a contractor openly so he uses a dummy called chief Ogbuefi Chukwuma as a front and they share the proceeds fifty-fifty(44).

Self-preservation and self-centeredness is the bone of contention in this play. Everyone knows what is right but they choose to fight for possessions rather than collective interest, the Vice chancellor couldn't write a query to the Nigeria university's commission to report the absence of equipment in the laboratory despite the fact that the contract has been awarded to ensure a second tenure in office as the vice chancellor. This self-aggrandizement is what informs senator's insistence that his daughter must marry Ogbuefi so that the monies from Ogbuefi's pocket could be recycled into his pocket. He was willing to sacrifice his daughter's future and happiness for a pot of porridge. This is the die-hard political game that exists amongst the politicians of Nigeria today. A host of them get to the top and sell off the future of the next generation of Nigerians in the name of privatization Virgin Nigeria was privatized, what is the situation today? Nepa was privatized, sold off to PHCN, where is PHCN today? These firms were sold off to fellow political capitalists to constantly put the peasants to the bottom level of exploitation.

All these facts encourage a capitalist structure that Marx dismisses and Bakare raises this national consciousness that this system should be met with stiff resistance. This corruption in the political sector made appointments into public offices to be politicized and same is obtainable in the education sector, the Emir and the V.C toasts to celebrate another set of graduands that has just graduated when Pedro bursts in to snuff their lives out, they claim not to be involved in physically producing 'half-baked graduates' but their silence and actions made them participate indirectly. This is captured by Pedro thus:

**V.C:**(scared). But where do I come into this? Why did you chose this time? I mean with me, the pro chancellor and chairman of council, we had no hands in this.

**Pedro:** I object Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, you had more than hands in the process of making me professionally malnourished... I remembered specifically, that most of the chemicals I started seeing in the hospitals after my graduation were the things I wasn't opportune to be familiar with when I was a student here just because the university couldn't make them available.....

**V.C:** Not my fault...Not my fault. I forwarded the necessary request to the university's commission, the funds were approved based on my recommendations, but the chairman of senate sub-committee on education used his position to corner the contract of supplying the chemicals and other facilities. And then we waited....and waited...and waited without any supply forthcoming.

**Pedro:** And what did you do as the V.C? Did you protest or complain?

**V.C:** Protest? Who do I protest against? The man is a sacred cow, he is very powerful.

**Pedro:** It wasn't the sacredness of that cow that stopped you from protesting, but your ambition to ensure a second term in office as vice chancellor. You didn't want anybody to work against your ambition so you compromised the future of those of us entrusted in your care.... (58-60).

This is just one of the many aftermath of corruption, when political elites stuff themselves with the national cake, each sector of the economy that ought to add life and bring development to the populace suffers political diarrhea, monies meant to procure arms to combat terrorism of the Boko Haram Islamic sect were reportedly siphoned by Col. Sambo Dasuki during the Goodluck E. Jonathan regime and attacks have been constantly perpetrated. The citizens are displaced and the soldiers killed. The wife of the soldier who couldn't fend for herself becomes prostitute and her child becomes armed robber, courtesy of the society. That justifies the fact that the less privileged are always at the receiving end of these disasters and Bakare argues for a change in the wheels of power.

This corruption in the political terrain has crept into the education sector as intellectual bigwigs who have reached the peak of their careers, engaged in dangerous politicking to submerge the growth of potentially promising intelligentsia like themselves to constantly create a monopoly of authority. This is the selfishness and self-centeredness that pervades the world of the play. Intelligence and scholarship have been sacrificed and raped on the altar of personal ambition, dregs are constantly produced in the education sector due to the porous attitudes of lecturers towards quality and qualitative education. Pathological idiocy, extreme mediocrity, glorified emptiness and sheer indiscipline are now being celebrated. That justifies why a graduate in Nigeria today might find it hard to express himself in his chosen field of study. The system is replete with damages owing to politics of loyalty to the supreme 'boss' in the system that usually gets rewards for loyalty rather than bright minds who are competent and value oriented. Dr Akitikori is a gifted hands that was to mould Pedro but he was ousted from the system for refusing to be subdued under the monopoly of Professor Kurumbete Ijakadi and his position was taken up by Yemi- a loyalist to Professor Kurumbete who is a certified incompetent teacher and could not manage to pass his exams without help successfully. He taught Pedro the wrong administration of dosage that twisted his fate from a promising gynaecologist to a murderer in incarceration. His ignorance and incompetence is reiterated by the chorus thus:

Chorus: Teacher don messi messi ooooTeacher don  
fumble fumble ooooTeacher don messi messi  
ooooTeacher don yab yab oooo  
Solo: (Dr Yemi) Okay you are ready  
Chorus: Teacher  
Solo: You are bloody ready  
Chorus: Teacher

Solo: In the field of teaching  
Chorus: Teacher  
Solo: I be pedagogy  
Chorus: Teacher  
Solo: In the field of Shurgery (surgery)  
Chorus: Teacher  
Solo: I be master butser (Butcher)  
Chorus: Teacher  
Solo: You get a Pasient (Patient)  
Chorus: Teacher  
Solo: with pelptic ulcer  
Chorus: Teacher.....  
Solo: (Picks pruner for demonstration) And yanka the  
tommy.  
Chorus: Teacher.....(38-39)

This above song is the case with Dr Yemi, like some lecturers in the academics, they get promotion through recommendations from their boss because they are loyal not because they have worked for it. The politics is so stiffened that grants and allowances allotted to the educational sector are given with favouritism, ethnical differences and in some institutions, religious differences. Any student that passes through this kind of political system like Pedro, would be intellectually short changed, which justifies why more and more private universities are taking a coign of vantage of these development to lure potentially promising students to their institutions for monetary benefits, whereas others who are buoyant enough opt for studying abroad where they believe life is greener and the future more promising. Aside this, politics and corruption in the system has made some senior literati commit grievous crimes to humanity without fear or conscience by operating the system as a merchandise- an opportunity to enrich themselves and these bigwigs send their children beyond the shores of Nigeria. The vice chancellors neglect their administrative duties in pursuit of higher positions or contracts as the case may be. They also eradicate every iota of resistance in any form, by any means at the expense of the future generations just to see to it that their word becomes law. Consequently, the student's future are put to perdition but they are nonchalant about this. The following dialogue lends credence to this:

**Kurumbete:** ...Look that boy is dangerous to my future, he is in my area of specialization, well positioned to break my monopoly, he is also dangerous to your future..... he is a

threat to your long stay as The head of department. We have to get him out of the system fast!

**Ugolo:** True prof. but who takes over from him? He is too good in the area. If we get him out, the system will suffer, our students will suffer.

**Kurumbete:** to hell with the system suffering. I hope you are not fooling yourself thinking you can help the system? Can't you see nobody cares about the system? Everybody is a hanger on just looking for a way to survive via the system. Those who are in a position to make fat monetary rip offs from the system do so. It is a merchandise. The system is not only suffering but bleeding. So what difference will another kick make?.....Yemi will finish his housemanship sometimes next year.....so we kick Akitikori out and Yemi takes over his courses.

**Ugolo:** Ha....Prof....Yemi is too weak academically, he is no a material to replace Akitikori.

**Kurumbete:** Who cares? Is he going to teach your child? Make no mistakes about allowing your children to study in this country, if you don't have enough money to send them to Europe, then send them to Ghana (30-32).

From the above discussion, it is not out of place to say these unscrupulous elements responsible for this decay in the system prefer to send their wards abroad to acquire qualitative education. In Nigeria today, the politics of corruption is so virulent that it stinks to what the playwright calls 'a suffocating proportion'.

The new philosophy is half bread is better than none. The system has misplaced its priority in search of other engagements that are unhealthy to the academic space. That is why the system bleeds and all manner of corrupt practices are perpetrated in a place where no form of indiscipline ought to be tolerated. Where people should be reshaped and rehabilitated, where the future of the country ought be shaped and moulded. This is captured by the playwright thus:

**Solo:**Half education is better than none, Na de philosophy of our universities now, Halfblindness dey riskyKatakata dey for

front.....Government go de careless. Vice chancellor turn contractor....Dean na to play wayo, HODs na politicians, Lecturers turn survivalists.....(5)

The above song raises salient rhetorical questions in the society, questions like why do we fail to trust our products? Why did we prefer to travel beyond the shores of this country for first class medical treatment? The playwright further raise the consciousness of the entire society that this table that is shaking will be upturned one day as the proletariat(less privileged) would rise and revolt against this oppressive, exploitive and insensitive system as is the case with the play, the principal perpetrators were gruesomely murdered by Pedro to avenge the politics his life and future was played with. The play ends with death but it's not a tragedy. Bamikunle submits that "the dead character deserves what they got and society can breathe a little better. Without being sentimental, the play has meted punishment to whom it is due" (v). Some persons however escaped only because they need to learn and sanitise the system before nemesis revisits them again.

### **Conclusion**

*Once upon a Tower* sparks a muse in the subconscious minds of the society that the future is accursed if the system is not salvaged from philanderers and selfish personalities who wants to eat up in large chunks the polity. In this play, the playwright successfully portrays the negative side of corruption with the use of satire and this has been critically assessed from the view points of the following characters; Senator's diversion of funds for university equipments, Professor Kurumbete's over ambition in creating monopoly, Dr Yemi's incompetency, Dr Ugolo's conformity to crimes etc. The lack of competent, responsible leaders with integrity, vision, high moral values has been the bane of the country. It is simply disheartening that Nigeria, a country blessed with natural resources and manpower is now doomed with uncertainty where abject poverty, high unemployment rate, unresolved assassinations, looting and squandering of public funds, etc, all as consequences of corruption, have become the order of the day and this permeates not only the education sector but all other sectors of the economy. Thus from the series of events in the play, it is evident that these corrupt practices abounds in Nigeria today and only a true rebirth, occasioned by a revolution of the status quo against the capitalist structures, like Pedro did, can birth the Nigeria of our dreams else the end is just the beginning.

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## **DRAMA AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION VIA A THEMATIC READINGS OF FEMI OSOFISAN'S SELECTED OUEVRE**

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### **Abstract**

*Nigeria came into existence with the forced unification of some 250-300 ethnic groups in 1914. Since then, a lot of animosity has been generated among these various ethnic nationalities, resulting in varying degrees of wastage, destructions and carnage. The nation that the British Imperialists left behind in 1960 when Nigeria was given its political independence had only a semblance of coalition and not a Nation, as it is governed by a constitutional framework that barely provided for justice and equity among the various population. The paper examines equity and justice as critical factors to national reconciliation and national development. The paper using content analysis argues that the selected oeuvre of Osofisan support national reconciliation and development by advocating for a corrupt free society where equity and justice reign supreme. In conclusion the paper recommends that continuous exposure to his plays can help Nigeria tackle the challenges against national reconciliation and development.*

**Keywords:** Reconciliation, Drama and National

### **Introduction**

It is critical to note that Nigeria's constitutional framework is totally lacking in defining equity and justice in the sharing of politic power, social development and the sustainability of the various distinct cultural identities of the peoples that make up the nation. A nation with such diversities in culture, religion and opinion of the people ought to, have consciously "designed policy responses to the disintegrative potentiality of their heterogeneous ethnic composition" (Akpan 13). The absence of such mechanism was to culminated into a bitter and hard fought civil war which lasted for thirty-six months, leaving behind, rivalry and and suspicion amongst the various component ethnic nationalities in pursuance of self actualization and fulfillment, in difference to the pursuance of a collective ideology for the quest of a true

nation. Having been able to contain all the divisive elements of corruption, nepotism, ethnicism, religious fanaticism, and violence against one another, and still remained one nation, therefore the time has come for all of these to be put behind and chart a new course for progress and attainment of a true nation, where equity, fair-play and justice should form the ground rule for the pursuance of individual and collective dreams towards the achievement of our national aspirations, using all means, including drama. This is even more important now that for the first time, successful transitions from one civil administration to another has been achieved in Nigeria from 1999, presupposing some kind of unity.

A nation is a depersonalized entity with a sovereignty attached to it. The basic quality justifying a nation as an entity is hinged upon the fact that its institutions are the embodiment of the will of the people. According to Rupert Emerson,

The Nation is a community of people who feel that they belong together in a double sense that they share deeply significant elements of a common heritage, that they have a common destiny for the future, even to the extent of being prepared to lay down their lives for it, however deeply they may differ among themselves on other issues (69).

From the above, the concept of nationalism is derived. It is imperative that the definition of Hans Kohn is that;

Nationalism is a political creed that underlies the cohesion of modern societies and legitimize their claim to authority. It centres on the supreme loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the people upon the state and firms the indispensable framework for all social, cultural and economic activities (13).

This work is therefore, an examination of the role of drama in national reconciliation, using Femi Osofisan's *Farewell To A Cannibal Rage* as a case study.

### **Drama As Veritable Tool For Reconciliation**

Drama is the most social of all artistic enterprise. It is collaborative in nature as it calls for the involvement of various personalities in different capacities, ranging from actors, dancers, singers and a variety of designers. Osofisan states that, "performance is always the product of a community, done for the

delectation of a community. It is many people working together to achieve a single goal, which is meant to have an impact on some other people”(112). In the same vein, Ngugi waThiong'o sees drama as “a weapon of galvanizing the broad masses towards radical socio-economic changes”(25).

Based on the above, drama becomes a potential tool for the mobilization of people towards achieving reconciliation in a fractionalized community, state or nation. Reconciliation as a concept is the harmonization of two or more ideas, situations and conditions, etc. It is a necessary condition required for every human progress after a period of disagreement. It is an important aspect of conflict resolution, as it makes consistent and compatible all disputing ideals and groups.

It is from this perspective that drama becomes a veritable tool for the harmonization of opposing ideas, situations and conflict and, for the achievement of unity and peaceful co-existence amongst diverse groups. Over the years theatrical activities of every shade has tended to, according to Osofisan (114),” provide opportunities for discovery of one another with pleasant astonishment, as partners and fellow citizens in a newly defined space called nation and a new kind of intimacy, and a new identity is forged between them”

Recently, Wole Soyinka, was in Jamaica where he was opportuned to observe the production of his play, *Beatification of Area Boy*, used as bridge for bringing together Jamaica's fractious young population. His observation was captured by Osofisan in, *Theatre and Nationalism* as follows:

Kingston is a violent city. The kind of violence in Kingston defers from that of Lagos. The area boys are products of garrison as they are locally known. They are created and often maintained by politicians. The youths grow up in an atmosphere of mutual predatory neighbourhood hostility . You do not stray from your turf to another. The result can be fatal. Taking transportation through other zones as it is unavoidable means only one thing don't alight at the wrong bus stop(115).

The production of the play presented an opportunity for the destruction of the garrison mentality, the hatred and suspicion that had existed. According to Osofisan:

By remitting and bringing together actors from different areas

of the city for the project, the actors went into enemy camps to perform to an enthusiastic audience. It was the first undertaking of their lives across zones, it was the first time they were able to see that their age mates across did not hide devil horns under their Rastafarian locks and that, there were no guns behind every electric post (115).

To this end, drama can be said to have played a great role in the resolution and harmonization of several difficult issues ranging from ethnic, cultural and political, this is because drama is a cementing force between factions and nationalities. Though various other means have been used to achieve reconciliation, for instance, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which sought to reconcile both the perpetrators and victims of Apartheid after its end, and Oputa Panel in Abuja, Nigeria, which attempted to douse the nations conscience from the civil war years, and more particularly, the turbulent years of the Abacha regime, there success has not been as tremendous as that which drama has achieved.

It is important to note that the relative peace enjoyed in Jos, until the mindless attack on the Cocin Church Headquarter of 26 February, 2012, had the contribution of various dramatic forms and variety shows, like the Peace Concert which held in Dadin-kowa, Jos last year and the Plateau Peace Conference of 2010, which used drama to reminisce on the peaceful nature of the Plateau in times past.

### **On Femi Osofisan's Oeuvre**

Saint Gbileka once remark that "Osofisan's plays are the first body of literary drama that devout their theme to the problems of the peasants and the working class." ( 74 ) The truism of Saint Gbilekaa's observation on drama in Nigeria, quoted above is incontrovertible. This is so, partly, because Osofisan does not only see literature (art) as a medium of entertainment where he seeks to rouse his audience into critical awareness of prevailing social decadence.(Gbileka 74) and partly because most, if not, all of Osofisan's plays especially his early plays engaged this in content and form. A cursory thematic study of his plays reveals that indeed he writes about the problems of the peasants and working class and if this presupposes that he writes for them, then how do we reconcile the fact that the University communities form the largest audiences of his plays?

Beyond this however, it is essential for us to understand that there is a sense in which Osofisan's social vision connects with the recurring themes of protest against oppression, injustice and corruption on the one hand, and the

issues of women and compassion on the other. These by no means exhaust the list of themes in his plays.

Notably, we have used the word protest as against the more familiar word revolution as one of his thematic preoccupation. This is because the word revolution has fallen short of its generic meaning (epistemology) owing to the fact that the way and manner it is used in Osofisan's text hardly reflects the context.

Returning to Osofisan's social vision, it is important to note that it stems from his sympathetic considerations of the conditions of the peasants and working class who are more often than not at the receiving end. We can also argue that his social vision is partly informed by his anger and discontentment with the educated middle class in the Nigerian and African societies as well. Osofisan vividly captures his social vision when he declares;

That every man be born free and equal. That every man has a right to life and to the means of maintaining it .That inequality as we practice it in Nigeria can only lead to doom. That change and progress can only be achieved by us and not through any divine intervention. That anybody who labours must enjoy the fruits of his labour. That nobody should exploit the labours of others for his personal enrichment.(Awodiya 37-38)

We have quoted Osofisan at length just to have a glimpse of his social visions for society and humanity; this weighs heavily on the thematic values or relevance of his plays. As further argued by Bola Ademeso, Osofisan writes from a "Marxist vision..... borne out of the need to reinterpret... the status quo through a radical and scientific means that will cover all the various human endeavours" (5).

In addition, Femi Osofisan, is one of the foremost second generation Nigerian writers. A virile socio-political crusader, who espouses the icon of the underdogs. He is a playwright with a progressive and humanistic world-view. He is thoroughly steeped in the Yoruba culture, significantly, it is the social background from which his plays spring and his interest in oral literature, ancient beliefs and traditions of the Yoruba is frequently revealed. For, example, in *Farewell To A Cannibal Rage*, Osofisan employs the oral narrative technique in telling the story of love between Olabisi and Akanbi, using Baba Soye 'the diviner and priest of "Orunmila", a Yoruba god of wisdom, to try to dissuade Olabisi from her choice using the Yoruba mythical

story of Simbi and the handsome man.(pp.46-50). He uses Adigun and Titi, Olabisi's mother as symbols of their past and the death (that is, Adigun's) and their eventual blessings to the union of these young lovers, a capitulation of the old order to a new one, through reconciliation. Also, in this play, he exposes his disposition towards capitalism. He exposes its evil through the intrigues that led to the killing of a friend by a friend.

### **Thematic reading of select plays versus national reconciliation and development**

This notwithstanding, there exist some differences in terms of the form and content of his earlier plays and the latter. This has informed varied criticism about his commitment to art and the Marxian dogma. It is against this backdrop that we now begin a thematic reading of Osofisan's plays. We shall start with *A Restless Run of Locusts*, and conclude with *Yungba Yungba and the Dance Contest*. We shall also consider some plays in between these two. The general idea is to cover certain periods, issues and style in appreciation of his artistry and creative inventiveness.

#### ***A Restless Run Of Locusts***

This play was premiered in 1969 and published in 1975, with a thematic focus on the issue of social transformation. Hinged on this theme, Osofisan advances the argument that there is every need for changes in the socio-cultural as well as political terrain. According to Peter Ukpokodu, Osofisan approaches this issue from two directions: “the first is the battle of the sexes fought mostly by Chief and Mrs. Kuti” (46-47) while chief Kuti measures the ability of the woman by her expertise in knitting and culinary matters because political issues are beyond their understanding – the women reject this attitude (of men) because it is “selfish, arrogant and self-exonerating”.

The second direction from which Osofisan approaches his theme is via a portrayal of the “political battle of the generations:- old versus young. Thus, in the play, Sanda who stands as a representative of the younger generation is myopic and iconoclastic. Rashly he goes ahead to “disobey and disrespect time honoured traditions like the respect for elders, yet, he has nothing to replace what he is destroying”(Gbileka 79). However, in the views of Muyiwa Awodiya, the argument the play advances is that “..... if social transformation must take place, there must be a radical rejection of some obnoxious and outmoded values like absolute respect for elders” (Awodiya 47):

Some critics and analysts have also argued that the theme of revolution is central to the play. We reject this argument in that as we have argued earlier,

what we see in the early plays of Osofisan (except for *The Chattering and The Song*) are a trend of revolt or what we termed protest against institutionalized and socio political formations in the society. Notably, if we reckon with the period the play was premiered (1969) and we collocate it against the larger context of Nigeria's political electioneering within that decade, then we can begin to understand that it was actually meant to mediate the post independent milieu of Nigeria and Africa at large. A continent where politics is seen as a "do or die" affair.

### ***The Chattering and the Song***

This play was premiered in 1976 and published in 1977 (importantly) in a run up to FESTAC'77. The main theme of the play is the dead end of tyrannical leadership and the inevitable change society must witness galvanized by the resolve of the (oppressed) population to unite and confront the status quo. In the views of Saint Gbilekaa, the; "play dramatizes a universal system of oppression.... (and) is more about tyranism and how it can be overcome through conscientization" (Gbileka 79).

This is the most revolutionary of all Osofisan's plays, and significantly, it captures these themes through an elliptic plot. Against the backdrop of an alienating class, society the farmers movement group is meant to counteract it and erect a new egalitarian society. To carry the plot further Osofisan constructs the "Love-hate" triangle between Sontri, Yanjin and Moka, coupled with the play-within-a-play device in which the historical debacle between Latoye and Alaafin Abiodun is reinvented and re-enacted as a metaphor for the context (Gbilekaa 79). According to Biodun Jeyifo; "A militant has described the *Chattering and the Song* as the most revolutionary play ever written and produced in Nigeria" (51-52).

This view expressed almost two decades ago, makes it today arguable whether this view can hold water in twentieth century dispensation: most especially in the wake of playwrights such as Hagher, Fatunde, Lakoju, Nasiru, Yerimah and even the latter works of Soyinka, Clark Bekederemo and Rotimi of the pioneer tradition.

Significantly, the play mediates the context of inept and corrupt military junta of Gowon in the late sixties and early seventies. As Osofisan reveals, it was the monumental corruption of the regime that prompted him to write the play, explaining (in it) "why the regime had to go and in what way social justice could be established in its aftermath"(62).

The themes of protest against oppression, injustice and corruption are also present in almost all Osofisan's plays. For instance, in *Who is Afraid of Solarin?*, where Osofisan argues that a society that cherishes "eye service" (Bamidele 55) will not progress unless it rids and transforms municipal corruption as practised in the play. *Red is the Freedom Road* on the other hand dramatises the resolve of Akanji a native leading other slaves in captivity to "revolt" against the oppressive and tyrannical king (Awodiya 82). Meanwhile, in *The Oriki of a Grasshopper*, Imaro's quest for a revolution that will sweep away corruption, oppression and injustice and replace it with a better social order is unsuccessful because of deep rooted corruption in the society and the low consciousness of the populace.

### ***Once Upon Four Robbers***

When this play was premiered in 1978, it provoked a lot of debate, not so much for its theme but much more because of the manner in which it draws the audience into the actions of the play through the utilization of African traditional story telling formula. In the play, Osofisan thematically restructures the phenomenon of armed robbery (in Nigerian society) albeit in a dialectical manner. What Osofisan dramatizes here is a critical investigation into the nature and conditions of crime, in terms of the fact that people do not just rob for the sake of it, but because they are compelled by (severe) economic and social forces. As Osofisan puts it; "in the kind of society in which we have fabricated for ourselves, crime had become an obligatory practice in the rites of survival" (Osofisan 64).

The play dramatizes the plight of a foursome gang of robbers who have just witnessed the execution of their leader. However, instead of this lawful act of public execution by the authorities to scare and deter them, it further strengthened their resolve to continue in their crime. As sociologist would put it, their action then becomes a normal reaction to an abnormal situation. Significantly, among the multifarious themes in the play, the subject matter of recurring violence, the dehumanization of man by man and the wanton corruption, oppression, and exploitation of the many by the few stand out. In the end what the play amply demonstrates is the fact that "The robbers were not an aberration but a creation of the society itself, which such unconscionable manners as public execution would not eliminate but instead aggravate" (Osofisan 64).

Eventually the matter is left in the hands of the audience to decide the conclusion. This is similar to the end of the play in *The chattering and the song*, where Osofisan states that "the play does not end". The general idea is

that it continues in the minds, hearts and imagination of the people as they continue to debate and question issues (which the play raise) within their own social, economic, cultural and political materiality

Thus with close reference to *Once Upon Four Robbers*, Gbilekaa observes that “In a bid to articulate socio economic conditions that push men into crimes, Osofisan has failed to provide psychological insights into his characters that are almost flat and completely dependent on their social environments as well as economic determinants” (Gbilekaa 98).

Notably, the period in which the play was premiered (1978) and published (1982) clearly mediate (once again) the Gowon- Obasanjo-Shagari regimes. That is, beginning from the late 70's to the early 80's. This was a period that marked the climax of armed robbery in Nigeria: turning the public execution of robbers into a carnival instead of probing into the cause(s) for the increase in the wave of crime.

A cursory study of other plays by Osofisan also reveals the themes of corruption, oppression and exploitation. In plays such as *Morountodun*, *Midnight Hotel*, *Altines Wrath* and *Another Raft*, Osofisan captures the dialectics of these triple social vices as threats to national development and recollimation when he declares that “Corruption, injustice and oppression do not come from heaven but from man made god on earth... we ourselves are also responsible for whatever our society may become” (Awodiya 139-140).

If this play marked a turning point in Osofisan's dramaturgy, it is because (in part) it is the first play in a series which he tagged the “Magic Boon” plays. In a note to the play *Esu and the Vagabond Minstrels*, he declares that “Common to these plays is a central dramatic motif borrowed and adapted from the world of folklore – namely a group of people in a moment of desperation (caused by some social or political crisis), suddenly obtains, from some mysterious agent they come across, a magical power capable of altering their circumstances provided of course that they use the power according to expressed injunctions (v).

### ***Esu And The Vagabond Minstrels***

This is the second of Osofisan's “magic boon” plays with the theme of compassion central to the actions of the play. Premiered in 1984 and published in 1988, it draws largely from the existentialist philosopher and writer Albert Camus. Osofisan in his prefatory note writes that:

So this play is on a theme of COMPASSION, a sentiment now considered a sign of weakness or effeminacy in today's macho world alas, the road towards 'civilization' and development takes us daily further and further away from our humanity. But should this be so? (v).

It is partly in answering this fundamental question that the play sets out to dramatize the fortunes (in terms of moral temperaments) of five vagabond minstrels – Omele, Epo, Oyimbo, Jigi, Sin sin and Redio- as they encounter two gods: Esu and Orunmila. At the end of the play, it is only one minstrel whom the gods find worthy to be rewarded for showing compassion, while the rest are punished for their selfish and merciless acts. The symbolism is unmistakable. Fewer people out of many are compassionate. Notably, the theme of compassion also runs through plays such as *Once upon four Robbers*, *The inspector and the Hero* and *YungbaYungba and the Dance Contest*.

Significantly, the period of the play's premiere and publication mediates the harsh economic realities of the eighties: following Nigeria's dwindling fortunes leading up to the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). However, this is a play that will continue to mediate all times because the issue of compassion is one that human beings cannot afford to rule out of their daily lives. The effect of this theme on an audience can be tremendous. In this so-called civilized age of the twenty-first century what better way is there to reinvigorate our moral attitude /values, and sense of equity and justice than to be entertained with a play such as this?

### ***Yungba Yungba and the Dance Contest***

Though the theme of compassion runs through this play, its main focus explores the subject matter of dictatorship and democracy as two contrasting elements to national reconciliation and development. It was premiered in 1990 at the Arts Theatre University of Ibadan, and published in 1993. Osofisan in an introductory note to the first production comments that the play is all about “the struggle all over Africa between self-perpetuating regimes and democratic forces (xiv), the play also raised the issue of women in nation building. Thus, we see the trio of Ayoka, Dunbarin and Laboopo in the play, leading other women to effect change in the sit tight leadership of Iyeneri –the priestess of the shrine.

Notably, there are three categories of women in Osofisan's dramaturgy. Following Muyiwa Awodiya's argument, the first group are the young and

progressive, positive revolutionary women such as Yanjin and Funlola in the *The Chattering and the Song*, Ibidun in *Red is the Freedom Road* and Ayoka in *Yungba Yungba and the Dance Contest*.

The second groups are the conscious liberal women eager for social reform. The difference here is that they are not in the forefront of the struggle, but having shared deep understanding of how they are being exploited, they yield themselves to the struggle for change led mainly by the womenfolk, for instance, the market women in *Once Upon Four Robbers* and, *Fires Burn and Die Hard*. The third group of women are the conservative, reactionary, change resistant (often old) women: such women include Alhaja Kabirat in *Morountodun*, Tolu in *Who is Afraid of Solarin?* Mrs. Awero Asibong in *Midnight Hotel* and Chief Mrs. Aduke Esonin *The Inspector and the Hero* (Awodiya 8).

Basically, what inheres from these thematic readings is the fact that Osofisan has variously dealt with the same issues (injustice, corruption and oppression of man by man) though in different forms. What this does to the audience is to provoke them into the materiality of their existence. This is made possible in part, because as Effiong Johnson puts it: "Many of Femi Osofisan plays..... have been deliberately crafted to stimulate "angry" thoughts against forces inimical to collective progress.... (184).

Commenting on the plays of Osofisan and his use of traditional Yoruba motifs, Olu Obefemi argues that Osofisan does not utilize them in their original form: What he does is to appropriate the historical past for his social vision (122-123). Femi Fatoba has also argued that in Osofisan's dramaturgy "The play within a play within yet another play (399) structure suits the story of his plays which are not often told in linear form".

In a similar view, Emeka Nwabueze observes that "Osofisan's style of play within the play applies the communicational technique of "Equal finality": emanating the same result from different origins (78). Even though Osofisan uses traditional (oral) motifs and paradigms subversively, it has become appropriate to his relationship with the audience. According to Joel Adedeji; "African audience do not want to be passive. Oral traditions provides them with direct means of vicarious participation in the production... (141).

If we can say this about his theatre, can we also say the same about the dramatic texts? Especially since we are dealing with a different mode of expression. While the theatre can combine verbal and non-verbal language,

the text is left with only verbal language in written form. How can the reader draw meaning or understanding from the text? What parameters can he or she use to interpret the themes in the play(s) especially in a given semi sphere?

### ***Farewell to a Cannibal Rage***

Femi Osofisan's *Farewell To A Cannibal Rage*, is about reconciliation between two families brought by the strong nature of love between Akanbi and Olabisi, who left the city to inform their respective families the love they have found, and their intention to concretize this by marriage. They both face objections due to all kinds of reasons. But more specifically because it is claimed that Akanbi's father was killed by Olabisi's father, which necessitated Adigun, Akanbi's uncle to avenge it. Based on this existing feud neither family was willing to have the other as an in-law. However Akanbi and Olabisi shun all objections and oppositions to their relationship, until they succeed in ending the enmity between the two warring families.

The play which was dedicated to Biafra and those who survived it could be inferred that the play is intended to salve the wounds of the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-70, which created a lot of pains, psychologically, emotionally, socially and economically in the heart of Nigerians, particularly, the seceding Biafran people of South East Nigeria, who were forcibly brought back in to the Nigerian fold. This may have inspired this work and its dedication, as above, by the playwright. Reconciliation becomes even more relevant today when, during the controversy that followed the fuel subsidy removal, President Goodluck Jonathan, in January 2012, made allusion to the circumstances that triggered the Civil War in Nigeria as still being present today.

**In the play**, Akanbi and Olabisi, the principal characters in the story, through a narrator, in a performative story-telling manner, are young lovers from the same community, who met and fell in love in the city and decided to return to their homes to seek the consent of their parents to get married. The consent was denied, as unknown to them, there exists a history of vendetta in both families, arising from the killing of both fathers, who hitherto had been friends, as a result of capitalist intrigues and machinations. According to the Stranger: "I've brought you plans and promises. I've been seen by the Big Government in the city to bring the news To this soon-to-be-prosperous place. We're here to develop new model farms which will turn each of you into millionaires" (p. 54).

The above, is to bring about the manipulation that turned two friends against each other, as the land that was been sought after by this agent of

government belonged to these two friends, The stranger is to come forth with a plot, following the Baale description of both men, Olabisi's father and Akanbi's fathers, thus:

Baale: Both are violent, stubborn men. And money cannot buy them.  
Stranger: And woman?  
Baale: What do you mean?  
Stranger: Drive a woman between them.  
Baale: Ah! Why didn't I think of that?  
Stranger: You see? Send for me when you are ready and the task is accomplished(p.)

That is how Olabisi's father, Atanda is led into believing that his friend, Folabi, is betraying his friendship by having an affair with his wife. Folabi, on the other hand, has innocently been made to believe that his friend Atanda, had been bitten by a snake at the same time that Atanda's wife is told the same story. On their almost coincidental arrival at the scene of the supposed snake bite, Atanda, meet them, and without a word, in a fit of anger, smites Folabi to death. This death is to be avenged by Adigun, Folabi's brother, who brought Akanbi up as a father. This is the basis of the vendetta, that Akanbi and Olabisi's love and their insistence of going away forever without the blessings of their parents, despite all entreaties by Baba Soye, the servant of Orunmila, and the physical confrontation of Adigun with a long knife on Akanbi, who dispossess him of the knife and throws him to the ground for the first time ever since his childhood days. a Adigun threatens: "No, the hyena is dead. Come here, Akanbi. The time has come for me to answer the boatman. I look to the West. To the sun that has set. Come, wear this on your wrist. Remember me. Now my head is nude ... oh remember me! you head the family now. Head it well. So, salute!" (p.68).

This makes the capitulation of the old to the new and a beginning of reconciliation as Adigun leans on Titi, his erstwhile enemy for support to where he kills himself. At the end, Olabisi's mother, say to Detoun-the crazy: "Come with me. It is ours now to bury the dead. Farewell my children" (p 70).

### **Conclusion**

It is important that the theatre should serve as a veritable tool for achieving harmony, peace, reconciliation and national progress. It should be applied to the pervasive survival tendencies that have engulfed the Nigerian society which have manifested in most of the conflicts we have had for example, the

restive situation in Plateau State and of course, the Niger-Delta ,which is being reconciled by the ongoing amnesty program as way of forging a true Nigerian nation, where justice, equity and liberty are upheld as symbols of national growth.

It is important to note that while members of the generation that have initiated these intrigues are dying off, a new dawn should be ushered in with more exposure to these kind of plays that can persuade us to embrace national reconciliation and development just like the celebration that attended the burial of the ex-Biafran warlord, Chief Odumegwu Emeka Ojukwu, a new legacy of love, equity, justice and fair-play, be laid and bequeathed to the next generation. In the play Olabisi said,...”we must not inherit the hate of our fathers”...”there 's no war yet so hard that men cannot forget”.(p.16) Finally, in a country like ours which is often an arena of conflict, drama can play a vital centripetal role, if properly harnessed in the attainment of national unity.

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## **WOMEN NEGOTIATING POWER IN NIGERIA'S POLITICAL SPACE: A STUDY OF IRENE ISOKEN SALAMI'S *MORE THAN DANCING***

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### **Abstract**

*In democratic Nigeria, like in other African societies, there is a great gender inequality in politics as well as decision-making. The country's political scene is predominantly controlled and shaped by men. Within such patriarchal context of modern democracy, women in politics are not able to play any significant role to transcend the sexual politics. Rather, the roles they often play are mostly based on the terms dictated by men. As a result, women are marginal in national politics and visibly invisible in various positions of power either at the local, state or federal level. This is a cause for serious concern and provides the ground for many Nigerians, especially feminists and the gender sensitive ones, to question the legitimacy of democracy in the country. On this note, therefore, this paper assesses the patriarchal alienation of women from mainstream politics and their quest for an equitable political system, using Irene Isoken Salami's play, **More than Dancing**, as a primary paradigm. Theoretically anchored on Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics*, the study provides insight into the salient factors responsible for the under representation/marginalisation of women and also suggests strategies that can help improve the political condition of women. In conclusion, the paper upholds that democracy, especially in Nigeria, ceases to be genuine but rather is a charade without the active and significant participation of women as well as the incorporation of their perspective in all levels of decision making.*

**Keywords:** Women, Negotiating, Power, Political Space

### **Introduction**

*The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity drawing mutual enrichment from their differences. (Inter-parliamentary Union, 1997).*

*Gender equality and women's empowerment are not only*

*human rights; they are also imperative for achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development. Women's political participation is central to these goals, and political parties are among the most important institutions for promoting and nurturing such participation (Clark ii).*

Nigeria today operates a democratic system of government. Literally, democracy is rule by the people going by its etymological origin as derived from the Greek word 'demokratia,' which was coined from demos (people) and 'kratos' (rule). Abraham Lincoln described such societal construction as "...government of the people, by the people, for the people" (The Gettysburg Address). The concept of democracy is widely celebrated and accepted as the best form of government because of the participatory opportunity it affords the citizenry in the selection and election of their leaders/representatives. Hence, a democratic state is considered one where the citizens have equal access to job, education, justice, power, freedom, privilege and the likes. A democratic state is a society of equals where there is neither gender segregation nor class disparagement. This is why, according to Arowolo and Aluko, quoted by Falade, "any claim to democratic regime or state must essentially embrace a high degree of competitive choice, openness, and enjoyment of civic and political liberties and political participation that involves all groups of the society" (18-19).

However, it appears that democracy in Nigeria, which is arguably still nascent and fledging is operational only theoretically and not practically given that politics has predominantly been deemed to be men's domain. Olufade corroborates this view thus:

In Nigeria, politics is presumed to be a man's turf, where *No Woman Need Apply* (NWNNA) – an unspoken slogan reminiscent of the discrimination against Irish nationals in 19th century Britain. This unwritten rule is one that only a small percentage of the female population has defied successfully. (161)

In contrast to the universal ethos of democracy which Lincoln encapsulates, democracy in Nigeria is evidently *a government of the men, by the men and for the men*. In her article entitled *Emerging from the Shadows? Changing Patterns in Edo Women's Political Participation*, Irene Salami-Agunloye posit:

Nigerian politics is predominantly politics of men, men dominate the political arena, men formulate the rules of the political game and men define the standards for evaluation. Political life is based on male norms and values and in some cases even male lifestyles. Women are marginal to national politics, and more generally, to the public life of our nation. As a result, one of the greatest challenges of the Edo woman today, as with all Nigerian women, is her exclusion from political space and her invisibility in political affairs. Considering this invisibility, it is not surprising that very few women have gained access into the political arena. (89)

Over the years, due to the patriarchal configuration of the political landscape in Nigeria, women are continually discriminated against in both the election and/or selection (appointment) of persons into positions of power. While this may be a global phenomenon and not peculiar to Nigeria likewise other African countries, such discrimination has lingered for too long in this part of the world whereas other nations, especially developed ones, are progressively moving towards gender equity. Although women are not entirely absent from the political scene, however, the sad reality is that they are recognisably effective in politics either merely as voters or party faithfuls during political rallies/campaigns. Affirming this claim, Tabitha Agishi observes that “the few women who were bold to enter into the political terrain were used for mass mobilization/campaigns and dumped after party victories” (98).

Global patriarchy has given ascendancy to men in politics and placed them in a vantage position to perpetuate male hegemony via the election and/or selection of candidates for elective and appointive positions. Under such gender uneven electoral politics inspired by men's majority in the political hierarchy of the various parties, women remain greatly marginalised and under represented at various levels of government as well as party politics. It is in response to this gender inequity in politics/decision-making and other salient areas in which women are discriminated against that The Fourth World Conference on Women was hosted in Beijing, China, from the 4<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> of September 1995 to address such issues under the twelve critical areas of global concern to women which it focused on. The twelve critical issues outlined in The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which constitutes areas of concern regarding obstacles to the advancement of women are women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, violence against women, women and armed conflict, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms

for the advancement of women, human rights of women, women and the media, women and the environment, and the girl-child.

For this reason, a focus on the political representation of women is important and topical, reflecting the world wide thrust towards political liberation and egalitarianism. Consequently, African literary writers, notably playwrights, have continued to fulfil the artistic responsibility of mediating and interrogating Africa's gender uneven politics in their writings because, according to Chinua Achebe in *The African Writer and the Biafran Cause*, "an African creative writer who tries to avoid the big social and political issue of contemporary African will end up being completely irrelevant" (75). This makes it very difficult for writers generally to avoid the socio-political realities of their societies because it has always formed the basis for their art. Indeed, "a writer has no choice" as Ngugi wa Thiong'o further asserts in the preface of his book, *Writers in Politics*:

Literature cannot escape from the class power structures that shape our everyday life... Whether or not he is aware of it, his works reflect one or more aspects of the intense economic, political, cultural and ideological struggles in a society. What he can choose is one or the other side in the battle field: the side of the people, or the side of those social forces and classes that try to keep the people down. What he or she cannot do is to remain neutral. Every writer is a writer in politics. The only question is what and whose politics? (xi).

Against the backdrop of women's marginalisation and underrepresentation in politics in Nigeria which is a negation of the true essence of democracy, Irene Isoken Salami's *More than Dancing* is used as paradigm to x-ray the patriarchal nature of Nigeria's political landscape and, thus, advocate a truly egalitarian society where men and women are equally represented in the power arena.

### **Theoretical Premise**

Kate Millett's Theory of Sexual Politics in her book *Sexual Politics* (1969) provides a suitable theoretical framework for this paper to explore the grounds of women's political marginalisation and their objection as represented in Salami's *More than Dancing*. First published in 1969, *Sexual Politics* generally laid the foundation for other feminist discourse and scholarship by showing just how patriarchal structures and attitudes permeate virtually all spheres of human existence. Millett considers the

power relation of the sexes in a political light. In her the “orisation”, her usage of politics however has a different connotation that transcends the frontiers of institutional party politics of APC (All Progressive Congress), PDP (People's Democratic Party) and many others as we have them in Nigeria or of UPLP (United People's Liberation Party) as reflected in the dramatic text, which this paper sets out to examine. In her own words, the word “politics” refers “to power-structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of people is controlled by another, one group is dominant and the other subordinate” (23). In simple terms, the “one group of people” being “controlled by another” are women and who by virtue of their subjugation by the men (who are the dominant group and in control) are trapped in a power-structure relationship which confines them to the position of inferiority and subordination.

Millett's *Sexual Politics* is an exposition into the power relation that exists between men and women with regards to the hegemonic status that the former maintains and exercises over the latter, the family and society in general. This male domination over women and society is unequivocally expressed by Millett who insists that a man takes delight and pride in the subjugation and humiliation he metes out on the opposite sex (woman) “who is nothing but an object to him in the most literal sense” (20). The designation “*Sexual Politics*” is an expression of her view of 'patriarch' as pervasive, requiring “a systematic overview – as a political institution” (1). She views the existing domination between a man and woman to be mostly sexual, noting the power of sexuality through which men exert their power since it is in intimacy they haughtily demonstrate their performances. It is the “battle of sexes” (46) such that men possess power and women can hardly challenge or be opposed to a man (with power). Patriarchy, according to Millett, is deeply entrenched in family institutions and extended to the larger society. As one of patriarchy's oppressive mechanism, the family remains the leading institution of patriarchal societies given that the husband, in most cases, is the head and embodiment of authority who rules over the affairs of his household and especially the wife who becomes his subject physically and otherwise.

As one of the leading voices of the second wave feminist movement, Millett's notion of patriarchy proffers an insight into the systematised oppression, subjugation and exploitation of women by men in many aspects of their lives. She observes thus:

*Our society, like all other historical civilization is a patriarchy.  
The fact is evident at once if one recalls that the military,*

*technology, universities, science, political office and finance-in short, every avenue of power.... Including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands.... What lingers of supernatural authority, the deity, his ministry, together with the ethics and values, the philosophy and art of our culture is of male manufacture. (23-24).*

According to Das, "Patriarchy subordinates the female to the male or treats the female as an inferior male, and the power is exerted directly or indirectly in civil or domestic life to constrain women" (5). Literally, the word patriarchy means the rule of the father (the patriarch) and was originally used to describe a particular type of male-dominated family – the large household of the patriarch which comprises of women, low-ranking men, children, slaves and domestic servants all under the domination and control of this male (Sultana 2). In contemporary times however, with the wave of feminist consciousness, patriarchy is used "to refer to male domination, to the power relationships by which men dominate women, and to characterise a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways" (Bhasin 3). Similarly, Walby defines it "...as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (20).

Millett argues that an objective investigation of our sex role structure will reveal that the relationship that exists between the sexes now and even throughout history is a case of what Max Weber once described "herrschaft," or domination and subordination. She says "Women have been placed in the position of minority status throughout history and even after the grudging extension of certain minimal rights of citizenship and suffrage at the beginning of this century" (43). Patriarchy is an age-long phenomenon that has been deeply integrated into our society. The domination by men takes effect right from childhood when they are taught to be dominant and they grow up to form a dominant-subordinate relationship with women. Hence, as Millett further observes, male and female are regarded as being part of two separate cultures that are constructed from childhood (31). Given this socialisation from the cradle which accords men power that women defer to, the condition of men and women differs significantly. Women constitute part of a "minority group" who, like slaves, are denied of several rights by slave masters (men), and so "they live for differential and unequal treatment" (55). Along this line, Sultana posits:

Patriarchy, which pre-supposes the natural superiority of male over female, shamelessly upholds women's dependence on,

and subordination to, man in all spheres of life. Consequently, all the power and authority within the family, the society and the state remain entirely in the hands of men. So, due to patriarchy, women were deprived of their legal rights and opportunities patriarchal values restrict women's mobility, reject their freedom over themselves as well as their property. (6-7).

The oppression of women which Millett considers to be Total is multifaceted as women are kept subordinate in a number of ways that include amongst others “discrimination, disregard, insult, control, exploitation, oppression, violence – within the family, at the place of work, in society” (Sultana 7) and also in politics. Against this backdrop, therefore, Millett sees the need for a transformation to this sexual politics in order to engender a more humane and civilised world/society for both sexes and which is devoid of the long-lasting patriarchal features that entail the oppression of one sex by another. To deconstruct this patriarchal status quo and bring about an egalitarian society, there is need for the reinvention of a revolution that is aimed at new progressive and complementing relationship between the sexes. “This consciousness, this vision, this experience, this understanding, this revolutionary politic is feminism” (Warnock 28). It is this feminist movement and consciousness, which is the foremost potent force for non-violent revolution in practice today, that crusaders like Prof. Ononaghosa Odaro, Madam Bisi, Madam Ebele, and other women of UPLP in Salami's *More than Dancing* stand for as they seek an all-encompassing political landscape in the country where there is neither gender bias nor sexist agenda.

### **Summary of the Play *More than Dancing***

The play *More than Dancing* centres on the patriarchal nature and culture of politics in Nigeria, the resultant marginalisation/ under representation of women, and women's quest for an all-inclusive political system where gender is mainstreamed and both sexes are allowed equal political space. In the play, the Woman Leader of United People's Liberation Party (UPLP), Madam Bisi, takes the bold step to interrupt the party's convention as she protests against male hegemony and the persistent marginalisation of women in the political scheme of things as well as their relegation to peripheral and demeaning roles (i.e. dancing).

Subsequent to this courageous act which leads to the formation of another faction of UPLP, Professor Nona Odaro emerges as the women's choice of presidential candidate. This development does not go down well with the men who are determined to weaken the resolve of the women at all cost and

frustrate their ambition. However, Nona and her fellow women are spurred on to remain resolute and unwavering by past historical heroines such as Queen Idia of Benin, Queen Kambassa of Bonny, Queen Amina of Zauzau, Inikpi of Igala and Emotan amongst others who appear to her in dream at different times.

In the end, in spite of the various attempts by the men to talk the women out of their crusade and the malevolent and stern opposition they put up at various levels to destabilise the women, especially Nona even at the home front, she emerges as the party's official presidential flag bearer and, afterwards, triumphed at the polls to the utter dismay of the men who now realise that women are truly "more than dancing."

### **Women's Strive for Political Equity in *More than Dancing***

In view of the gender imbalanced political landscape of Nigeria vis-à-vis the marginalisation of women, the playwright expresses passionate concern right from the opening scene of the play when Madam Bisi Adigun (Woman Leader of the United People's Liberation Party – UPLP) boldly disrupts the mini convention of the party and berates the all-female dance troupes for their demeaning roles as mere entertainers. The composition of only the men on the high table with no woman reflects the men's domination in the party as executive members and the women as subordinates. Enraged by this gender biased political structure which does not embody democracy, justice and freedom, Madam Bisi strongly protests:

**Madam Bisi:** Stop drumming! Stop dancing!! Stop immediately. Stop I say!!! Enough of the dancing!... Year in, year out, primaries come and party elections go, all we do is dance. Is dancing all we can do? Is that all we are meant for?... Look at the high table (*Points at the top row where the dignitaries are seated*). How many women do you see up there? Where are the women, I ask? Look at us, (*points at the lower seats*) applauding the winning team. Look at us (*pointing at the dancers*) dancing and collecting two bags of rice, one bag of salt, one carton of maggi cubes and two wrappers to be shared among thirty-five women!... (1).

Although UPLP, like virtually all the political parties in Nigeria today, is comprised of both men and women, it is basically shaped by patriarchal ideology. The party is completely under the control of the men who occupy all of the party's executive position. Hence, the involvement of women in the party as floor members, prime entertainers and frontrunners at rallies/campaigns is inconsequential and demeaning because they are considered not fit or good enough for leadership.

**Madam Bisi:** ...United People's Liberation Party is a party for men, dominated by men, safeguarded by men. Men are chairpersons, secretaries, vice chairpersons, treasurers, public relations officers, welfare officers, financial secretaries, publicity secretaries and so on... Then, we are remembered as women leaders... Yet, when it is time for election, women are mobilised to vote. We are only good for dancing and voting... This is a democratic dispensation. Democracy is for all. It is for women as much as it is for men. Women are equal partners with men in governance. Get out of this place. Move out of here... (1-2).

The patriarchal structure of politics in the country makes it not conducive for women's active participation. As a male-dominated sphere thought to be the preserve of the men, politics is made unfriendly and even hostile to women. Hence, it is not surprising that the higher the pyramid of political power, the lesser the representation of women. One very common yet erroneous perception of men about women venturing into politics is that of a gatecrasher barging in into a territory she does not belong. Nona says:

**Nona:** ...This attitude of men feeling that women are intruding into their party is becoming unacceptable. They see the party as designed for them. Women are just filled in where needed. They see us as good only for dancing and voting. They have devalued and degraded us. We are being mistreated and marginalised (9).

The men indeed hold such discriminatory view about women which they often express freely just as Mazi Madu explicitly declares before Nona and

her husband Ambassador Uyi: “women have no right being in politics. They are our wives. Let them remain at home. That is their duty post” (54). At another time, both Madu and Alhaji Sani convey such views:

**Sani:** Where have you heard of first gentleman in the Africa? America, the champion of democracy and women liberation movement, has never had a female president.

**Madu:** You see, all women are good for is to dance at party rallies, not rule! They have no place in politics! We will fight them with our last drop of blood!

**Sani:** When America produces a female leader then Nigeria will be ready to produce one. Until then, tell Prof. Nona Odaro to go home and cook for her husband, period! (30).

Needless to say that women are leaders in some countries of the world today like Germany, Britain, Croatia, Liberia, Norway, Taiwan and Chile amongst a few more others. Although it had been hoped that the glass ceiling which Sani tailored his argument around would have been shattered by the historic emergence of Hilary Clinton as the first female president of the United States of America (the foremost advocates of modern democracy and arguably the most powerful nation in the world), the status quo for now remains unchanged with Donald Trump as the man who took over the mantle of leadership from Barack Obama.

Madam Bisi and her fellow women are determined to liberate themselves from their political obscurity and stake their claim in the power arena. They desire to stop the perpetuation of male hegemony in relation to politics and political leadership. The women are vocal about the true essence of democracy:

**Nona:** ...It amazes me that we call ourselves a liberated democratic party yet women in our party do not have a voice. If we say we are free and a democratic party, then we must be ready to deconstruct and reconstruct our political culture. There must be visible evidence that women within the party have been empowered to participate in the political process by their inclusion in the decision making-process as equal partners with the male counterparts (4).

Again, Nona lets the men know that equal participation of men and women in leadership and decision-making process is a necessary requirement for true democracy to exist:

- Nona:** If the hallmark of a democratic society is plurality of expressed opinions and contributions by those living within it then the participation of women in leadership positions ought to be valued and encouraged.
- Jeta:** Singular or plural the important thing is that our party is represented.
- Nona:** No matter what the case is, Ambassador Jeta, democracy will only be democracy when men and women as equal partners deliberate upon national policies and legislations. (5).

The marginalisation or exclusion of women from leadership does not only contravene provisions in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria but also several international legislations, protocols and declarations. For instance, in section 42 subsection 2 of the 1999 Constitution (with 2011 Amendment), it is clearly stated that “no citizen of Nigeria shall be subjected to any disability or deprivation merely by reason of the circumstances of his birth.” Some international legislation in this respect include the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR), which was domesticated in Nigeria in the form of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Enforcement and Domestication) Act Cap 10, 1990, and makes provisions for the enforce ability of the Charter in any Court of Law in Nigeria. Article 18 of the ACHPR unambiguously states that “the State shall ensure the elimination of every discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of women...”; Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “all human beings are born free and equal”; Article 5 of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and ratified by Nigeria in 1984, which “encourages nations to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women with the view to eliminate inferiority and superiority of either sexes or stereotype roles of men and women”; and also Article 1.1 of the Nigerian fundamental principle of humanity as contained in The Nigerian Declaration of Human Responsibilities and issued by the National Orientation Agency, which states that:

Every person in Nigeria, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, social standing, age, political and religious persuasions, physical disabilities of any type, has an inherent and equal right to be accorded the recognition and respect due to all human beings and the right to be treated humanely in all circumstances.

There is also the Beijing Declaration of thirty percent affirmative action for women and the National Policy on Women which stipulates thirty-five percent representations for women. Despite these policies and declarations, women are still being overlooked for leadership/decision-making positions. Contemptuously, misguided men like Femi and Sani often disregard these provisions and even deride women on account of them. In one particular instance, Femi aims a sneering swipe at women:

**Femi:** If not Beijing platform of action, it is CEDAW, if it is not CEDAW, it is 30% affirmative action, if not 30% affirmative action, it is optional protocol, if not optional protocol, it is National policy on women, if not national policy on women, it is Beijing +5... what they want is not just 30% but 90% affirmative action... (32).

However, not all the men in the party and by implication, all Nigerian men, are bigoted like Femi. Hakeem, apparently the only male executive of UPLP to share in the grievances of women and who is an advocate of their cause in the play, takes a rather progressive and reasonable stance to enlighten his fellow men on the essence of the various frameworks like CEDAW:

**Hakeem:** Alhaji, wait, you've got it all wrong. CEDAW does not threaten men's liberty in any way. Domestication of CEDAW is for the good of all of us. It is not a threat to anyone, male or female. Domestication of CEDAW is for national development. Women need our support just as they had always supported us in the past. (33).

An interesting and relevant question which *More than Dancing* attempts to answer by addressing the gender inequality question in a democratic society is posed by Mary Hawkesworth thus:

If democracy is understood as a mode of governance that respects the dignity of human beings, affords rights and immunities to individuals, fosters individual freedom and development, and encourages collective action to achieve political benefits, then why are these gendered effects so palpable? And how can such blatant inequities continue ...? (299).

In the women's resolve to achieve liberation and empowerment from the clutches of a patriarchal and phallogocentric socio-political order, they set up a faction of UPLP where gender is mainstreamed. In the words of Woodford-Berger, the notion of gender mainstreaming suggests progressive intentions:

To imbue all systems, structures and institutionalised cultures with awareness of gender-based biases and injustices, and to remove them... mainstreaming also involves efforts to make attention to gender and equality issues the concern and responsibility of everyone in development organisations, as opposed to being only that of specialist persons, units, teams or 'machineries' (122).

In the wake of the women's establishment of their faction of UPLP because the men remain unreasonably obstinate and would not grant them an equal political space that will guarantee their empowerment, they come up with a female presidential candidate. Although this development is surprising to the men, most of them do not see women as any formidable force to be taken seriously straightaway. Sani and his cohorts echoed the bigoted disposition of many Nigerian men towards a woman becoming the president with their sneering and jeering expressions:

- Sani:** Why do you bother yourself? Who will give the presidential seat to a woman? In this country? *Wa la hi ta la hi*, the day a woman becomes president of the Federal Republic, I will cross over to Chad. A woman will not rule me, Allah forbid.
- Madu:** *Tufiakwa*, I will swim to Equatorial Guinea.
- Sonsare:** I will run 880 to Cameroun (39).

In a truly democratic society, men and women are seen as partners in progress who equally take part in the leadership of that society as a way of

upholding the democratic principle of equality and also ensuring that such democracy is sustained and consolidated. Against the backdrop of a patriarchy-induced misconception that politics is a man's world and which men like Sani, Madu and Sonsare etc. embrace, Patrick Uchendu contends:

Men cannot claim exclusive right to shape the future of our world. It is time for them to accept challenge and share with women in decision-making process. It is high time to acknowledge that the denial of women's right and opportunities is at the root of our developmental problems and social economic ills... (64).

Relatedly, in his progressive ideological position and inclination towards the need for change as well as the meaningful inclusion/representation of women in politics and decision-making, Hakeem tells the men:

**Hakeem:** Democracy must include the opinions and perceptions of men as well as women. This is important because women constitute half of the nation's population (37).

With Nona emerging as the women's presidential candidate, the women are resolutely on a no-retreat-no-surrender mission to assert themselves and secure their democratic freedom and space. Nona's reaction to her nomination is imbued with ambivalence as she is caught in between her aversion to politics and then the call for service to motherland and not to disappoint the women.

**Nona:** The mantle of leadership has fallen on me. As the women's candidate, I cannot fail them. I love politics but I am inexperienced in political intrigues. I hate the intrigues in politics. I am not a smooth talker. I am not crafty in any way. How can I cope?... I love my home. I love my career and I love my husband... In spite of all these I love my country. (16)

Nona is eased of her state of dilemma by past heroines who appear to her at different times in her dreams, encouraging her to accept the nomination and lead the women. The likes of Inikpi, Queen Amina, Queen Idia, Moremi, Emotan, Kambassa, Madam Tinubu, Nwanyeruwa, Gambo Sawaba and Funmilayo all serve as sources of inspiration and pillar of strengths to her as

she eventually declares her willingness and readiness to lead the women to political liberation: “! ! I am ready! Here am I. I am ready to go all the way” (29).

The dream motif in *More than Dancing* as well as the appearance of past heroines who respectively related their heroic accomplishments is a motivating factor for Nona and her fellow men to stay resolute and strong-willed against all odds. Despite several malicious attempts by the men to destabilise Nona and also to weaken the resolve of the women, they remain undaunted by the men's schemes. At first, they (men) failed in their attempt to lure Madam Ebele, one of the top party members and leader of the market women, to their side even with the enticement of two million naira and the promise of an additional five million naira later. At another time of the meeting between the men and women, the men's acceptance to consider Nona for the position of the Vice President as well as running mate to Alhaji Bawa (their preferred choice of presidential candidate) is shrewdly rebuffed by the women. Once more, in another failed strategy to sabotage Nona's political ambition, the men were again unsuccessful in their ill-disposed and antagonistic intrusion into her home as they failed in their bid to cajole her husband, Ambassador Uyi, into dissuading her from contesting the presidential election or even withdrawing his support for her by consenting to join ranks with the men and become the running mate of their own presidential candidate, Alhaji Bawa. Nona's husband is stern and forthright in his response to the men:

**Uyi:** Funny isn't it? My wife is vying for presidency; then I her husband will condescend to come up as the running mate of Alhaji Bawa. what an insult? Is that a strategy for you to destabilise my home or to force my wife out of the race? Go back, tell the others that I am determined to stand by my wife. I will support her as she has always supported me. I will not disappoint her under any circumstances (55-56).

Against the conceited and narrow-minded belief of men like Madu that, “women cannot be united. They can never have a common front...” (39), the women worked and campaigned assiduously to ensure that their candidate is victorious at the polls. This is, of course, after Nona had edged out the men and their candidate, Alhaji Bawa, to become the party's official presidential flagbearer. This comes as a shock to the men, especially Madu who now recants his earlier sexist perception of women: “*Chineke me eee*. This is all a

ploy. We called them coconut brains; we thought they were daft, foolish, ha! Women have truly come of age. See how they have fooled us” (102).

Following the conduct of the presidential elections, early results which showed Nona leading the opposition parties by a great margin unsettles the patriarchal caucus made up of usual suspects like Sani, Madu, Jeta, Femi, Terna, Balat, Ohio and Sonsare. Agitated over the likely implication that Nona's imminent emergence as President would have on them, some of the men like Terna wasted no time in joining her team for fear of being rendered irrelevant in her government. He says:

**Terna:** We have been marginalised. We better hurry up and join the others, if we don't our seats in the house will be endangered also (102).

**Terna:** Well, if we want to be relevant in Nona's government we better move fast (103).

Nona's impending victory, which translates also into emancipation and empowerment for women is an indication that no matter how rough and bumpy the road for women in politics may have been, there is hope that one day, perhaps sooner rather than later, women will attain significant political representation in both elective and appointive positions. Her political ascendancy is reflective of the current global consciousness and upsurge in the number of women that have risen to the apex of political power in their respective countries. Although parity is still quite a long way off, the number of female government leaders (or women in top government positions) have continued to grow over the years: Theresa May (erstwhile British Prime Minister), Angela Merkel (German Chancellor), Dalia Grybauskaitė (President of Lithuania), Ana Brnabić (Serbia's first prime minister and the Balkan nation's first openly gay leader), Halimah Yacob (first female president of Singapore), Sahle-Work Zewde (president of Ethiopia), Ellen Sirleaf Johnson (erstwhile Liberian President), Paula-Mae Weekes (first woman president of Trinidad and Tobago), Salome Zurbishvili (Georgia's first woman directly elected president), Zuzana Čaputová (president of Slovakia), Simonetta Sommaruga (President of Switzerland), Jacinda Ardern (youngest Prime Minister of New Zealand in more than 150 years, elected in 2017 at the age of 37), Katrín Jakobsdóttir (Prime Minister of Iceland), Sheikh Hasina Wajed (Prime Minister of Bangladesh), Mia Mottley (Prime Minister of Barbados), Mette Frederiksen (Prime minister of Denmark), Sophie Wilmes (first woman Prime minister of Belgium), Sanna Marin (Prime Minister of Finland), Jeanine Anez (interim president of Bolivia),

Aung San Kyi (de facto leader of Myanmar), Tsai Ing-wen (President of Taiwan), Hilda Heine (erstwhile President of Marshall Islands), Bidhya Devi Bhandari (President of Nepal), Bibi Ameenah Firdaus Gurib-Fakim (erstwhile President of Mauritius), Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović (erstwhile President of Croatia), Marie Louise Coleiro Preca (erstwhile President of Malta), Michelle Bachelet (erstwhile President of Chile), Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila (Prime Minister of Namibia), Erna Solberg (Prime Minister of Norway), Beata Szydło (erstwhile Prime Minister of Poland), and Kersti Kaljulaid (President of the Baltic nation since 2016 and first female president of Estonia). Some others more include Helle Thorning-Schmidt (First female/immediate past Prime Minister of Denmark), Laura Chinchilla (First female/immediate past President of Costa Rica), Tarja Halonen (First female/immediate past President of Finland), Doris Bures (first of the three immediate past joint Presidents of Austria's National Council), Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner (first directly elected/immediate past female President of Argentina yet the second woman to serve in that capacity, and also the first woman to be re-elected to the office), Park Geun-hye (President of South Korea – her powers and duties were suspended since 16<sup>th</sup> December 2016), and Dilma Rouseff (who until her impeachment and removal from office on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 was the first female president of Brazil).

In Nigeria, the continued marginalisation and underrepresentation of women at the various levels of governance and decision-making does not only amount to social injustice against women as far as the tenets of true democracy is concerned – equality and equal rights for all citizens – but also makes the country's brand of democracy a façade and somewhat hinders development because one half of the society is denied the opportunity to contribute their own quota to nation building. On this note, Hakeem submits:

**Hakeem:** ...Whether you like it or not, the continued exclusion of women from the decision-making positions in the nation will slow down the pace of development of the democratic process and stunt the economic growth of the nation (35).

Commenting on the play, *More than Dancing*, and the fundamental message embedded therein, Olaitan Lateef Rasheed avers:

*More Than Dancing* is therefore a clarion call on the one hand, on all African women in general and Nigerian women in particular to fasten their seat belts and be ready for a journey of

self-realisation, emancipation and equality in the affairs of governance. While on the other hand, it sends warning signals to the men that gone are the days where men reign supreme, the patriarchal nature of the society, especially, the African system is about to be jettisoned (97).

### **Factors Militating against Women's Political Participation /Representation**

Some of the factors that account for the under representation, marginalisation or exclusion of women from governance/ decision-making and politics generally are discussed as follows:

**Ideological Factor:** One of the leading impediments to women's participation/representation in politics today is patriarchy. As an ideological tool, patriarchy is used via gender role ideology to confine women within the domestic arena and men in the public domain. *Madam Bisi in More than Dancing* says:

*...when men are at the helm of affairs in political parties, the possibilities of women being elected are limited. By being excluded from key positions in political party organs, we are portraying and perpetuating the traditional role of women as house wives whose places are in the kitchen and not the political arena (4-5).*

Rich defines patriarchy as:

*...the power of the fathers: a familial-social ideological, political system in which men – by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labour, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male (57).*

Patriarchy, as a societal system, comprises of social structures and practices in which men use their position of dominance to keep women subordinated. In a patriarchal political system, power relations are exploited by men to control access to institutional power which they predominantly wield to shape and mould ideology, philosophy, tradition etc. in their favour. As reflected in the play *More than Dancing*, the patriarchal nature of politics in Nigeria is often reinvigorated by the system of the various political parties which

*habitually favours male members to the disadvantage of female members. Madu emphatically says: "you see, all women are good for is to dance at party rallies, not to rule! They have no place in politics! Not in African politics or decision-making process!" (30).* It is indeed a dicey and messy scenario for women, who rarely occupy any significant position, as most political parties in the country are dominated by men who occupy virtually all the important executive/decision-making positions where decisions are made to always favour men.

**Socio-Cultural Factors:** The dual roles of women in the productive and reproductive spheres have grave implications for their participation in politics. As mothers and wives, childbearing/motherhood and several other family/domestic responsibilities that women are preoccupied with virtually on a daily basis hardly allow them the time and opportunity to have a life outside of the home. Politics is neither a part time nor a spare time activity. It is time consuming and requires a great deal of attention. In view of political activities like party primaries, conventions, caucus/zonal/board meetings, campaign stumps, rallies and the likes, a woman must, therefore, sacrifice part of the time she spends on activities in the house to be active and fully involved in political affairs. Hence, women who do not have understanding and supportive spouses might end up paying a steep price for their political ambition – a broken marriage/home. This almost was the harsh reality for Nona in the play when her husband, Uyi, at some point, becomes overbearing and intolerant of her political adventure. He scolds her while flimsily making a fuss about his dog not being fed:

**Uyi:** ...All you think of these days is politics! Politics!! Politics!!! Your emotional, mental and physical energies go into you political career. You only come alive when political discussions are on.

**Nona:** Uyi, that is not fair. I am disappointed in you. You make so much fuss just because of a hungry dog. When did Nona become the dog keeper? When? You are trying to ruin my political career because your dog is not fed. I care for you and the children. Now you want me to extend the services to your dog. No, Uyi, that will not work!

**Uyi:** I am the boss in this house; I draw the work schedule... I had warned you that your political career would have no roof in this home (77).

**Religious Factors:** Religion is yet another factor that encumbers the significant participation of women in politics as well their representation in decision-making. While politics requires the exposure of women in order for them to interact with male and female constituents and address public meetings, women are held in *Purdah* in deference to Islam especially in some Northern parts of the country. This, by implication, means that only their husbands can have unfettered access to them and their movement is restricted to their quarters. Similarly, another religious factor that constitutes a limitation to women's political participation is the practice of Sharia in some states such that women are not allowed to mingle with men in public.

In another light, religious belief which holds that politics is a dirty game and a sacrilegious activity capable of defiling the spirituality of an individual can hinder women from participating in politics. This is further accentuated by Esidene and Abdul thus:

There are however very many uncanny things that go with politics in underdeveloped societies such as vote buying, ballot box stuffing, arson, assassination of political opponents, violence and the like. Therefore, engaging in this kind of misdemeanours by adherents of true worshipers of God is a bad process. It therefore becomes a critical element in scaring away persons or groups from politics (12).

**Economic Factor:** Politics is money-demanding especially in a country like Nigeria where the money factor determines, to a very large extent, the electoral fortunes of a political aspirant – whether he/she emerges victorious at the various levels and categories of elections. As Alhaji Sani puts it to the women that “politics costs money,” so does Madu remark: “...I will love to see a good display of money as women come out to contest for positions...money is a defense. It answers all things” (3). “Money is very critical in the shaping, making and unmaking of public office which is supposed to be on trust” (Omodia, Erunke and Abdul 101). Therefore, the bigger the amount of money at the disposal of an aspirant the greater his/her chances of winning. Unfortunately, women do not have the necessary access to and possession of productive resource. Even when funds are provided by political godfathers/sponsors, women are mostly not considered for sponsorship because they are not fancied to stand any chance of winning and so investing money to their cause would amount to wastage. For these reasons, women more often than not suffer the lack of the necessary financial strength and support to run for elections in order to possibly actualise their political aspirations.

**Virility Deficiency Syndrome:** The general perception that politics is a dirty and a dangerous vocation of wit where only the 'strong' emerges victorious is a major deterrent to women's participation in politics as well as their involvement in governance. Politics is one activity that has come to be identified with violence especially in Africa and, so, it is often described as a game of survival of the fittest "that is reserved for unrefined people who have little scruples with bending the rules and subverting due process" (Olufade 163). It therefore, follows, as pointed out by Esidene and Abdul, "that man by nature is stronger and virile enough to play the game of politics" and, hence, women are fragile, mild and not wild enough "to compete favourably with men in the turbulent activities" (12) as well as to hold political positions. Such insinuation is made in the play by Sani when he cautions the Woman Leader and the women alike: "...*Haba*, Madam Bisi, be careful; don't push the women too hard. Political positions will wear them out" (5).

### **Strategies for Women's Political Empowerment**

The following are some recommendations aimed at the political empowerment of women and to foster a significant increase in their participation as well as representation in politics/decision-making:

- ❖ Deconstruct the culture of patriarchy through legislations that seek the abolishment of various socio-cultural, religious and other discriminatory (gender) practices which constitute impediments to women's empowerment and development.
- ❖ Mobilising and involving men in the feminist advocacy for gender equity for effective and positive impact. This necessarily means re-educating Nigerian men towards the benefits and positives of women empowerment in a democratic society.
- ❖ From primary schools to tertiary level of education, gender sensitive curricula should be designed and taught. This will go a long way to ensure that the girl-child is socialised to know that women have meaningful/essential roles to play in politics and that the world of politics is for women as much as it is for men. Also, by so doing, the boys will be discouraged from holding negative and stereotypical perceptions about girls.
- ❖ Formulating and implementing a quota system affirmative action. This is because the more equipped and represented Nigerians (men and women) from the various geo-political zones, states or communities are, the more potentials and human resources there will be at the disposal of the nation to be harnessed and exploited for development and sustainable democracy.
- ❖ Full implementation of international and national legislations and

provisions relevant to the political rights of women such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the National Gender Policy etc. and their integration into the national law.

- ❖ The National Policy on Women stipulation of a thirty-five percent affirmative action for women (which is even a scorn) should be implemented and passed into the nation's law without further delay.
- ❖ A review of the 1999 Constitution, political and other regulatory frameworks is imperative to include more gender sensitive provisions for greater or equal participation as well as representation of women in politics.
- ❖ It should be made constitutionally binding on all political parties, as the main gatekeepers in the determination of candidates especially for elective positions, to have it enshrined in their party manifestoes that where a man is the party chairperson or secretary etc., a woman must necessarily deputise and vice versa. Such practice of internal democracy at the party level would not only oblige political parties to integrate women into elective and non-elective public positions in the same proportion and at the same pedestal as men but will also engender gender parity on the national political scene and ensure equal participation of women in politics and decision-making.
- ❖ Policies and measures should be put in place to promote a violent free political terrain especially during campaigns and elections because majority of women are naturally wary of terror, aggression and activities that poses a threat to their lives. Non-Governmental Organisations, civil society organisations, active and credible human rights/feminist activists can all take the vanguard in advocating the formulation of a viable anti-violent political/electoral process in Nigeria.
- ❖ The few women who are in top political leadership positions should persistently and doggedly champion the cause of women and promote legislations that address the gender agenda. They should also embody purposeful and positive role-modelling and mentoring to other aspiring women in politics as a way of encouragement and inspiration.
- ❖ Women should take up the initiative to set up a political party where gender is mainstreamed as evident in the play *More than Dancing*. This is necessary because as long as women continue to join male-founded political parties that thrive on patriarchal ideologies, the longer they will most likely continue to function as secondary players.

As passengers who have entered a male-chauvinistic (political) train (party), it would be hard for them to make any significant impact or effect any change in the values/tenets of the parties for equality sake. But when women take on the position of a driver, as founders, they are advantageously placed to bring about a political party system that is gender sensitive and where men and women are given equal opportunities, priorities and privileges.

- ❖ Building teamwork, networking by women, a coalition of politically focused NGOs and gender sensitive socio-political activists, and other women organisations, regardless of religious and ethnic affiliations, to advocate and galvanise support for women political aspirants.

### **Conclusion**

Women constitute about half, if not more than, of the world's population. This means that their contribution to the socio-political and economic development of societies is in that proportion very crucial. Their enhanced participation in formal politics and decision-making at various levels is required for their potentials to be fully harnessed and for them to effectively contribute their own quota to nation building.

It suffice thus to say that as a democratic society, the gender uneven political landscape in Nigeria vis-à-vis the marginalisation and under representation of women in various leadership/decision-making capacities is an outright affront to the essence of true democracy and, thereby, constitutes a critical setback to the advancement of the nation. Hence, the increased participation of women in politics as significant players or an equitable political system where men and women are equally represented at all levels of decision-making/governance is an essential precondition for the existence of genuine democracy. Their active participation as well as the integration of their perspective in all levels of decision-making in all spheres of society is essential for the development and consolidation of democracy, and also for the attainment of the goals of equality, social justice and the realisation of women's rights which are also human rights.

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## **THE ACT AND IMPACTS OF CORRUPTION TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF NOLLYWOOD**

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### **Abstract**

*Nollywood also known as the Nigerian Film Industry despite its endowed human material to drive the industry to a greater political, economic, and socio-cultural height, still imperatively, need to beckon power that matters for steady progress and growth. The Nollywood Film Industry is a Nigerian film industry that projects the image, culture, and tradition of Nigerians to the rest of the world for the better mutual relationship with other countries. Above all, it has become a relevant economic sector with a remarkable contribution to the Nigerian economy. The success of this industry is highly determined by different category of people and groups; those directly involved in the production of films (internal category), the distributors and marketers (external category), and those who make policy and create an enabling environment for the security of films or films merchandise (security category). Notwithstanding, the success of this industry in its entirety has been threatened by a series of corrupt activities like piracy, favoritism, sexual debasement/nude images, and compromised of standard. This unscrupulous act is an upheaval to the complete success of the industry; it is in the face of this that this study examines the state of corruption and its impact on the growth and development of Nollywood. In achieving this, the study employs the qualitative method of research to unravel the activities of perpetrators of corruption and how these activities constitute corruption. The study found a high concentration of corruption in the industry amidst the increase in the activities of pirates, an increase in the production of porn inclined films, and compromise of the standard by film's security agencies/Filmmakers, amounting to grave effects on the growth and development of the industry.*

**Keywords:** Corruption, Growth and Development, Nollywood Film Industry, and Standard

## **Introduction**

The Nigerian film industry with its endowed human resources steers the industry forward by the activities of some committed individuals and groups of people. Currently, the industry is bedeviled by activities of corruption in actualizing a stable state of progress and growth. It is a thing of concern for the Nigerian State in the face of current economic setback. These economic setbacks can be seen in poor economic planning, mono-economy practices, and most importantly the growing rate of corruption in the industry. According to Otile, corruption is the perversion of integrity or state affairs through bribery, favour, or moral depravity (cited in Otile 2008). This also means the impairment, dissimulation, and misrepresentation of processes and moral debasement. One good way to perceive or recognize corruption is when an individual or group of peoples' act negates the moral principles that guide their official obligations.

Inyanda, (9) states that "corruption is a common word used by both adults and children because it is found in every aspect of Nigerian's profession". He further stresses that corruption has now become the culture in Nigeria and other African countries like Angola, Egypt, Libya, Cameroun, Zimbabwe and even in other parts of the world. It is undeniable, that most countries in Africa have issues of corruption to battle with. However, some countries in the world like, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and New Zealand had been consistently ranked as least corrupt countries by Transparency International (a leading anti-corruption organization) rating corrupt countries in the world. Marie Chene's survey shows the reason behind their success is the transparency, law enforcement, integrity, and openness of official activities to the public. There is a broad consensus that fighting corruption involves public participation and transparency mechanism such as disclosure of information. Chene (20) Also notes the increase in literacy level and prioritize human right issues (e.g gender equality, and freedom of information). With this, it is substantial, that what differentiates Nigerian from some of these countries is Nigeria's inability to devise appropriate measure in dealing with the menace, leaving corruption to gain ground and manifest in all the sectors in Nigeria: the governmental agencies, economic sector, traditional institution, private sectors, institutions of learning, health sectors, markets, banks and even at the religious sector (Churches and Mosques), etc.

The presence of corruption has placed a constant fear, especially in the minds of the lower class, that corruption has come to stay; particularly with the popular notion by some Nigerians that corruption is a "citizen" of Nigeria. Nevertheless, there is a campaign against corruption by President

Muhamadu Buhari's present administration, which gives some hope that the corruption, despite its strength, can be eradicated. It is pertinent, to extend this campaign to the relevant economic sector especially the film industry.

The film industry is one of the most relevant economic sectors in most countries of the world in which Nigeria is no exception. Although the activities of the film in Nigeria started in the 1960s, it was in the 1990s that the Nollywood film industry began its rise to recognition across the world". The industry was rated as one of the most relevant industries in the country with a remarkable contribution to the growth of Nigerian economy and job creation, thereby aiding the Nigerian government with employment problems (Giwa, 14). According to the article, "Nigerian Film Industry: A Potential Gold Mine," Rebecca states, "Nollywood produces 50 movies per week, second only to Bollywood more than Hollywood in the United State. Although its revenue is not at par with Bollywood's and Hollywood's, Nollywood still generates \$590 million annually" (Cited in Giwa, 17).

Nevertheless, despite the industry's' achievement, it is still lagging behind in the area of quality of film produced; quality in terms of the picture, acting (realistic acting that causes spectacles), content or kind of image projected in term of decency and the ideal misce-en-scene elements which can depict the ideal situation. This has been an upheaval to the level of growth in the quality of film production, and this is largely due to the constituent of the menace called corruption. For instance, corruption can be attributed or seen account for the contradiction in qualities of films produced not as been in proportion to the revenue generated as stated by Moudio. At this juncture, it may be unreasonable to an extent to compare Nollywood to Hollywood in the qualities of films produced and the economic vaibility of the industries, owing to the economic strength of the United States and most importantly, the age of however, Nollywood must set a target and work tirelessly toward realizing such a target. This is crucial to sustaining the economy of the industry as well as the audience of Nollywood who will be critical about the quality/kinds of film productions, compared consciously or unconsciously to Hollywood, Bollywood, and any other film industry around the world. This will mean doing away with all sorts of corruption. The phenomenon has manifested in a different dimension and perpetrated majorly in the administration of the industry (producers, directors, actors/actresses, marketers,) and also governmental agencies or committee responsible for overseeing or playing a financial intermediary role between the government and film industry. It is in the face of this that this study is devoted to identifying perpetrators of corruption and consequently evaluates its impact on the growth of the

industry and a recommendation that will help in curbing corruption for the betterment of the economy.

### **Literature review**

Corruption like many other concepts in social sciences does not have a general comprehensive acceptable view. In other words, there is no widespread or an encompassing and all-embracing definition as to what constitutes corrupt behavior. Nevertheless, there have been various views and opinions of the concept by different organization, dictionaries, and scholars, from different perspectives. This study looks into the various views to ascertain a reasonable clear and wider understanding of the concept.

According to the World Bank and Transparency International (IT), a leading global anti-corruption watchdog, it views corruption as behavior on the part of public officials, where they misuse public wealth to enrich themselves. This can be bribery, embezzlement nepotism tendency amongst others. This definition narrows corruption to the public affair; the illegal manipulation of public function and public wealth by individual or groups. The Advanced English Dictionary (2008) says corruption is a moral perversion; impairment of virtue and moral principles. This view has its focal point on the moral aspect of corruption. Folarin states that:

Broadly speaking, corruption is a term used to describe acts that are considered immoral, such as fraud, graft, bribery, stealing, perjury, lying, dishonesty, indiscipline, and debased act like sexual immorality or perversion. Corrupt acts also include economic and financial crimes, nepotism, favouritism or discrimination, injustice, improper compromise, and partiality in decision-making or allocation of values (79).

This submission widens the scope and inferred that corruption goes beyond the narrow definition given by the World Bank and Transparency International (IT), as the use of public office for personal benefit.

Along with the heterogeneous nature of Nigerian people, film-makers are divided along, regional, ethnic, cultural, and religious lines. This account for the emergence of sub-film industries like Kannywood, Yoruwood, Igbowood *etcetera*. This sub-film industries are either located in the southern or northern part of the country. They project their respective cultures, languages, values, and tradition. Kannywood for instance, based in Kano is a Hausa speaking located in the northern part of Nigeria. The idea of the name

Kannywood was informed by Kano the roots of the Hausa film industry. Contrary to the use of language that is peculiar to a people is the use of English as a medium of expression by the Nollywood film industry.

The term "Nollywood" was coined following the style of Hollywood and Bollywood, which is a generic name for the Nigerian film industry. Ojukwu and Ezenandu (27). In a similar vein, Jedlowski (226) notes that the name "Nollywood" first appeared in Nigerian in New York Times article by Noritimtsu Onishi in September 2002 and republished by the Nigerian Newspaper "The Guardian" a few days later. Jedlowski, further notes that while suggesting this name, Onishi's article explicitly referred to Bollywood and Hollywood. Nevertheless, the formation of the term Nollywood does not mean the first emergence of the Nigerian film industry is Nollywood, but it was at this period that it became more popular. Giwa (2014, pg. ) concur with this claim as she argues that the cinema of Nigeria dates back to the late 1960s as the business of filmmaking expanded with increased investments in production and intense distribution networks. It was in the 1990s when Nollywood began its rise to recognition across the world. At this early stage, the films meant to project who a true Nigeria is to the rest of the world. The early Nigerian films thematically emphasized culture and history and to some extent morality and politics, but the contemporary social reality was left out (Udayi,9)

The idea of culture and history as the thematic preoccupation arguably is informed by the attainment of Nigerian independence, hence the need to recollects and restructures the mindset of Nigerians, and even to create the ideal picture of Nigeria which serves as a counter-attack to the erroneous perception of Nigerian culture and history by the white European. Notwithstanding, there was a sudden change from culture and history to contemporary realities, which generates diverse opinions on the new developments. (Udayi,126) While some Nigerians feel that these contemporary realities are day to day activities which an average Nigerian can relates to, others felt that Nollywood was over deviating from Nigerian culture. Nevertheless, this new development or change makes Nollywood popular especially with the coming of video films.

"A collection of variables accounted for the emergence of video films. First, Larkin argued that the oil boom and subsequent diversification of Nigerian public sphere have been a prime impetus for the adventure to video production (cited In Amana &Omale,87) secondly, the decline and quasi-death of the celluloid film making, and thirdly the emergence and popularity of

video technologies in Nigeria" (Amobi,7). "Nollywood has been so heavily criticized for its poor plotting, poor scripting, recurrent over flogged themes, or negative themes, poor picture quality output, cracked sound quality, poor distribution management, and other perceived problems, the industry continues to thrive" (Amana &Omale,5), (Udayi, 115). It is undeniable that Nollywood continues to thrive amidst a heavily laden criticism. But the above-stated issues are very fundamental towards a reasonable success of Nollywood. These issues or identified problems have been a recurrent criticism level against Nollywood in the trend and development of the industry. Udayi (118) notes that the confusion of these issues appears to be increasingly deepening to the point that it intrinsically suggests that Nollywood should be thrown to the dust to be trampled upon.

### **Acts of Corruption and Perpetrators in/outside Nollywood**

Film production is termed as the totality of activities taking place in the Nollywood film industry which brings about the production and distribution of films for audience view. These activities are carried out by specific individuals and groups; the product of this industry demands a collaborative venture which requires individual/groups people's active involvement for its success. Actors, directors, marketers, cinematographers *etcetera* are some people who contribute to the success of the industry. For this study, the groups/individual are categorizing into two which comprises internal and external bodies. The internal bodies are directly involved in the production of films which includes: directors, producers, actors, cinematographer *etcetera*, on the other hand, the external body are the ones who major in the distributions of the finished products; hence, the marketers take the forefront in this category. Although, there can be overlapping of roles as a member of the internal body could also be in the external body and vice-versa. Another category that does not involve directly in production or distribution but is supposed to guarantee the security of film production and distribution is the governmental agencies and corporation. These include Film and Video Censors Board and anti-piracy, these categories play different but complementary roles to the overall success of Nollywood. In other words, their roles are significant to the growth and development of this industry. Therefore, the study traces corruption to the above-mentioned categories.

### **The Internal Body Perpetrators**

Generally, as observes earlier there are many crews that form this category, contributing in different ways for the success of the final product. However, the discussions focus on few who due to their hierarchical placement in the administration of film are always at the forefront. Therefore, traces of the

activities of directors, producers, and actors were traced to reveal how they constitute a corrupt act in film making.

### **The Director**

A director in film is responsible for the look and sound of the film. He/she analysis and visualize how the film should look and consequently guides all the actors and the production crew as they carry out his mission and vision. He/she has the power of deciding which actor would best interpret a role and can also influence the selection of personnel in charge of the crew even though, it may be an oversight function. In the light of this enormous role, the director wields so much power and there is a tendency of misusing or abusing such power thereby constituting a corrupt act, and invariably affecting the growth of the industry. According to Ademiju-Bepo, a male director sometimes makes sexual advances to a female actress who he feels lust with or collects gift or money from an actor promising such actor a role in a film which means he has compromised the ethic of the profession, hence, constitutes a corrupt act or behavior (personal interview). Similarly, in an interview with Inside Nollywood on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Veteran actor Victor Osuagwu concurs to this as the he decries the level of sexual harassment cases by the directors in the industry. He states that what people do is to organize “auditions” and at the end of the day mess girls up. He further states that these days, before you are auditioned, you pay money, before you act, you pay, and before you can be seen on screen you pay money this account for the wishy-washy production. From Ademiju-Bepo and Osuagwus' submission, these acts negatively affect the outcome of the production, because those acting skills and qualities are compromised and many times those who have the skill for some role are even neglected for not going through the back door like others.

### **Producer's Responsibilities and the act of Corruption**

A film producer is responsible for the turning of film ideas into a successful motion picture. In other words, he/she is the major financier of the film which enables the hiring of actors and other production crew. He/she supervise the production process and arranges for the distribution of finished films to theatre or cinema and marketers. In terms of hierarchy, in the administrative set-up, the producer is ranked number one. Similar to the director, the producer wields even more power since he owns the production, his decision is likely going to be binding on all and sundry. The overwhelming power of producer makes him/her produce films that could be detrimental to the culture of the Nigerian society e.g. porn inclined films which do more harm than good to the life of the young boys and girls in society. It's quite worrisome

the increasing number of nudity or better still porn inclined films flooding the market of Nigerian society and invariably causing moral impairment. The kinds of actors featured in such films and the nudity showcased makes it obvious that the producer's mind is preoccupied with the amount of money to be realized at the end of the production. The spectacles have now been shifted from acting prowess, *mise-en-scene* appeal, and realistic acting to the display of nudity. Dan states that the producer knows what he/she needs for the success of the production; if a director knows that featuring a particular actor will give him more money, he/she should do it. The implication of this statement is that money is at the forefront of producers' goals. Money has been the sole goal pursued by producers. This is further explained by Lyke Michael as he laments that today, producers only care about luxuries – like a ride in big jeeps, have a private jet, live a big life with enough money, hence money became the game; this is unlike the producer of those days who were eager to affect lives with their story like late Hubert Ogunde and also Afolayan's late father Ade Love (cited in Sunday 20). From the above arguments, the issues in contention lie between money and message passed across and the need to balance them. Both money and message are very relevant for the growth and development of the industry; money contributes economically to the growth while the message contributes to the socio-cultural life of Nigeria society and uplift the image of Nollywood. If the producers are entirely driven by money alone with little or no regard to message, they end up producing films that lack content to uplift the moral standard of the society.

### **Actor's Role and Their Corrupt Act**

Actors play or interpret their roles guided by the script, directors, and creative talent of self-judgment. The job of an actor is to use their creative skills/talent to make the audience believe that the character is a real person speaking/acting in a natural setting. In Nollywood, some actors are established already with remarkable fame while others are still up-coming actors struggling to be featured in movies. While the former hardly goes through the rigorous audition processes to be assigned a role, the latter undergoes series of auditions to be considered for a role. The process of the audition at the time is infected with some corrupt practices like the offering of gifts, money or the actor's body to enable such person scale through. Osuagwu in an interview with Inside Nollywood, notes that some actors can openly say they are willing to do anything to be considered for a role and this attitude has encouraged some "greenhorns" to buy their way into acting. In the light of this, the study classified actors especially up-coming actors into two; "determinant" and "desperados". The former knows the task ahead of them works harder and

rely on their creative skills/talent to secure a role. The latter are eager to get a role at all cost hence, uses anything at their disposal to secure such a role in the film. The implication of the "desperados" is that it constitutes a corrupt act affecting the quality of the production since such actors may not necessarily possess that ingenuity acting skills/talent to merit the role.

It is pertinent therefore that directors producers, and actors be conscious and adjusts from this kind of corruption. As Sunday (2) opines that, the decadence expresses by the producer, director, and actor in Nollywood movies industry calls for questioning if the industry has suddenly lost its culture and discipline.

### **External perpetrators**

The goal of every industry lies in public consumption of its product and services; the film industry is no exception. The product of Nollywood is sent to theatre and mostly to marketers for distribution. It thus means that marketers have a crucial role to play to the success and failure of the outcome of the production. Therefore, this category examines the roles and activities of marketers and individual/public, and how it may constitute a corrupt act.

### **Marketers**

Marketers are not involving directly in the production, they are in charge of publicity and distribution of films produced. These dealers are supposed to distribute the original copies of this film for public consumption or get permission of copying from the filmmaker. Sometimes some of these original copies are being pirated by marketers thereby ripping on the creative talent of another persons. This single act is a big theft that continues to ruin the creative industry of Nollywood. According to Diran, marketers "can be phenomenally corrupt". Explaining the phrase, he states that marketers steal peoples' ideas. He further notes that there were instances in Nollywood when cinema was reigning and people make a huge investment in the film and their works – masters' tape was stolen by marketers thereby running those filmmakers into bankruptcy. Because, in those days, when a film is released they have to run throughout the cinema first before doing a step-down. But when marketers steal the masters' tape and duplicate same as the filmmaker has programmed the exhibition and the screening of the film in a cinema, these corrupt marketers are also putting it as their film, which means the revenue that supposed to come to the filmmaker end up with the corrupt marketer. The swift pace at which marketer carries out these activities is quite alarming. In July 2014, less than three weeks after the release of "Half of a Yellow Sun", Lagos film vendors were found hawking pirated copies of the

film around the metropolis. From the ongoing, it is obvious that the gravity of the theft perpetrated by marketers greatly hinders the growth of the industry.

### **Individual or Public Consumer**

There are ignorant acts that are committed by individuals or clicks of friends that one can term as corrupt acts perpetrated against the film industry in Nigeria. Some of these corrupt acts are consciously and unconsciously carried out as a result of ignorance of the offense. Some of these acts include copying of film from someone's laptop or desktop to your one's own laptop or transferring the film through a transferable platform as the case may be *etcetera* is theft because such people don't have copyright permission in most cases. Also, burning of CD/DVD player into a laptop/desktop, transferring a film file from one mobile phone to another is theft that individuals indulged in consciously and unconsciously. Those that consciously carry out this act are neither remorseful nor afraid of the law because of the nature of law enforcement with respect to this. On the other hand, those that indulge unconsciously are not aware and can even argue that it is not theft. However, the reality is that one can buy the original copy of the film, download from a permitted site or secure copyright permission before copying any form of the film; else, it will be a corrupt act.

### **Film security agency**

Although this category does not directly involve in production nor distribution, it is meant to create an enabling environment for filmmakers; securing film from theft and consequently assuring that films are in line with the film policies law. This category hence focuses on anti-piracy force and Film and Video Censors Board.

### **Anti-Piracy Force**

Anti-piracy forces are a security squad charged with the responsibilities of identifying pirates' activities and consequently bring them before the law for punishment. In other words, they fight piracy-related crimes. However, the rate at which piracy still thrives demands the questioning of the effectiveness of this group. According to Diran, why Nigeria has not completely won the war against piracy is the possibility of still having corrupt elements in the anti-piracy squad. This is because they are prone to inducement. In this case, if the anti-piracy agents or official is corrupt, he/she can collect bribe from those persons he's supposed to hunt down hence, the fight will be back to square one, and it will be nothing to write home about. From the above claim, it then follows that the presence of corrupt elements within the anti-piracy agent makes the fighting of piracy a child's play hence the urgent need to flush out

the corrupt element first because a divided anti-piracy agent cannot fight a united pirate.

### **Nigeria Film and Video Censors Board**

The Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board is charged with the responsibility of screening the film before releasing it for public consumption. This is done in line with the film policies which spell how a film should be done to protect the image and integrity of the country, also, to protect the culture, tradition and other norms of the society. However, against this background are some films that are pornographic in content raising the question of the effectiveness of the film censors board. The recent production of some porn inclined films especially the most recent soft-porn "Destructive Instinct" 3&4 produced by Judith Opara Mazagwu popularly known as Afrocandy, and why it was not banned by the Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board has put doubt in the minds of Nigerians on the effectiveness of the Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board. A close review of this film shows that the script in question had no message what so ever rather than the showcasing of nudity.

Notwithstanding, there is a different opinion on the effective role of the Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board. According to Diran, Censors Board usually screens films and cut away some scenes to ensure that there is no pornographic content, no nudity, no foul language against an ethnic or religious group. However, the filmmakers often go out their way to re-insert such scenes that have been cut out. So, by the time the film is released it will be too late for the Censors Board's intervention because the final copy that was approved is different from what is now in circulation. Similarly, Ella consolidates on this opinion as he notes that the Censors Board often does their work but some films make their way out illegally. Diran and Ella's argument is that Film Censors Board is not to be indicted for some of these pornographic films release, instead, the filmmakers are to blame because it is the filmmakers who usually bypass or truncate the process. However, a critical second look of this can indict the Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board in sharing the blame; it is one thing to make laws, it's another to enforce such laws. If filmmakers re-insert scenes that have already been cut out by Censors Board as claimed by Diran, the perpetrators should be punished severely so that sanity can return fully to the industry instead of condoning this habit by remaining mute.

### **Impacts of corruption to the growth and development of Nollywood**

In whichever sector or what ever industry, the impacts of corruption are usually grave. According to Diran and Ella, the impact of corruption on the

growth and development of the Nollywood industry are numerous. First and foremost, it affects the economic growth of Nollywood. Economic growth is a vehicle for the development of every industry including Nollywood. The more money, the more investment in the industry, and the more economic output; which will result to increase in quality and quantity in production. However, against this background, most of the money is lost to pirate's activities. Nollywood is supposed to contribute to the GDP of Nigeria but piracy and other related corrupt act have often been an upheaval to this obligation. Although the Nollywood industry is still ranked as one of the largest sectors in the country, the total eradication of piracy and other corrupt acts can make it the most or second most relevant sector in Nigeria.

Again, it acts of corruption discourage individuals or organization to invest their money in the industry for fear of film in security and piracy. Many preferred to go for Low Budget film instead of the High Budget film since these films can be pirated at any time and that could account for the low quality of film Nollywood produces sometimes. If a low budget film is pirated it will not affect the filmmaker much like the implication of high budget film. In 2015, popular Nigerian Director, Producer, and Actor, an award-winning producer, Kunle Afolayan, was notified that his classic film "October 1" had been pirated and was already being sold on Lagos street at N500 (\$3) per copy. At the time of this big menace, the film had barely yet to recoup the \$2 million invested in its production. In light of this experience, Afolayan threatens to leave Nigeria if a legitimate business would not be allowed to thrive due to the activities of a pirate. Although Kunle Afolayan did not leave as he threatens to but many creative and talented filmmakers must have abandoned the Nollywood film industry on this ground.

Socio-culturally, soft-porn damage the image of Nigeria and the image of Nollywood, making the industry lose some of its customers and investors. Nollywood has lost some audience feels that it has suddenly lost its bits and African rooted contents and only projects nudity. This has driven many away from Nollywood film; some Nigerians even preferred to watch Bollywood film as they opine that it carries more educative content than Nollywood films. The implication is that when patronage is negatively affected, it will shield investors away and consequently affects the growth and development of the industry. Again, other corrupt acts such as taking of gifts, money, nepotistic tendency, or indulging in a sexual relationship in place of assigning a role to actors also affect the quality of the production in terms of realistic acting and interpretation of the role. All these and other corrupt practices are an upheaval to the total success of Nollywood which requires attention.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study finds it imperative to draw attention to the Nollywood Film Industry in light of its potential economic relevancy towards the increase of national wealth. Over-reliance on mono-economics has turned to be a nightmare to Nigeria, hence, sectors like Nollywood can be alternated for the purpose of economic diversification. On that note, the government should invest their time, attention, human, and material resources to improve the industry. It is evidential that when the then Jonathan Administration invested one hundred and fifty million dollars (\$150m) in Nollywood, it yielded positive results. So, this government should emulate this. However, it is one thing to invest, another to secure the investment. Therefore, the need to bring into mind the identified activities that constitute corrupt act and consequently collaboratively put efforts to wage war against the menace is imperative. If this is well planned and executed, the industry will mark a remarkable breakthrough that invariably will affect the economy of the country positively.

It is advice-sable that the anti-piracy force and Nigeria Film and Video Censors Board should first eliminate the corrupt elements within them; they should treat pirates as criminals that they are; shops that harbor these criminals should be sanctioned. Years of sentence and fine are often too small and this makes the fight a child's play since sooner than later, the pirates will buy their way out and soon indulging in the same acts again. If this is achieved, it will encourage more investment leading to improvements in quality. Again, information on the theft or piracy should be well circulated for those who are not aware that unauthorized copying is a theft punishable by the law.

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**Oral Interview**

Ass. Prof. Diran Ademiju-Bepo on 11 December, 2017 by 4:52pm

Dr. Dan Ella on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2018 by 10:38am

**\* USING THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT (TfD) TO ENHANCE WOMEN AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN SELF-HELP AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN PLATEAU STATE.**

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**Abstract**

*The research is intended to cover aspects that include Conception, Perception, Awareness, Advocacy, Action, Empowerment and Strengthening Sustainable development of Women and Youth in the Nigerian Society. The research aims at finding solutions to meet with and accomplish man's need for sustainability, especially at grass-root levels where the youth and the oppressed gender (women) are located. The research will seek to quantify and qualify the valuable contributions of women and the youth to the economic growth of the society and country at large and yet, neglected in the development programme and planning by misdirected policy makers in government. It therefore intends to address problems concerning women and youth, by emphasizing on income generating activities.*

**Keywords:** Theatre for Development, Women, Youth and Empowerment

**Introduction**

**Conceptual clarifications**

The concept of youth has attracted various interpretations that has brought about controversy because of the inherent difficulty in reaching an agreement on the age bracket that should constitute an acceptable youth age. Many countries see youth as ending when a person is given

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equal treatment under the law which is often referred to as the “voting age”, when the person attains 18 years old. After that, the person is considered an adult. Despite the disparity, it is generally agreed that the term youth marks the physical, psychological and social transformation into adulthood. Based on this concept, many government policies include people age 13 to 25 years old. The 2006 pan-African Youth Charter defines youth or young people as “every human being between the ages of 15 and 30 years”. This tallies with the English convention which classifies the period of youth as falling within the ages of 15 and 30 years (Wokocha, 2002). The peculiar nature of Nigeria has led to the invention of social and economic definitions which treats youth as a thing of the mind and so admits people of up to 40 years and beyond. In fact, Zik of Africa of blessed memory and the first President of Nigeria, once said “youth is in the mind”. Economically, the lateness of the period of independence for the average young Nigerian leaves them socializing in the realm of youth for as long as they remain dependent on their parents or guardians, and this could be way beyond the age of 30.

Despite the debate as to who a youth is, “the most vital point is that, the youth are indispensable facet of any given society (Muhummed and Vambe 821). The task of developing them to enhance societal growth squarely rests on the shoulders of the states concerned. Such expectations include the participation process of direct social change intended to bring about social change and material advancement that will ensure equality, freedom and other valued qualities for the majority of the people who will gain greater control over their environment.

#### **Statement of the problem**

The problem is the dialectics of self help project in academic parlance. Self help projects have also continued to suffer from a one size fits all approaches as well as inability to sustain itself. The former is a function of academic fixation on theoretical rather than protocol strategies. The latter is often on account of misplaced priorities; where projects are built around and on women and youth who at best are fictitious or unwilling or both individual, before it can be sustained. Theatre for Development, which, is rural-based, has the capacity to achieve growth, sustenance and much more.

### **Aim and objectives**

The aim of this discourse is to project and advance: the frontiers of Theatre for Development (TfD) strategy as a veritable option for inspiring and nurturing self and community development instincts and practices in the psyche of the rural populace. This will then promote all-round development championed by both women and the youths who constitute the engineroom of robust national development that will pace Nigeria among the league of the 20 strongest economics in the world by the year 2020. In this regard, the research has lined up the following objectives as pointers to achieving its goals:

- (1) To examine the development yearnings of the rural women and youth of some selected rural communities in Plateau State of Nigeria.
- (2) To examine the impediments that affect strategies and efforts at initiating, sustaining self-help/development activities among women and youths in rural communities in Plateau State.
- (3) To examine Theatre for Development strategy as a portent option to ignite and sustain self-help/development initiatives and activities among women and youths in rural communities in Plateau State.

### **Research questions**

The study is be guided by these research questions:

- (1) What are the developmental aspirations of the women and youths of the rural communities in Plateau State?
- (2) What are the impediments to the development strategies that are being used at initiating and sustaining self-development activities among women and youths in rural communities in Plateau State?
- (3) To what extent can theatre for development strategy be a viable option for igniting and sustaining self-development activities among rural women and youths in Plateau State?

### **Constraints to Youth and Women Empowerment in Nigeria: Unemployment and Underdevelopment**

The contribution and participation of Nigerian youth in issues affecting their lives and national development is hindered by factors that include the following: Lack of qualitative education, non-tuition costs such as uniforms, books and transportation. These aspects have made it impossible for most youths to complete basic primary education which is considered the minimum level required to function in the society.

Furthermore, in Nigeria both formal and non-formal education have high rate of drop-outs among our youths. This is very unfortunate because both

aspects of education are important for the development of the youth's capabilities as individuals as well as responsible members of their societies. Most of the drops-out end up in urban centres in search of menial jobs. Others end up in the streets and high way junctions hawking assorted items. Some of them are described as "Para-literates" or "half-baked graduates" and therefore, unfit to compete with their counterparts around the world (Kura 8). Such youth members who cannot contribute positively to the development of their societies usually resort to criminal activities such as drug peddling, kidnappers, drug addiction, prostitution, armed robbery, political thugs, bunkering, cultism, street urchins, political thugs and many more.

High rate of unemployment and underemployment among the youth in Nigeria has greatly hindered their participation in the economic and social sectors of nation building. Of the over two hundred million Nigerians, about 80% of this population is made up of youth and more than 80% are unemployed. The estimated 10% that are employed, are burdened with near total dependence of relatives and family members. An unemployed individual is vulnerable and can easily be manipulated by others to meet his needs. Poverty and unemployment are, indeed, two most important impediments to the participation of the Nigerian youth in national development as well as deterrent to the progress and development of Nigeria.

In spite of all efforts by successive governments to reduce poverty in Nigeria, it is very obvious that majority of Nigerians still remain poor despite the introduction of programmes such as Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) and the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in 1999 by Olusegun Obasanjo. In fact, the population of the poor has soared continuously. The main reason for the persistence of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria is a clear indication of failure of leadership where there is unwillingness and inability of the political class to rise to the occasion in their responsibility and the challenge of leadership by example, which constitutes the hallmark of the leadership. Unemployment and poverty actually constitute the greatest threats to peace, security and national development in Nigeria. Indeed, the restiveness and violent conflict in the Niger Delta are traceable, in part, to the level of poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment in the area.

Furthermore, the preponderance of ethnic militia, vigilantes, and criminal gangs in Nigeria since the advent of democratic rule in 1999, has been linked to youth unemployment and poverty, and this has implications for public

order, peace and security in Nigeria. Unemployed youth have been conscripted in the ethnic and religious armies and militias such as the Odua People's Congress (OPEC), the Egbesu Boys, the Arewa People's Congress (APC), the Boko Haram militia and the Om-batse militia group. The activities of these groups pose serious threat to national security, political stability, and national economy. The unemployed youth as political thugs, have often been used to foment electoral violence and as assassins, they are used to eliminate political opponents. They are also used to wrought all sorts of electoral fraud and malpractices such as ballot snatching and stuffing (Muhammad and Vambe, 213:85). Other deviant activities the unemployed youth engage in include drug trafficking and vandalization of oil pipelines, militant attack and piracy.

### **The Youth and Women**

The terminology, youth, which is applicable to women, refers to the group between the ages of 12 and 30 (Social Development Policy for Nigeria, 1989). This categorization, however, differs from one culture to another. For example, in some cultures the age group covers the age range of 12 to 40 or 45. These age grades comprising male and female makes them stand out as the most critical in the society because they constitute the most vibrant work force and also make up a sizeable number of the population. They include men and women who have just completed secondary school education, those that have begun their careers in the different occupations and trades available in the society. The youth in this category also constitute those that have recently married and have started raising their families as well as taking care of their elderly parents.

In essence, the youth constitute the engine room of development in any society. They form the backbone of what moves the community forward in areas that cover education, agriculture, politics, the economy, religion, culture and tradition as well as social change. The youth have so much energy that can muster physically challenging tasks in the society: they defend the society during conflicts and war; they keep the peace after conflicts and help in controlling criminal activities along with law enforcement agents as vigilantes; they graze the livestock, clear the bush, weed, fish and hunt animals in the bush.

According to C.A. Nwachukwu, 'youth' is a period when young people are old enough to be drafted, marry and have children, but often still depend on their families for economic support. 'Youth' has been defined as "a period of young adulthood". The youth are recognized in every human society because of

their inestimable attributes which are dynamism, creativity, innovation, resilience, forbearance, adaptability, strength, energy, agility, enthusiasm and vivacity. (Wuele et al, 212).

“The youth in any society are known as the leaders of tomorrow. They play a crucial role in the prospect for development and should be included in all national development plans and programmes. The power of the youth to drive global development was recognized in 1965 by member states of the United Nations (UN) when they endorsed the declaration on the promotion among youth of the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples. The United Nations General Assembly in 1985 called for international youth participation development and peace, to harp on the critical role of young people in the world.

The level of national development in any country is largely dependent on the extent to which the enormous potentials of the youth are harnessed and utilized by the government to promote and sustain economic growth and social progress in Nigeria. However, widespread unemployment and poverty in Nigeria has created conditions that predisposes the youth to deviant behaviours, which hinder economic growth, political stability, social cohesion and over all national development. In order to change this trend, the potential of the Nigerian youth as the locomotive and engine room of development obstacles that hinder the transformation of people's physical, biological and socio-economic environment for personnel and societal benefits. (Ref. Youth Empowerment and National Development in Nigeria (32).

The power of the youth to drive global development was recognized in 1965 by member states of the United Nations (UN) when they endorsed the declaration on the promotion among youth, of the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples (United Nations, 2007). In 1985, the United Nations called for international youth participation development and peace to deliberate on the critical role of the youth in the world and endorsed the guidelines for further planning and follow-up, which are significant for their focus on young people as broad category, comprising various sub-groups as opposed to a single demographic entity. Similarly, in 1995, the United Nations strengthened its commitment to the youth by directing the international community's response to the challenges of the youth in the next millennium. This it did by adapting an international strategy: “the world programme of action for effectively addressing the problems of the youth and to increase opportunities in society.

The programme built on other international instruments such as the Rio Declaration on environment and development in 1993; the Copenhagen declaration and the platform for action by the 1995 world conference on women both meant to meet the challenges of youth development in the world (Isa and Vambe 83). However, despite this laudable effort by the UN, youth in the developing countries, especially in Africa, still face serious challenges such as: unemployment, underdevelopment, moral decadence and violence. In Nigeria, the youth are disinherited and refused everything. The schools have rejected them for want of space and they have not found work. They are also confronted with religious fanaticism and cultism among others. Youth facing these challenges cannot possibly contribute to national development.

### **In Retrospect: Tfd, development and participation**

Issues on development have preoccupied the minds of various authorities and agencies over ages. From the United Nations and its various agencies to other world institutions like the Brentwood Forest, World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as regional bodies like the European Union (EU), the G8, the African Development Bank and National Governments. In all, development has been the major concern.

In a bid to roll back the chains of poverty, ignorance and disease which are associated with underdevelopment, various development strategies have been designed and tried across various communities on the globe with varying results. Underdevelopment however, continues to persist. To tackle the challenge which underdevelopment with its associated negative indices poses, women and youth in various communities have been the main focus because it is believed that they constitute the engine of development.

On the role women play in development, Lasiele (132) posits that “women are an indispensable group of people, who must be profitably engaged in the development process.” This is because “they represent 52 percent of the world's population and their contribution to national development in reckoning.” According to Gambo and Lenshie (1). If women constitute 52% then it is very much likely that the young female constitute the largest number in that statistics. Mixed with the young male population, they constitute the largest statistics in any given human population. And they constitute the vibrant energy and resource for development.

Strategies and approaches for igniting and sustaining development among a

people, particularly women and youth in rural communities vary and the dividends also vary. This is so because the strategies adopted have most times been based and hinged on academic theories and assumptions which are formulated under atmospheres and environments that differ sharply from the real practical experience and cosmos of the ruralites in developing societies. Thus the up-down or top-bottom approach which is usually used always leave the ruralites as mere spectators of activities for which they ought to be major stakeholders.

Three key areas are strategic to this discourse: TfD, development and participation. It is therefore, crucial to begin with a refreshing idea along these lines. Iorapuu posits that;

The genre ... TfD has had different nomenclatures in the past and understandably so under different contexts. In Nigeria for instance, practitioners have intellectually negotiated and renegotiated the process from popular theatre, community theatre and most recently TfD (65).

In a sense all these can be seen as some form of Community Development (CD). For instance, Campfens contends that,

CD is a demonstration of the ideas, values and ideals of the society in which it is carried out. From a humanitarian perspective, it may be seen as a search for community, mutual aid, social support, and human liberation in an alienating, oppressive, competitive, and individualistic society. In its more pragmatic institutional sense, it may be viewed as a means for mobilizing communities to join state or institutional initiatives that are aimed at alleviating poverty, solving social problems, strengthening families, fostering democracy, and achieving modernization and socio-economic development (25).

While these terms may have strong links, they are not interchangeable. However, Iorapuu contends that these different nomenclatures did not vary the goal 'since each is aimed at empowering people for social change' (MLA. 65), in terms of improvement in their standard of living, increased infrastructures for rapid development and good governance amongst other things.

Higher asserts that 'Community theatre for development is a theatrical style

which stresses “participation”, “dialogue”, “critical consciousness”, etc' (3). It is interesting to note that these three key elements continue to shape and reshape issues of development. In addition, Okwori provides a graphic conceptual view of community theatre when he argues that:

This is a theatre that is localized within a particular community. It addresses issues and problems within the community. It uses the language, the artistic forms of expression, and the codes and symbols within the community. It is done by the community members themselves, sometimes in partnership with others. The plays are intended to provide information and awareness which will instigate community members to engage in debate and discussion of the issues raised by the drama. This will then lead to critical consciousness, a kind of awareness that moves the community members to take action (16).

The implication is that theatre is used as a pretext for galvanizing the community into taking action that would see the community members intervene (taking action) in their development quest. However, the idea of TfD can be traced to the colonial era particularly in British colonies, whereas Mlama argues, the colonialist used theatre as a galvanizing tool to mobilise communities towards certain ends. In this wise:

field worker travelled from village to village organizing drama performances, discussions, and demonstrations based on such topics as cash crop production, taxation, and disease eradication. The theatrical programme were planned, message chosen and scripts prepared by government workers (Mlama 68-69).

Kidd attests to the presence and activities of the colonialist during this time thus:

In the 50s a number of theatre-for-development experiences were carried out by colonial governments in the transitional period as pressure built up for independence. In Ghana and Uganda, for example, mobile teams were formed to tour the rural areas with plays on cash crop production, immunization, the importance of self-help, literacy, sanitation and local government tax. The actors were development workers and often combine their performance with practical demonstration (for example of agricultural techniques), question-and-answers sessions and other forms of practical activity (e.g the

distribution of insecticide sprayers, vaccination drives, literacy teacher recruitment, etc) the tours were a form of 'mass education' to compliment and reinforce a process of community and extension work at village level (5).

Historically, in Nigeria, the roots of Tfd goes back all the way to the pioneering works of Michael Etherton and a host of scholars in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This in itself is tied to the practice in East Africa. Okwori asserts that: 'The Chikwakwa and Laedza Batanani became the spring board from which ABU program took off' (24). These efforts were laudable to say the least. However, these were no more than attempts at community mobilizing, which even at that had its own shortcomings. As Odhiambo argues:

The philosophy of the practice at this time inclined more towards conformism than radical transformation... Furthermore, at this time those who used the mode hardly ever anticipated the active participation of the target audience, the emphasis was more indeed on the message rather than on how the message was delivered or received (42).

With the attainment of flag independence, came the establishment of universities and theatre/drama/performing arts departments from where 'a kind of theatre whose main philosophy was to take theatre to the people' (Odhiambo 43). This was the situation in Makerere university Uganda where the tree travelling theatre was birthed. However, as Odhiambo argues, situating the initial efforts of the tree travelling theatre within the context of Tfd is problematic especially in the sense that Mloma queries the whole exercise:

First is the assumption implicit in the idea of 'taking theatre to the people' that these people do not have a theatre of their own. Travelling theatre represented an imposition of outsider's agenda and analysis. Second, the traveling theatre was embarking on a futile venture to spread a middle class type of theatre among the peasantry. The objective was to influence the people to start similar groups all over the country. It did not strike these theatre artists that this was an impossible task due to the alien nature of that theatre and lack of a base for its possible development that emerges out of a people's way of life and not from a one day show by and analyse problems and to offer criticism. This was contrary to the characters of the popular theatre forms that normally combine entertainment with education and critical analysis (65).

As if in response to this wave of criticism, a few years later the focus of the movement began to change in places like Uganda and Kenya. For instance, the practice delved into experimentation with different modes of TfD. It was not therefore, suprising that the Ngugi wa Thiong'o Kamiriithu theatre experiment in Kenya was remarkably different and successful. Kerr's observation throws some light on the success of the Kamiriithu project: 'the Kamiriithu theatre had its origins in an indigenous tradition of cultural resistance to colonialism, and the radicalization of intellectual popular theatre forms such as theatre for development and the university travelling theatre' (240). So by aligning theatre to the genuine aspirations of the community it is easy to turn theatre into a weapon at the service of liberating the people.

In addition, the Kamiriithu project remains indelible partly because of the fact that 'it also created for them a visibility. It certainly enabled them to contest their history of subjugation and what initially looked like a fatalistic relationship with nature' (Odhiambo 73).

Odhiambo further argues that the activities and philosophies of two South American activists in the 1970s impacted profoundly on the development of TfD practice in Africa and indeed Nigeria, especially TfD's emphasis on conscientisation, debate, dialogue and participation, which put together, buttress the need for participatory development as TfD seeks to establish a binding link to the organic materiality of the community. The two South Americans are Paolo Freire (in his seminal work- *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*), and Augusto Boal (in his seminal work-*Theatre of the Oppressed*). The duo and their works provide a theory and methodology that became a model, which continue to refine the TfD practice in mostly third world countries. For instance, Freire sound a note of caution when he writes that, 'the pedagogy of the oppressed is a pedagogy which must be forged *with* and not **for** the oppressed ... in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity' (30). According to Odhiambo:

...the new thinking in development and Theatre for Development came to recognize the centrality of the target groups in both the development process and the construction of development-oriented theatre. The implication of this was the recognition of the privileged status of "process" rather than of "end product" in the conception and implementation development enterprise (47).

This leads to a consideration of the concept of development. Walter Rodney in his seminal work on how Africa was underdeveloped by Europe writes that: 'Development in human society is a many-sided process' (9). What this implies is the fact that development is a continued exercise on improvement. However, Okwudiba Nnoli introduces a dialectical dimension to the concept when he argues that:

Development is a dialectical phenomenon in which the individual and society interact with their physical, biological and inter-human environments transforming them for their own betterment and that of humanity at large and being transformed in the process ... (36).

To properly comprehend the concept of development, there is need to appreciate its opposite-underdevelopment since as Estava argues:

In order for someone to conceive the possibility of escaping from a particular condition, it is necessary first to feel that one has fallen into that condition. For those who make up two-thirds of the world's population today, to think of development-any of any kind of development – requires first the perception of themselves as underdeveloped, with the whole burden of connotation that this carries (7).

In Sachs argument, the term was first used by Harry S. Truman on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 1949 to refer to the southern hemisphere as 'underdeveloped areas'. Thus: 'The label stuck and subsequently provided the cognitive base for both arrogant interventionisms from the North and pathetic self-pity in the South' (2). Another name for it is 'dependency' as coined by Andre Gunder Frank (Saul 10) upon which a whole lot of theories have been erected. As Saul puts it,

Frank formulated a general "law" of dependency or underdevelopment, which held that the development of the west, the "metropoles", had been made possible by the subordination and exploitation of the former colonies, the "periphery", at the expense the periphery's stagnation and impoverishment, and continued to be so (Saul 10).

Thus, Idoko and Nancy argue that 'exploitation has come to form a major component in gauging the prevalence of underdevelopment in any given

situation' (52). This assertion corresponds to the reasoning of Illah when he writes that:

In Africa, underdevelopment is a malignant tumour, in the magnitude of *elephantiasis*, a product of the slave trade, the ensuing colonization, the charade of independence, the progression into neo-colonialism and now into globalization, the enveloping, evasive yet highest form of imperialism. This social construction of development also proposes post-industrial bourgeois modes that are acquisitive and consumptive. It is a Western model that is being globalized by trans-industrial conglomerates and the ideological media of the North, celebrated *as having* the paraphernalia of modernity: skyscrapers, snow leisure, bullet trains, half-clad tourists. Compare this to the global *South* besieged by poverty, wars, disease, Kalashnikov-totting child soldiers, refugees, empty classrooms, etc. (1-2).

What this suggests is the fact that the global South has often been hoodwinked into conceiving development as a brand of all the physical glamour of the global North in terms of skyscrapers, road networks, amusement parks etc. it is therefore, surprising to note that Nnoli's observation of the squalor prevalent in the Nigerian system about three decades ago is still true as;

Nigerians are very much aware of the deteriorating situation of the drinking water supply, food production, and the major social services, particularly electricity supply, postal and telephone services, ... air transport. Inflation is clearly uncontrollable; corruption has become more widespread and blatant. Port congestion, the shortages of housing, drugs and petrol, the boarding of essential goods, worsening traffic conditions, increased traffic accidents and deaths, declining educational standards, loss of University autonomy, examination leakages, indiscipline at all levels of society, and an increase in strike are fast becoming part of our life styles. The villages are decaying without the cities getting better ... (Nnoli 23).

Put in proper perspective, it is surprising to observe that 'Nigeria, which was one of the world's richest 50 countries in the early 1970s, has retrogressed to become on among the first 25 poorest countries at the threshold of the twenty first century. It is ironic that Nigeria is the sixth largest exporter of oil and at the same time host the third largest number of poor people after China and India'.

(Ugbuzor 1). In this light, Nnoli's contention makes great sense: 'The widespread view, within and outside the country, that Nigeria is developing is ill conceived and misguided. It is based on a notion of development that commits us to a wholesale imitation of others and, therefore, to a wholesale repudiation of our state of being. The oft-stated goal is to catch up with the West (Nnoli 21). This corresponds to Sach's assertion:

For development cannot be separated from the idea that all peoples of the planet are moving along one single track towards some state of maturity, exemplified by the nations 'running in front'. In this view, Tuaregs, Zapotecos or Rajasthani are not seen as living diverse and non-comparable ways of human existence, but as somehow lacking in terms of what has been achieved by the advanced countries. Consequently, catching up was declared to be their historical task. From the start, development's hidden agenda was nothing else than the Westernization of the world (3-4).

In addition, Ake points out the fact that the idea of development in Africa was a recent thing. In fact, as recent as five decades ago: "In Africa, the idea really started coming into vogue after the early 1960s, when many African countries has become independent" (141). The reason for this is not farfetched since:

The colonial government was not much interested in development and did not talk much about it. They were interested in keeping order and maintaining the political and economic conditions for the exploitation of the colony (142).

Sadly, even those at the helm of affairs at independence and till date have continued with this make belief about the need for development while they continue to fortify structures that guarantee the exploitation of the mass of people they are supposed to govern by subtly editing the people out of the process of development. This trend has become one of the pitfalls of development in third world countries like Nigeria. That is, the willful subtraction of the very people who stand to benefit directly from the process of development, in what can be termed as the development equation. This means that community people are often short-changed in terms of participation and or accessing/assessing their felt needs. Development is simply carried out with the passive and not active participation of the community people. This study is focused on this seeming marginalization of the community people in the development agenda by the very TfD practice which proposes to liberate them.

So it does appear that TfD and the concept of development meet at the crucial point where they both acknowledge the strategic need to evolve a new approach that is both interactive and bottoms-up. In this regard, 'the recipients of development are expected to negotiate their own development through a dialogic process' (Odhiambo 47). Sadly, more often than not, it is this negotiation and dialogue so crucial to both theatre and development that appear to be eluding practitioners of TfD.

It does also appear that from inception, too much emphasis was placed on the TfD practice as an end product (thus the elusiveness). But TfD practice is process centred. The implication is that while the former denote a focus on the effect of the TfD practice on the community, the latter suggest that the TfD practice is not an end in itself. The practice should continue long after the animators have left the community.

### **Data Presentation**

We begin the data presentation with excerpts of the drama skit. This is essential since drama skits used for TfD practice are more often than not 'missing in action'. The drama skit is a reflection of data from the field as well as means of generating further data from discussions that will follow.

The drama skit is titled, 'Our Life, our Destiny'. Since we had to stage it in three different communities representing Plateau North, Central and South senatorial zones, it would not be feasible to reflect the language nuances of each. Thus, the version below is that of Barkin Ladi.

*The play opens with a narrator who addresses members of the audience and also introduces the play and the reason why it is important for them to pay attention while watching.*

Narrator: I greet you all people of Gatu community. The play you are about to watch is scripted based on the research we carried out during our visits to this community. We went to work on it as animateurs and put it into a play form for you to see your problems and consider likely solutions. We shall discuss afterward. Please pay attention as you watch. Thank you.

**Scene one**

*(On a narrow footpath outside the village. Weng and Kaneng in their school apparels are returning back from school).*

**Kaneng:** I failed my assignment of  
**Weng:** *(Laughs)* How come?  
**Kaneng:** Why are you laughing? Well my mother worked it out for me and I never knew it was not correct.  
**Weng:** Hmmm! I scored all because my father did it for me. The assignment was simple though.

*(Suddenly Simi, a popular youth in the community, passes by with a bulging tummy. She attempts to hide her face but it is too late)*

**Simi:** Good afternoon Weng  
**Weng:** *(Weng and Kaneng answer her greetings)*  
**Kaneng:** How are you doing?  
**Simi:** I am fine and how is school  
**Kaneng:** School is fine  
**Simi:** Ok! My regards to everyone *(she moves on)*  
**Kaneng:** I will.

*(Weng and Kaneng stare at Simi with surprise look on their faces).*

**Weng:** Jesus Christ wept! Just imagine Simi of yesterday now pregnant  
**Kaneng:** Hmmm...I don't really know what is happening in our community. Imagine young girls getting pregnant on a daily basis  
**Weng:** This is serious and is getting worst day by day. It just simply means that they are not aware of their reproductive health.

*(After a short distance, they meet with Vou, a polytechnic student carrying a bucket of water)*

**Vou:** Good afternoon  
**Weng:** Afternoon, how are you?  
**Vou:** I am fine  
**Kaneng:** Vou, why did you have to leave school early today?  
**Vou:** I left school early because there was no enough water in our house and you know how far the stream is that is why I leave very early.

**Weng:** For God's sake you had to leave school very early just because you wanted to go and fetch water?  
**Kaneng:** Yes, of course! At times I have to leave school very early too so that I will help my mother in the farm and shop  
**Weng:** That is serious! Well as for me after school, I go home and rest, after which I play some games  
**Kaneng:** Wish I could be like you  
**Vou:** I envy you o.

*(After a while the honourable appears apparently searching for something)*

**Weng:** Honourable, Honourable  
**Councillor:** Please have you seen any truck driver around here?  
**Weng:** No, we have not seen any.  
**Councillor:** Ok thank you.

*(They continue praising him thinking he will give them money, not knowing that he is stingy man who always deny the community their allocations)*

**Weng and Kaneng** part ways then comes in Dara who is drunk and on his way home. He suddenly meets Weng by the corner of the bush, wrapping weed)

**Dara:** (Singing I wan buy moto, goskolo n aim stop am o!  
I say I have want buy moto goskolo n aim stop  
am o. I say I wan chop better food, goskolo na em stop am o  
**Weng:** (Suddenly notice him) Dara you are looking fine  
**Dara:** My son  
**Weng:** Good afternoon  
**Dara:** How are you? (He signals Weng to give him weed)?  
**Weng:** I am going to my house to get more money so I can drink more goskolo.

Some old men are not responsible at all. Since he is not responsible let met also be like him as partner (he walks away)

**Dara:** (Gets home and discovers nobody is around. He enters the bedroom) Let me check if this women kept some money somewhere (he stops and looks carefully around to see if someone is coming. He then begins searching for the money)

**Kaneng:** Ah! Daddy why are you taking the money in my mother's bag!  
**Dara:** (*Angrily*) What nonsense! What rubbish! Who gave you the right to talk to me in that manner? How dear you!  
**Kaneng:** Am sorry sir.  
**Dara:** You better be. Now let me tell you that you, your mother and her money are my properties.  
**Kaneng:** But Daddy, Mummy is saving that money for our feeding and to pay our school fees next term.  
**Dara:** Shut up and get out of my sight. Are you not supposed to be on the farm with your mother? (*Kaneng exits. Dara picks a rag and cleans his shoes, puts them on, puts in his best cloth and exits*).

(After a short while mama returns from the farm with a hoe in her hand and Kaneng is about going to help the mother on the farm and suddenly they meet each other by the door).

**Kaneng:** Mama why are you back this early?  
**Mama:** (Looking) seriously, I am not feeling good so I had to come home.  
**Kaneng:** (Collect the hoe in mama hand) let us go inside that you can rest Daddy has packed all the money in your purse!  
**Mama:** (*Alarmed*) This man will not kill me  
**Kaneng:** Mama just sit and rest.

### **(Scene 2)**

(Scene two opens with the councillor on stage seated and reading his newspaper and checking his wrist watch then his phone rings...)

**Councillor:** Hello, yes its honourable. Yes the fertilizer? Just offload it in the store and come to my house immediately. Yes I said now now or are you stupid (drops his call) rubbish stupid people, just disturbing me.  
**Ngo:** My husband, I heard you talking on phone about the fertilizer, is there any problem?  
**Councillor:** No, no problem. Its about the fertilizer allocated to the community.  
**Ngo:** What happened to it?  
**Councillor:** I want you to know that first of all, the fertilizers is mine before talking about any community and I will do what I want with it before anything else.

**Ngo:** Ok you should make sure you share it equally to reach everyone in the community.

**Councillor:** (Looking aside) I heard you

**Ngo:** Bye, see you later (exists)

**Councillor:** (Looking round to be sure she is gone)  
They don't know that we are godfathers of politics (goes back to his newspaper, then suddenly a knock from the front door).

**1<sup>st</sup> Woman:** Knock knock

**Man:** Honourable ooo

**2<sup>nd</sup> Woman:** Knock knock (silent for a while)

**Councillor:** (Angrily) Who wants to break my door? Come in (as the three come in he notice the seriousness anger n their faces) Are you here to arrest me or to beat me?

**Man:** Honourable, we are here to collect our own shares of fertilizers

**Councillor:** Which fertilizer, have you seen any fertilizer here?

**1<sup>st</sup> Woman:** We heard that government allocated fertilizers, to this community and we are here to collect our own share.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Woman:** And we know that you are the one in charge of the fertilizer. So why are you refusing to give us our own share?

**Councillor:** (Curiosity) Are you people dreaming? Have you seen any fertilizer here or do you want to turn me into fertilizer?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Woman:** Our farm products are dying. We are supposed to put fertilizer for them to grow well so that we can have plenty of food and sell some to have money to pay our children's schools fees.

**Councillor:** I don't have any fertilizer to give you people and don't you annoy me the more this afternoon. (Angrily) leave my house!

**1<sup>st</sup> Woman:** We are ashamed of you, we regret voting you

**Man:** We will not vote you again

**Councillor:** Who told you people that your votes was counted?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Woman:** What!

**Councillor:** (Stands up in anger) I said leave my house now!!

**2<sup>nd</sup> Woman:** I regret voting you

**Councillor:** What nonsense (**Light fades out**).

### **(Scene 3)**

(Scene three opens with the town crier who is sent by the king to announce an urgent meeting in the king's palace the next day).

**Town crier:** I greet you all the people of Gatu community. This announcement is from the king, that everybody should assemble at his palace because serious issues will be discussed. I greet you all.

**(Light fades)**

**(Scene 4)**

(Scene four opens with members of the community gathering at the king's palace. They are seen exchanging pleasantries while waiting for the arrival of the king to the palace. The king enters and sits down).

**King:** People of Gatu I greet you all

**Crowd:** We greet you your highness

**King:** I called you because of the many problems we are facing in the community. That is why I say it's important to call of you here so we can find solutions to all these problems. There is no place or community that does not have problem, but if we join our hands together, we will be able to bring out solutions to our own problems. so by this I will like to give the youth leader to say something.

**Youth leader:** Thank you and I greet your highness. I greet all the people of Gatu. My own problem in this community is the issue of stealing and drug abuse. Our youth nowadays are engaged in stealing and doing drugs. They engage themselves in constantly taking drugs such as tramol, codine, tutolin, cigarettes just to mention a few.

**Crowd:** Even mariuana

**Youth leader:** Thank you for saying that. They also engage themselves in drinking alcoholic such as pito lager beer and assorted local brew beer to get drunk. Our parents are not left behind because they also go with this youth to drink together and get drunk. At the end of it all, they will come back and beat up their wives and parents. Please your highness I want us to look into this problem and have a lasting solution to it.

**King:** Thank you, youth leader (pause) Now let us give a chance to the women leader to say something.

**Women leader:** I greet you, your highness. I greet you all people of Gatu. Your higheness another problem is the issue of our young girls who get pregnant at an early age and causing problems to their parents. None of them will be able to take care of the babies they give birth to. This is really a big burden to the parents. Please your highness let us all look into this issue and that the young girls avoid such shameful acts to the communities. Your highness at times this early pregnancy causes damage to their urinal tracks that is VVF which makes them have no control over their urine. Thank you.

- King:** Thank very much. Women Leader No, let me call on our Galadima to contribute.
- Galadima:** Thank you king. My problem in this community is lack of water. Our young girls and women have to walk miles away from the community before they can get water, and some of the water they bring home is not good for drinking. Your highness our fadama is drying up because of lack of water and this problem is very disturbing. So please I want us all to join heads together to find possible solution to this problem.
- King:** Hmmm thank you. Let me give chance to Ngo to contribute
- Ngo:** I greet you, your highness, I greet you all the people of Gatu community. One of our major problem as our father Galadima has just mentioned is water. We all know that we travel far to get water which is not clean for drinking, so I want to advice that when the water is brought to the house we should first of all boil it before drinking. I also want to urge all of us as a community to contribute money in order to sink wells and have clean water to drink and for our house chores. Concerning fadamas, please your highness I urge you to contact the government so that they can help us build dams for us to farm there since our major occupation is farming.
- King:** Thank you. Ngo, Let me give chance to Ngo Kangyang to speak
- Ngo Kangyang:** I greet you your highness. My contribution is on the issue of early pregnancy. Please I want our young girls to be careful and say no to early sex because that is what is causing unwanted pregnancies and early pregnancy. We the parents should advice our children on the dangers of early sex and early pregnancy. Thank you.
- King:** Thank you very much. Lets give this chance to Ngo Bot to contribute
- Ngo Bot:** Thank you, your highness. My own contribution is on drugs and the high level of drunkenness by our youth. I want to advice that anyone who is caught taking those hard drugs should be severely punished. All gaskolo shops should be closed down and those selling drugs should be arrested so that our youth can come back to their sense and be good future leaders. Thank you.
- King:** Thank you very much. Now let us give chance to Ngo Kaneng
- Ngo Kaneng:** I greet you, your Highness. I greet you all. My own contribution is on stealing. Our youths are engaged in stealing and this not

good. My advice is that we should go house to house to contribute money so that we can help the vigilante group to buy whistles and torch lights for security purposes for our safety. And anybody caught stealing should be seriously punished. Finally, any youth that refuses to come out for vigilante rounds should be punished for it's a must for every youth to participate. Thank you

**King:** I heard all that you have said from today I hereby give an order that anyone caught stealing should be punish and nobody should bail the person. Secondly, we will be serious about vigilante in our community because this is our home and our destiny. Thank you all. Less I forget I will send the town crier later on to announce our yearly festival. Thank you for your corporation **(Light fade)**.

**(Scene 5)**

**Narrator:** (At the festival venue obviously in festive mood) I greet you all the people of Gatu. I want you to sit down and witness Gatu cultural festival its best. This festival unites our brothers and sisters from far and near as well as our neighbours. It also brings about peace among people of Gatu community. Many to the rhythm of drum beats at the village square **(Light fades)**.

### **Summary of findings**

- Legal reforms guaranteeing equal rights of women to ownership, property and financial control. Social reforms to enforce humane treatment of women and their worthwhile participation in the development of the families and communities.
- Development of special entrepreneurial initiatives that focus on unbiased participation of women in gainful enterprises and make adequate allowances for their socio-cultural, economic and legal constraints.
- Redrawing budgetary allowances and state expenditure outlays to specifically improve gender equality and promote increased participation of women in new and existing entrepreneurial activities.
- Enhanced collaboration between women and financial, policy and aid agencies through innovative models that takes lack of formal training

and business expertise into account.

- Minimized failure-rates for enterprises involving women through ongoing technical and financial assistance, with in-built frameworks for efficiency monitoring and continuous survey.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

Without any fear of contradiction, unemployment and poverty are the greatest threats to peace, security and national development in Nigeria (Isa and Vambe 85). As if that is not enough challenge, the women folk face systematic discrimination culturally, politically, and economically, entrenchment within power relations, which perpetuate an almost universal subordination of the female gender (Isa and Vambe 85), which undermine national economy.

Measures that can be adapted to enhance women and youth productivity and economic development in Nigeria.

- (i) **Employment Generation-** through a comprehensive data bank of the youth vis-a-vis their skills, covering the 774 Local Governments of Nigeria; involvement of private sector participation; provision of infrastructure e.g. electricity and road networks, ICT (telephones), and housing (in the rural areas); provision of modern agricultural farm tools e.g harrowers, harvesters; cottage industries e.g oil milling factory where there is mass production of soya beans. The above should be applicable to the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. (Isa and Vambe, 61).
- (ii) **Moral Orientation-** Nigerian Women and youth need moral rejuvenation in view of the prevailing moral decadence. This will bring out good behaviour from them in order to be champions of the ethos of fairness, good character, hard work and other standards of good behaviour which can be imbibed. These good attributes can help them to put away the mentality of get-rich quick by any means and inculcate in them the philosophy of hard-work and patience. There is therefore, the need to involve faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations/civil society organizations, as well as traditional institutions to engage the youth and by extension, all members of society to embrace this moral reorientation (Isa and Vambe: 86).
- (iii) **Increased Vocational Training:** This will empower the youth and remove them from unemployment. Vocational training and skill

acquisition in all aspects of workmanship should be embarked upon. More technical schools and technological villages should be established to absorb the youth that will graduate from technical schools. Rural development should be embarked upon to absorb the high rate of unemployment in those areas. This will lead to increased trade and higher income. The acceleration of development of infrastructure can flourish where the private sector is encouraged to build, operate and transfer. The women and youth should have access to Micro Credit. Here, the youth clubs and, or community based organizations should serve as guarantors. Furthermore, the micro-finance banks should be mandated to set aside certain percentage of their loan facilities for the youth. This will reduce unemployment and poverty among the youth and also assist in reducing rural-urban migration (Isa and Vambe: 86).

Furthermore, provision of adequate sporting and recreational facilities in both rural and urban areas for the youth, will go a long way in expressing and exposing their talents in the area of sports such as football, boxing and many others. In addition, these facilities will keep them away from mischief such as kidnapping, rape, cultism and many other vices and find gainful careers in sports. Another important step to be taken forward for positive appraisal of the need for women and youth issue is the review of Government Policy on women and youth development in Nigeria (Isa and Vambe: 71). Although such exercises took place in 2001 and 2008, there is need for another review, in view of ongoing devastation of the world economy which has been held comatose in year 2020 due to the corona virus pandemic. This is besides contemporary issues affecting women and youth empowerment in Nigeria such as HIV/AIDs, drug abuse, youth restiveness, unemployment, armed robbery, kidnapping, rape, and many others.

The contribution of women and youth to national development is abysmal because of several impediments such as an unemployment and abject poverty. Irrespective of such a situation, our leaders carry on as if everything is in order. That Nigeria still relies on foreign aid through loans and massive importation of food to feed her population is a show of shame. The fact that the political class has refused to play according to the rules of the game and prefer sweeping national issues of great importance and other problems under the carpet, has become the bane of our society. Corruption in high places must be stopped forthwith and accountability in all facets of government. Our leaders must realize that Nigeria's problems must be

solved by Nigerians instead of relying on international monetary institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and other Breton woods institutions, particularly in solving the nation's poverty and unemployment challenges.

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## **NIGERIA POPULAR MUSIC IN SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGE: A REVIEW OF SELECTED WORKS IN NIGERIAN POPULAR MUSIC IDIOM**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper enumerates the social transactions via music aside its social impetus. It appraises the songs performed by contemporary Nigeria artistes. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the extent contemporary generation songs interrogate society and to determine their level of commitment to the happenings within the society. The theory adopted for this paper is Socio-musicology as postulated by Karolina Kizinska. This theory basically aims at bringing music and society in an alignment that seeks to study how the two converge and affect or influence each other. This paper examines how past/current musical dialectics reflects, the happenings in the society; albeit, futuristic in their interplay. Findings reveal that the efficiency level of music as a tool for interrogating societal happenings is high.*

**Keyword:** Popular, Music, Socio-political and Change

### **Introduction**

Music is experienced in many different contexts and its significance for human behavior is noteworthy. Music plays an important role in many social contexts such as weddings, funerals, parties, among others. Music has the capacity to induce various moods and emotions in human beings such as anger, excitement, love, etc. One could for instance experience an immediate change of mood from feeling upset to calmness by listening to a song.

If music then has such an explicit and powerful influence on shaping the emotional and psychological state of people, couldn't it then be used perhaps as a tool and vehicle for societal interrogation and check? It is in the light of these questions that artists in Nigeria and elsewhere have at various times

risen and used music to interrogate societal happenings in order to affect social change. Aside its socializing function, music, through its capacity to drive emotions manner has been used for its emotional inducing function by many artists such as 2 Baba, Fela, Tekno, Brymo, Dr Smith, and J-Martins among others to showcase/present and question societal happenings with the view into creating awareness and change in society.

Music and society are inseparable. Where there is no society, there is no music. Blacking John describes music as an organized sound into a socially acceptable pattern (33). This simply means that music revolves around human activity and existence. Each society defines what music means to it and how it affects its people. Whatever form of rhythm or sound that does not conform to a people's way of life or social pattern will not be identified by that people as music. In essence, music is like a voice that carries the pattern of life that a people identify with. It is a voice that speaks a people's moral values, educational system, government, economy, religion among others.

Music also possesses a strong relationship with the language of society. It has to be conveyed through a particular medium (language) of communication which people understand. However, music transcends the limits of language. It looks at the way people cannot express themselves through the spoken and written word and makes up for the lapse. Music can in fact be seen as a deeper extension of language itself, filling in the gaps and reaching to points where the spoken word fails to. It transports a deeper fuse of emotions to the mental faculty of the listener.

At the heart of music and society is the artist. The artist is the singer, composer, or producer who creates songs and presents to society. Thus, music, society, and the artist, have become inseparable because without the artist, society will be void of music, and without the society, there will be no artiste, or the artist will be void of a platform to present his/her music. Music is the working tool of the musical artist. It is a means by which the artist conveys carved out messages and ideals to society, with the hope that the people will truly listen, and as a result, come together and bring about social, political, economic, or religious change.

### **Impact of Music on Society**

It is quite true that society has had a massive impact on music, just as music has had a massive impact on society in the course of history. It is therefore, in line with this fact that Elie Siegmeister in *"Music and Society"*, brought forward eight points that outline the historical impacts of society on music.

They include:

1. The history of music is organically and dynamically related to the history of society, from which it cannot be isolated without losing its intelligibility. 2. Music has at all times had a social function or functions corresponding to the objective needs of society. 3. Changes in the social structure and hence in social needs have brought about changes in the function of music; these are the moving forces underlying the growth and development of music as an art throughout history. 4. Although the music of various classes have continuously interacted upon one another, and at times some have dominated others, each class when it has become conscious of its needs as a class, has tended to develop its own characteristic music, functionally suited to the satisfaction of those needs. 5. The function of music in the long run determines its form and style; when function changes, new forms and styles arise, old ones tend to be modified and die out. 6. The Specific factors directly influencing the development of music are: The social and economic position of the composer, The type of audience or patron for whom the music is created, their tastes, interests, demands and Conditions of performance. Technological factors. 7. Factors determining local variations in form and style in regions having a generally or similar type of social structure. 8. The role of the individual: the social orientation is the matrix, the groundwork out of which the individual grows, and within which his work develops and matures (6-7).

The above outlined points show how critical society is to the development of music. Society produces and shapes the entire concept of music. These artists have had millions of fans over the years that diligently listen to their messages and are willing to follow their ideals. One's attention is therefore, closely drawn to the kind of power and influence that music has given the musical artist over his/her listeners and fans in society. Below, are some of these artists and excerpts from their song lyrics which have prodded and added value to the society:

**"Down" by Brymo**

*Something dey go round town  
People dey go downtown  
Some people dey stand around  
You wanna to know, go downtown  
Them say the Chief  
E dey sleep with the thief wife  
Aboki for corner*

**Theme - Promiscuity**

*E dey sleep with the chief wife  
The neighbor daughter, carry belle for the thief child...*

Brymo is talking about societal ills and how karma goes round in a vicious circle. He tries to tell a symbolic story of a society where people interchangeably sleep with each other's wives and daughters. He tells of a man trying to cheat his fellow man, without the knowledge that a different man somewhere is also cheating him. This can be seen in lines such as "them say the chief e dey sleep with the thief wife, aboki for corner, e dey sleep with the chief wife, the neighbor daughter carry belle for the thief child" and "something e dey go round town" which means "they say a chief is sleeping with a thief's wife, while a friend is sleeping with the chiefs wife. The neighbor's daughter also gets pregnant for the thief's child. Something in society is going round, back and forth ". The song tries to caution society on its actions, as what goes around, comes around.

**"Sorrow, Tears and Blood" by Fela                      Theme - Tyranny**

*My people self they fear too much  
We fear for the thing we no see  
We fear for the air around us  
We fear to fight for freedom  
We fear to fight for liberty  
We fear to fight for justice  
We fear to fight for happiness...  
We no wan die...*

It can be seen from the argument above that Fela is using his song to urge people in society, to conquer their fears and stand for justice and liberty. This can be seen in lines such as "my people self they fear too much" and "we fear to fight for justice" which means " My people are too scared to fight for justice". Fela through his song reminds society that unless they set aside fear and stand firm, injustice will prevail.

**"Fia" by Davido    Theme – Limited love**

*I love you, no mean say, if you say make I put one hand for Fire  
Fire fire burn them  
I go put hand for Fire oh  
E no mean say, if you say make I put one leg for Fire  
Fire fire burn them  
I go put leg for Fire oh...*

The artist Davido, is trying to criticize how a lot of people try to make their

partners who love them to engage in foolish and detrimental acts, all in the name of love. This can be seen in lines such as "I love you no mean say, if you say make I put on hand for fire, I go put hand for fire oh" and "E no mean say if you say make I put one leg for fire, I go put leg for fire oh" which means "the fact that I said I love you does not mean I will oblige, if you say I should put my hand and feet in fire to get burnt". Davido is basically saying to society that in a love relationship, one party should not try to manipulate and take advantage of the other.

**"Motherland" by Sound Sultan**

**Theme – Greener pasture**

*Chinedu somebody borrow you ego  
Make you take carry go Chicago  
Remember Nnamdi sell him car  
So you go go America  
All these People wey been de raise you  
Still de stay for face me i face you  
U promise say you no go fashi them  
Every other month you go de tachi them  
Hillary wey you been promise to marry  
Still de wait, o' boy she don tarry  
When she go see you, na inside ovation  
You marry oyinbo from another nation.  
Use magomago, get dough  
Now your oyinbo wife don know  
Next thing u know, she don go report you  
Wetin u know, them don deport you...*

From a close gaze at the above lyrics, we can denote that the artist, Sound Sultan, uses his song to caution the Nigerian society about going abroad to engage in illegal businesses in an attempt to get rich quickly. He also reminds Nigerians living abroad who have made a fortune and have forgotten about their family and friends back home to remember their motherland. This can be seen in lines such as "all these people wey been raise you still dey face me i face you" which means "all the people who catered for you and raised you up are still in poverty back home" and "use magomago get dough, now your oyinbo wife don know. next thing you know, she don report you. Wetin you know, them don deport you" which means "you use dubious means to get rich abroad, then your American wife finds out and exposes you. The next thing you know is that you are being deported". The song basically talks about one remembering his or her motherland no matter the height attained and ensuring that the attained height was not attained dubiously.

**"Which Way Nigeria" by Sonny Okosun**                      **Theme – Hope and conscientization**

*I want to know  
Which way Nigeria is heading to  
Remember that a single step is the beginning of a million mile  
Let's start right now to  
Rebuild ourselves to make the country smile  
lets save Nigeria so Nigeria won't die...*

From the above lyrics, it is clear that the artist Sonny Okosun, is preaching the message of patriotic living through his song. This can be seen engrained in lines such as "let's start right now to rebuild ourselves to make the country smile" and "lets save Nigeria so Nigeria won't die" which clearly depicts patriotism.

**"Nigeria go Survive" by VenoMarioghae**                      **Theme – Hope and conscientization**

*Cocoa dey for West Ooo, rubber boku for BenDelOoo...  
Palm Oily dey for East Ooo, timber they for Sepeleoooo...  
Groundnuttydey for North Ooo, Ricydey for Benue Ooo...  
Hide and Skin e deyOoo, cotton dey for North ooo...*

*Nigeria Go Survive, Africa Go Survive, my people go survive o Nigeria Go Survive...*

From the above lyrics, one can infer that the artist Veno, celebrates the rich deposit of crops and resources, in the Nigerian arena through her song. She reassures society through her song that Nigeria will survive because it is a blessed land filled with plenty resources. This can be seen in lines such as "cocoa dey for west ooo rubber boku for bendel, Nigeria go survive" which means "there is plenty cocoa in the west and plenty rubber in Bendel, Nigeria will survive" and "hide and skin e deyooo, cotton dey for North ooo, Nigeria go survive" which means that "there is an abundance of hide and skin and cotton in the North, Nigeria will survive". This song is like a voice of hope and assurance which debunks the notion of some prophets of doom who say Nigeria will not survive.

**Level of Responses in Music Appreciation**

Andrew Moses, in his *Guiding Junior High School Pupils in Music Experience* listed the four main classifications of the listener's response to music as follows:

1. Emotional response often brought about through the establishment of mood (state of mind and feelings).
2. Physical response through the listener's reaction in terms of bodily movement (dance).
3. Intellectual response through the ability to analyze the component parts of the music and develop technical knowledge (structural appraisal)
4. Imaginative response through the ability to project into learning in terms of creative learning (38).

From the afore-mentioned levels of reactions, one could deduce that listening to music creates four types of response, all of which are psychologically connected to emotion and intellect. It therefore, means that the everyday artist in society is aware that his/her music wields the power to strongly suggest thought and behavioral patterns to their listeners. It is therefore, a thing of little wonder that when a person or group of persons intend on endorsing or preaching a certain message to society, they quickly resort to the use of music in the form of jingles, concerts, and adverts to convey such message.

Taking a look at Africa's musical legend Fela Kuti during his musical career, one could infer that he stood out as one of the greatest social interrogators of his time via the use of music, which in fact resulted to a lot of collision between him and the government. His type of music as described by Michael Olatunji could be termed as "Yabis" music which is derived from the noun "Yab" in Pidgin English. The word literarily means to make fun of someone or something (26). Fela through his Yabis music was able to "Yab" the social disorders in society and questioned the authoritative actions and rule of the government of his time. For example, According to Mike Okpati, Fela used his songs "Confusion na quench" and "Go slow Go slow" in the 70's to graphically present the scenario at Ojuelegba where at the road crossing, there could be no policeman or traffic warden found to control the traffic. Everyone around the area was thus held in traffic for hours, the message he sent in his songs however, caused the government of the day to construct two fly-over bridges in Western Avenue and the National stadium Lagos as well as the application of odd and even numbers on vehicles during the 1973 All African Games and FESTAC' 77 (16). This measure obviously helped in the reduction and control of traffic in the area. This change was brought about largely due to the influence that Fela's "Yabis" music had brought.

It is therefore, in the same vein that contemporary artists such as Tekno and J Martins have picked up the fight and chosen to not only provide an avenue for social but also to prod the mishaps of society and mirror it back at the people in an attempt to seek positive change. In that light, this artiste takes a critical look at the various roles of music in society, aside its social jollification.

Hogan Jenny make an important Statement that, “teenagers in society today, listen to music on an average of forty hours per week” (1219). It is therefore, a little wonder that the young or youth age group easily get influenced by the music culture of society. Whatever can gain a forty hour grip weekly on a person is definitely a major influence in the person's life. When one takes a walk around the streets of a community, a lot of young people who are glued to music either from their mobile phones, headsets, or mp 3 players could be observed. Some even simply sing or hum musical sounds without any recorded song been played or listened to. Imagine the impact and values that these songs could imprint on the minds of the listeners. As a matter of fact, music is gradually becoming one of the most successful teacher and instructor of the lives of the young and old, impacting on them different types of positive and negative values. A young lad for example may be taught how to speak fluent English language in school. The child comprehends quickly and is speaking fluent English in no time, but after listening to so much Afro music, which mostly has pidgin as its pre dominant language, the child's diction may most likely start to drift toward pidgin and at any given chance, may prefer to speak to people in pidgin rather than in English. A child might also begin to implore the use of vulgar words and language despite been taught the use of decent communication, simply because that child has been exposed to music, which contains vulgar language.

Alex Asigbo thus insists that “once a society has decided on its sets of moral codes, it is usually the artist's sacred mandate to act as a watchdog of those codes. It is equally the artist's prerogative to act as heralds for changing of those codes that have outlived their usefulness” (692). This means that the relationship between music and society has given the artist an avenue to be the watchdog of the society, and the mandate to blow the whistle whenever society deviates from its carved out moral and ethical codes. Music speaks powerfully to people and thus the artist is able to reach out to both young and old in a manner that can stir up positive development.

As noted by Robert Garfias in *Music: the Cultural Context*, phonograph recording or any other form of audio recording had not yet been invented by the 18<sup>th</sup> century (54). Music thus during this era, only existed in the form of live

presentations. This means that before the invention of audio recording technology, access to music was limited to live bands, orchestras, musicians playing by roadsides in exchange for money, church choirs, among others with no recording studios or gadgets invented. Every single song therefore had to be sung by the artiste live in the presence of his/her audience. If one wanted to listen to a particular artiste living in a different community or country sing a particular song for example, the person might have had to wait for an opportunity to meet face to face with the artiste in order to hear the song. The coming of advanced technology today however, has eliminated that problem and made it possible for anyone to listen to any song anytime they want to. Recording studios and gadgets have been invented and an artist can record a song, which can be sent to any music enabled device on the face of the earth. This fact is one of the major reasons why music is so embedded in present day society more than ever before. The availability and ease of access to it is limitless. The Nigerian society like every other society share a close bond with music which when fully and properly harnessed could largely aid national development and sensitization.

### **Artistic Responses to Social Changes**

A society decides and determines what its kind of music should sound like. Different societies have over the years carved out their own unique sounds that are peculiar to them, based on their culture and life pattern. The Afro beats or Afro music for example, is a genre of music which features a lot of percussions and originates from the borders of Africa. It carries the feel and sound of the African skin drums and heritage. Hip hop music on the other hand is a genre of music, which has its roots in the traditions of the Western world. Characterized by its hi hats, snares, kick drums, and jumpy bass lines known as 808's, hip hop music also carries the heritage and cultural tag of the Western society. Modernization however, has over time created an arena for a cross cultural mingling of these genres and has allowed them both the possibility of adapting make up elements from each other. People in society today long for the feel of a sound that is different from what they know and are used to. Society prefers a variety and thus many cultures have been forced to hybridize and adapt elements from other musical genres and infuse into theirs. One of such example is the Afro pop genre which combines both Afro and Pop music as a genre of its own. Music in all parts of the world is driven by the society that produces and listens to it.

The people decide what they want and what they don't in their own peculiar sound. Nnamani Sunday, in an essay entitled *The Role of Folk Music in the African Society* posts that:

The Igbo Experience, identifies the traits of African music as; primarily percussive with drums, rattles, bells, and gongs dominating. The melodic instruments include xylophones and plucked strings which are played with percussive techniques. African melodies are based on short units, on which performers improvise. Though the melodies are often simple, the rhythms are complex by European standards with much syncopations hemiola and polyrhythm" (305).

The above description by Nnamani is merely an observation of what he has identified as active elements in African music. Every society thus has the duty and role of either encouraging or discouraging a certain type of music based on its content and make up. This means that the society will frown at any song that defaces its cultural values and norms, while it accepts songs that conform to its values. Society therefore, checks and balances whatever is produced as music. For example, Nigerian artist, Eedris Abdulkareem in 2004 produced a song titled "*Jagajaga*". Below is an excerpt from the song's lyrics:

*Nigeria jagajaga  
Everything scatter scatter  
Poor man dey suffer suffer  
Gbosa, gbosa, gun shotinna di air...  
Na political armed robber be that  
Na wetindey kill Nigeria o*

Eedris Abdulkareem's song is a negative criticism of Nigeria. He speaks of the Country as if nothing positive is attainable. *Jagajaga* is a Pidgin English word which means shambles. The lines Nigeria Jagajaga and Everything scatter scatter when translated to English means Nigeria is in shambles and everything is in a scattered state. This message however is false. True is the fact that Nigeria as a country faces its own problems just as every other country in the world does. However, the way Eedris Abdulkareem portrays this fact in his song is totally demeaning and defacing to the nation and its society. The song went beyond the borders of Nigeria and to many who may have listened to the song in the international world, a wrong notion about Nigeria being a failed state may have been birthed. The society however reacted to this. As recorded by Osunbor Sarah in the Naija news Center, "the then government under the leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo banned the song from further airplay in all stations" (3). The artist also had to leave the country for some time due to hostile grounds which was developed

towards him. In the same vein, the Naija loaded online blog released a statement in March 2016, about a ban that the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission had put on a song titled "Don't Stop" by Nigerian artiste Olamide for its vulgar content. Below is an excerpt from the statement:

The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) has banned another of Olamide's song- "*Don't Stop*" just after months of blacklisting his '*Bobo*' song. According to NBC, this song also contains vulgar lyrics which are not good for the public. According to them, the phrases in the song that led to the ban includes: "I just wanna hit it now nownow, Je kin wo be" meaning "let me enter the place, don't stop, take it". "Ountamiounro mi," which means "It took your mama 9 months to make it". "wagbaponron" meaning "come and let me give you my penis" (1—2).

From the above excerpts, we can clearly see that Olamide simply used his song to promote sexual promiscuity and vulgarity to his audience who are mostly youth and the younger generation. This song went against the ethics of the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission which represents society, and since the society has the mandate of checkmating whatever is produced, the song was banned on the grounds of its content.

The society on the other hand accepts and does not sanction songs that extol norms and good morals to its members. One of such song is "*Hold on*" by Joe el and 2 baba. Below is an extract from the lyrics of the song:

*Just hold on, and be strong  
It won't be long, e go be alright  
If anyone talk say you no go make am na lie na lie... Just try  
No forget say na baba God give you this life  
So no let anything to stop you from going so high high...  
So don't forget where you are coming from and where you are  
going  
No pain no gain, keep going...*

Joe El and 2 baba in the lyrics above preach perseverance, self worth and hard work. This can be seen in lines such as "you have to believe in yourself and live through" and "No pain no gain keep going", which encourages the citizens of society to keep on pushing their dreams with hard work and commitment to attain success. The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission did

not blacklist and ban this particular song in contrast to Olamide's "*Don't stop*" because its content is empowering to people and does not violate societal norms and values.

Adewoyin Adeniyi States that, "Nigerian music industry has produced many talents from different parts of the country. There have been various artistes who have been the voices of the masses through their lyrics, while also speaking against corruption and bad governance" (23). In line with Adeniyi's thought, one could observe that Tekno, Fela, J Martins, 2 Baba, Dr Smith, among other artists in the Nigerian circle have indeed used their musical tool to influence societal change.

### **CONCLUSION**

The place and position of the artist, as proven by history is crucial and should not be neglected. The artist should thus be held in high esteem as the power he/she wields can influence society and rapidly prod the change that many societies so desperately crave for. An artist is therefore meant to be not merely an entertainer, but also a vanguard in society who acts as an armless police, fighting without guns and ammunitions and fostering the front line of positive change.

However, it is also imperative to know that contemporary music just like music of the 80's and the past still interrogate societal happenings. In the same vein, the songs, "*Rara*" by Tekno, "*Cool Temper*" by J Martins "*Nigeria go Survive*" by Veno, "*Which Way Nigeria*" by Sonny Okosun, "*Motherland*" by Sound Sultan, "*Fia*" by Davido and "*Sorrow, Tears and Blood*" by Fela etc interrogate happenings in society. The explicit impacts of the society on the music can not be quantified. In the same vein, the therapeutic index of the Nigeria popular songs has dialectically engaged the unfolding of narratives be it social happenings of its citizenry, questioning the economic stabilization for the interest of the common man on the street, exposing the religious bigotry of clergy and political leaders, the nepotism that is being perpetrated based on kinship and politics of acrimony. This is the order of the day which this paper attempted to discussed.

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## **EVALUATING THE DIRECTOR'S ROLE IN THE PRESERVATION OF AFRICAN ATTIRE**

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### **Abstract**

*The importance of costumes in stage performance cannot be overlooked in the history of theatre, due to the vital role it plays in enhancing the depiction of the characters, reflecting their psychology, and establishing the social and economic status of the character. It also projects actors' personality, occupation and lifestyle. Depending on how the director puts costume to use, it can bring about clarification in the characters' relationship and narrate the story. It nonetheless, fulfils an aesthetic purpose of beautifying the characters as well as the scenes. Most costumes over the years have served as a reminder of history and a preserver of the culture of African people. The import and introduction of foreign films to the African audience brought with it the western lifestyle and dressing, which is constantly emulated by the Africans. This has affected his/her way of dressing and taste for cultural values. His/her local attire made from handmade fabrics such as Aso-oke, Adire, Kente, Maasai Shuka etc, has been more or less replaced by western outfits made from imported fabrics (shirt and trousers or skirt and blouse). What we have now is a situation where an African man tends to wear his traditional attire once in a while or on special occasions like, weddings, naming, burial, chieftaincy ceremony and other ceremonies, thereby, making the patronage of the local textile materials much lower, than that of foreign materials. Hence, In an age where majority of our entertainment comes to us through the electronic media, consisting of the screen and radio, which has obviously affected the number of theatre-goers over the decades; there is need to search for the relevance of theatre in this present era, its functions and values in the growth and development of the African society, so as to ensure its continuity. This study will discuss the role of theatrical costumes in the preservation of African traditional attire using Death and the King's Horseman, a staged performance by the 400 level students of Department of Theatre and Film Arts, University of Jos, with a view of bringing out the relevance of theatre in the 21st century, using qualitative research method and conclusion will be drawn based on the outcome of the analysis.*

**Keywords:** Traditional Attire, Costumes, Preservation, and Stage performance.

## **Introduction**

African people are easily identified by certain characteristics, starting mainly from their language, to their appearance, which consists of their features and how they choose to be clad. This choice is based on their historical background, what is conducive for their weather or climate and also the raw material at their disposal.

According to Thaxton (n.p), African clothes' woven fibres from the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD were found in Nigeria West Africa. Around 200 B.C the people began to weave fabric to make clothing. They also make use of other materials provided by nature to enhance their looks." He noted that; "The history of African textile spans centuries in time and reflects the ancestral traditions of the African people. Based on the colourful nature of the African people, Thaxton rightly observed that the characteristics of woven products that attracted Africans included: colourful yarns, textured fabrics, applique designs, embroidery and dyeing. Great dyers of Africa were located in both Tunisia and Nigeria".

If this be the case, the traditional attire, or general appearance of any group of people could likely be traced to their history and vice versa. The mode of dressing of an individual tells a lot about certain aspects of his or her disposition, which has more or less been influenced by his cultural and historical background; likewise, a people's choice of traditional attire has its root in the people's history. This implies that: you cannot separate what makes a people who they are from what they really are. Opong and Adinku state clearly that, "appearance or what we wear is important because it transmits more information about us more than what we say' (11). This statement suggests that others 'hear' -from what they see- and understand our language through our appearance or what we wear before they even hear it. Hence a huge percentage of a people's culture is portrayed in their traditional clothing and adornment than in the other medium that requires time to study and understand. Thus, the dressing "shows" (apparent) but you have to "tell" (explain) the other aspects of their culture.

Abuku and Odi (189) also acknowledge that costumes basically reflects characters in relation to the indigenous or traditional cultural dictates of a people which have implications for development. This paper seeks to re-direct our attention on costumes worn by actors on theatre stage as a means of preserving our cultural heritage and to also serve as a reminder of history. This goal cannot be achieved without identifying other ethnic groups in Nigeria who produce their cloth locally and wear hand-woven *Aso-Oke* or tie

and dye *Adire* materials. In the words of Adenle:

Evidence of earlier inter-mingling from the migratory Nupe/Yoruba War Age shows in the commonality of, for example, *Etu* of Yoruba land in the South west and Sokoto (North West) and Nupe (*Tapa*) of Central Nigeria. She observed that the Tiv wear a lot of theirs as *fila* which they wear in mostly *gubi* the style that many Yoruba, especially the older people favour. What is more, the intricate hand-made embroideries of the Northwest and Southwest from old clothes bear similarities (3).

But for the purpose of our case study, we shall limit this research to Yoruba attire. It has been observed that not every African attire is proudly worn and promoted by those in custody of it. Opong and Adinku posits thus:

It is apparent that culture has great effects in the forms and functions of dressing, though over the years the influence of Western culture has been so patent in the Africans way of dressing. But it is imperative to note that in certain parts of Africa, some groups still find the traditional outfits quite functional and fashionable as we observed with the Yorubas in Nigeria and the Ashantis in Ghana who will proudly wear their traditional attire to any occasion without any compromise (13).

This foreign influence gained access mainly through the screen (Television and Film), as opposed to stage that brings us down to earth by utilizing readily available local and indigenous props and costumes. As a result, the stage presents a hope of pushing this Western culture back to its boundary and retaining our cultural and original cladding.

Since this paper is an attempt to remind the audience and also preserve history through the use of costume, it will be hinged on the theory of realism. Realism in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century began as an experiment to make theatre more useful to society. The mainstream theatre from 1859 to 1900 was still bound up in melodrama, spectacle plays (disasters, etc), comic operas and vaudevilles. Realism first showed itself in staging and costuming. Three- dimensional details had been added by 1800. By 1850, theatre productions used historically accurate settings and costumes and details, partly as a result of romantic ideals (Trumbull, 2). Henrik Ibsen is credited for introducing realism in drama. According to *Santos R. et al* he is known as

“Father of Realism”. He aimed at bringing a greater fidelity of real life to the stage (n.p). Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, is usually credited with developing the completely integrated, large-scale realistic production. He himself designed all the scenery and costumes, the “Theatre Duke” spread the gospel of the realistic, ensemble performance for the stage classics of the day (Russell, 382). In costuming, naturally, we are confronted with the problem of style, which consists of the personal style of the designer and that of the period he or she lives. This, unavoidably, tend to reflect in the way costumes are designed for various performances. Russell asserts that the designer should put aside the idea that he can recreate the past in his costume designs, he is doomed to fail, no matter how honestly he tries. This is because, he cannot escape himself. No matter how objective and self-critical he may be about his work and no matter how much time he spends studying every possible visual source from the past, what he finally presents to the public is a personal interpretation, coloured by training, personality, and the culture in which he lives (212). Russell's statement is verified by Santos *et al's* definition, “Realism refers generally to any artistic or literary portrayal of life in a faithful, accurate manner, unclouded by false ideals, literary conventions, or misplaced aesthetics glorification and beautification of the world” (n.p). The question that arises here is: how close to reality can a director and his costumier get in their work? This research is carried out with regards to reality, as much as possible in the use of costume, this is made necessary by the need to accurately depict the setting of the play, which is a Yoruba historical epic play. Successes and failures was encountered by the designers, but the main aim of this study is to help stop the extinction of African traditional attire through the adoption of realism on the theatre stage.

In order to keep us in focus in this study, the following research questions shall be treated:

1. What is the role of costume in the preservation of African culture?
2. How does costume serve as a reminder of our history?
3. How can the director ensure that the theatre remains relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century through his creative use of costume?

### **Attitude to African Traditional Attire**

Before we study the present day attitude of an average African to their traditional attire, it is expedient to explain what is seen and thought of as “traditional attire”. In Iuga's (39) expression, traditional clothes have a collective value, their shapes and significance are transmitted and inherited over generations, along with the necessary changes that have occurred over

time due to a change in taste and values. They reflect codes, shapes and meanings that are common to a whole social group, expressing the communitarian function of traditional art.

Certain factors are responsible for the attitude of an average African to their traditional attire. Most people see it as clothes to wear on special occasions like weddings, naming ceremony, funeral ceremony, festivals, etc. Labode (2013), observed in a study carried out in both Lagos and Abeokuta, major *Adire* producers and found that the usage of *Adire and Aso-oke* among the youth is limited to ceremonial occasions only. This may be acceptable, but it limits the promotion of this aspect of their culture to an occasional occurrence. Also, Onwudiwe (132) cites Oguejiofor: "It is now a fashion for *Ndi Igbo (Igbo people)* to wear all sorts of look..." he regrets that even some Ozo titled men throw away their revered red cap in place of some lesser caps. He accuses the elite and the well-to-dos in the society as the main culprits here. Onwudiwe in his own reaction says that the wind of change is heavily blowing to erode both the Igbo man and his language and culture away (133). Furthermore, he recommends that the government in Igbo states should remove the restriction of the use of Igbo language and dressing in Igbo attire on select days for, it is a shame to regulate somebody on when to use his native language and attire in his home land (136). The question that needs to be asked at this juncture is; is this choice due to the fact that the African man or woman has an extreme value for their attire so much so that they see it as "sacred", hence should be seen in it once in a while? Or on the contrary, under value it, seeing it as only worth wearing when absolutely necessary, and as such, a formidable but necessary evil? It is expedient to note that this attitude is not peculiar to African traditional clothes alone, but to African arts generally. Even the western world that now treasures African arts at the initial stage found African art intolerable and a bit confusing as seen from Klemm's account:

When early European explorers brought back souvenirs from their trips to the African continent, they were regarded as curiosities and they didn't find a home in art museums for centuries. Instead, these objects became part of natural history museums... by the early 1900s however, these same objects that were initially regarded as artefacts of material culture, began to be exhibited in Western art museums and galleries as "art". The objects themselves had not changed, but there was a shift in the attitudes and assumptions about what constituted an art work (n.p).

Again, in the world of fashion, African attire were not rated well enough for an international fashion parade, it was simply not thought fashionable. This may be due to the simple fact that the taste of the young ones who engage in these fashion parade differs from that of the elderly. This becomes more obvious in Adenle's observation about the Yoruba classics (*Sanyan, Etu, and Alaari*):

The Classics are generally worn -not by rule-by the parents. Younger people are more attracted to the modern design and colours. The Classics are simple and not flamboyant, perhaps conservative by modern-day taste! (3).

Furthermore, some cultures have formal and informal attire, which ensure that they are at most times wearing their traditional clothes during special occasions and on ordinary days. Yet some can hardly be seen wearing their cultural attire, this may be due to the fact that these attire are quite expensive to make, apart from the fact that it's not always readily available. Special orders may have to be placed in order to acquire these attire. For instance, the Jukun people are also good in making high quality weaving and *Adire* fabric but according to Okunna & Gausa's report, the Jukun cultural symbols have for long been relegated to the background and as such, it is not recognized and appreciated by many people. Most of the traditional cloths that were once produced by the Jukun weavers and dyers have already disappeared and the technique of the craft is no longer in practice. They observed that this could be due to technical problems associated with weaving, the poor aesthetic quality and unmodified nature of the cloths. Consequently, the level of patronage of the cloths have gone down(108). Diop and Merunka in their extensive research about frequent and infrequent users of African dress style discovered that there are differences in motives and end-goals, that:

Infrequent users wear traditional dress for special occasion, such as social outings, family gatherings, going to the village... during and after pregnancy and so on. Essentially traditional dress helps wearers be seen and noticed by other social group, because through it, they can express religious values, belong to a social group and appear beautiful. In contrast, frequent users wear traditional dress to conform to social rules, hide their bodies, be discreet, show humility and gain respect from others. It expresses respect for social traditions and an African identity (14).

Also, there are some who find traditional clothes rather uncomfortable and inappropriate to wear. This may be due to the hard texture of some of the fabrics used in addition with all the accessories that may accompany it. Most African traditional attire are hardly ever simple, but fortunately, some culture have both elaborate attire and simple attire, expensive as well as affordable ones.

### **The Yoruba Traditional Attire**

The Yoruba traditional attire consists of both formal and informal wears, thereby, making it possible for the people to wear not just on special occasions, but also at casual times. The formal wear for men consists of: *Agbada*, *Sokoto* and *Fila* (big flowing gown, trousers and cap to go with it). This is made from a hand woven indigenous fabric known as *Ofi* or *Aso-Oke*. According to Falola & Akinyemi, Aso-Oke literally means “fabric from the hinterland,” and is a hand-woven fabric of the Yoruba. It is woven solely by men on a double-heddle horizontal loom, in strips of about five inches wide that are then sewn into the desired dress (319). The women on the other hand use this same fabric to make *Iro*, *Buba* and *Gele* (wrapper, long-sleeved blouse and head tie) The informal wears are made from a pure cotton fabric, dyed with Indigo leaves into beautiful colours showcasing African artistic geometric designs, which are known as *Adire*, *batik* or “Tie and dye”. According to Thaxton:

Two of the most common dyeing techniques employed by Africans were Tie-dye and resist or batik. Fabrics for batik are made of cotton and are put through a mechanized technique of waxing to create designs...

The Yoruba people of Nigeria incorporated batik into their culture and it gained immense popularity (n.p).

The comfortable texture of the pure cotton fabric used for this batik and *Adire* makes it practicable for most people to use it as an everyday outfit as well as for special occasions.

### **DEATH AND THE KING'S HORSEMAN**

#### **The Synopsis**

*Death and the King's Horseman* is a play set in a 1946 event in Oyo, an ancient city in Yoruba land situated in Nigeria. It was a practice back then, for the Chief, an aide to the king known as “*Elesin Oba*” (The king's horseman) to commit suicide as a way of paying his last respect to the late king. This ritual also served as a sacrifice to pave way for the king to get to the land of the

ancestors unhindered. Hence, it was a spiritual escort of the king by his 'Horseman' to the "great beyond". This time, the traditional/religious ancient practice is confronted by the Western/modern belief in the person of Simon Pilkings, a white District Officer. Mr. Pilkings made some efforts to intervene and end this suicidal mission. He sponsored the son of the king's horseman, Olunde, to study in the UK in the bid to change his mind set through his exposure to Western education; thereby detaching him from his cultural background. Also, he intercepted the sacrifice on the night it was meant to take place, but it all proved abortive. Rather it brought about a tragic end of two suicides in place of one; Elesin Oba and his son!

### **WHY WOLE SOYINKA'S PLAY?**

*Death and the King's Horseman* is chosen for this paper based on the fact that Wole Soyinka, in spite of his rich and vast exposure to Western culture does not insinuate in his works that, African culture is of the past and as such should not be reckoned with. It will be helpful to note that, this paper is concerned mainly with the objective aspect of the play rather than the subjective. This work emulates the appreciation of the African culture, which consists of the development and progress of the African. As a result, the borrowed Western culture should not necessarily be seen as the 'modern' culture to embrace while we perpetually discard ours. Klemm note that:

Scholars find that specific historical moments had a profound effect on African communities and their art.

During the slave-trade and colonization, for example, some artists created work to come to terms with the horrific events-experiences that often stripped people of their cultural, religious and political identities (n.p).

These expressions in African arts is a form of resistance to colonial rule and influence, hence, this obstinacy in holding tenaciously to our cultural heritage as observed in *Death and the King's Horseman*, should be applied to the aspect of accepting and preserving Africa's beautiful traditional attire. That irrespective of what is imported from overseas, like *Olunde* in the play; we will not trade our own original heritage portrayed in African fabrics and styles in exchange for it. In *Webster's Third International Dictionary*; the concept of 'traditional dress' as a static form carried over from the past is usually contrasted with the rapidly changing fashion of "the West". This confirms the need to make a deliberate effort to prevent our traditional attire from becoming completely extinct in the world of fashion. To ensure this, every possible platform must be utilised to promote, sustain and preserve this delicate, but special form of dressing. Abuku and Odi observe that:

Presently, the use of these materials is in the increase. Designers include these materials in the costume designs and try to promote Nigeria's rich cultural heritage. This in essence boosts the tourism industry with its attendant development in Nigeria(193).

### **The Use of Aso-Oke and Adire in *Death and the King's Horseman***

The play opens in the market, and the section of the market where the scene takes place is in the traditional hand-made fabric section. Women are seen in their stalls with colourful Yoruba *Aso-oke* and *Adire* of various meticulous designs hanging from their racks. On stage, we see a literal advertisement of African traditional fabric and a display of our culture. The women themselves, who seem to be modelling their wares, are seen in good quality indigo and other colours of *Adire*. On this platform, the audience are reminded of their historical values, and there is a gentle nudging to: "come patronize our indigenous cloth and attire!" and "help promote our cultural heritage". None, except *Iyaloja* (head of the market women) is seen wearing *Aso-oke*, which goes to strengthen the fact that the Yoruba locally made fabric consists of a variety of the formal type and the informal. The difference is seen in the texture and patterns, which is mainly due to the processing of the textile. For *Aso-oke*, the dyeing comes before the fabric is woven, which makes it possible for the weaver to make it as thick as possible, combining threads of various colours. This is also applied in the weaving of *Kente*. The thickness of *Aso-Oke* and *Kente* enables it to serve as a blanket; by this, they not only serve as clothing and adornment, but also as covering and protection against cold during hamarttan or rainy season. *Adire*, which is not hand-woven and of light cotton material, is dyed after the textile is made. This allows the designer to draw beautiful patterns that are symbolic to the people's culture and beliefs.

Also, we see uniformity not just in the fabric the women used, but also in the way it is tailored, which is usually *Iro* and *Buba* (wrapper and long sleeved blouse). Back in the 40s when the play is situated, the only style women made with any fabric then was *Iro* and *Buba*, both for staying at home, or going to the farm or market and for social functions. This only form of fashion was comfortable and appropriate for any purpose, whether formal or informal. This is opposed to the modern day choice of fashion over convenience and practicability. We are more prone to following trend in fashion, even if it cost us our comfort more than our money. There is much to emulate in our traditional attire and a director is in a good position to bring this to our awareness in his rich use of costume. Hence, it is his duty to delve into

the robust archive of these traditional wears, which have gathered dust of abandonments over the years and bring about a re-emergence.

Another situation in that same scene 1, where Soyinka gives the director an opportunity to showcase African traditional textile is when the market women call *Elesin-Oba*: “a man of honour” and he feigns anger saying:

**Elesin-Oba:**

Words are cheap. 'We know you for a man of honour'. Well tell me, is this how a man of honour should be seen? Are these not the same clothes in which I came among you a full half-hour ago?(16).

At this statement, “the women, relieved, rise and rush into stalls to fetch rich cloths”. Note the adjective that describes these cloths from the women's stalls: “Rich”. The Horseman of the king knows this, which was probably why he seized the opportunity of the rare moment to demand for it. He probably had not had access to such cloths of the highest quality meant for men of honour. Labode affirms this thus:

These fabrics were considered prestigious and were highly sought after in the past by the aristocratic class and the elite throughout Yoruba land because they were important in the commemoration of important event (77).

Also, according to the *Encyclopedia of the Yoruba*, “the most impressive, and often the most expensive, dress is Aso-oke.” (Falola & Akinyemi, 319). Iyaloja tells us the brand of these “cloths of honour”: *Sanyan and Alaari*. Tola Adenle affirms that:

The three Yoruba great classics are *Sanyan, Alaari* and *Etu*. In the past, these classics were all woven in silk which then affordable only to royalty and the people of means in society. The availability of cotton and the fact that more people could and wanted to – afford better refinement, these fabrics started to be woven, still by hand as it's done to date in cotton. (2).

The value placed on these cloths could be likened to the value placed on the expensive oil the woman with the alabaster box poured on the Lord before His crucifixion. She more or less prepared Him for burial, (Mark 14: 1-9), though the two situations are not quite similar. Elesin made his own 'sacrifice'

by committing an offence just before his death; when he took another man's bride. Secondly, he died by committing suicide. Nevertheless, the value placed on these hand-crafted indigenous cloths could not be overlooked in the play, as we see Elesin Oba decked one after the other with colourful variety of these beautiful fabrics, by women, who represent the custodians of these priceless traditional cloths. It is in this scene we witness *Elesin Oba* being bestowed with honour for the sacred act he is about to engage in. It is by this single act of the women's generosity -in exception of his controversial demand for a maiden that belonged to another suitor - that we observe the people's show of appreciation for this 'noble' task ahead of the king's horseman.

Another instance in the play in which African cultural attire is obviously exhibited and promoted, this time, by foreigners; was when Mr and Mrs Pilkings wore the traditional costume of the Yoruba masquerade known as *egungun*. The Pilkings recognised and appreciated the creativity in the design of the *egungun* costume, so much so that they chose to wear this unique attire as fancy dress to a costume party (for the British residents) they were attending that fateful night. Their confidence in the choice to borrow the culture of the native African people in spite of disapproval by the natives themselves, was expressed in the words of Mr. Pilkings:

**Mr. Pilkings:**

Well, I've got it on. And what's more, Jane and I have bet on it in view of this, we're taking first prize at the ball" (Soyinka 24).

We can deduce that as Clarke rightly observed in her article *Western appreciation of African art*, that:

Although objects from Africa were brought to Europe as early as the Fifteenth century, it was during the colonial period that a greater awareness of African art developed. The cultural and aesthetic milieu of late-nineteenth century Europe fostered an atmosphere in which African artifacts, once regarded as mere curious, became admired for their artistic qualities(n.p).

African design which is known for its abstract conceptual approach is globally admired and well valued in the art world. The ironical situation however, whereby the costume is rejected out of fear for the mysterious *egungun* by an indigene, "Amusa", a native administration policeman, takes us aback! His strong belief in the superstition surrounding the masquerade has deprived

him from seeing and appreciating the artistic effort in the beautifully designed costume. Amusa's reaction at the sight of the *egungun* costume represents the attitude of most modern day people of Africa. This impediment to the acceptance of African culture by most Africans, as a result of fear or disgust for the mystery surrounding certain aspects of African traditions whether true or false, forms majorly, what has truncated the promotion and the growth of these cultures. On the other hand, those who chose to either overlook these beliefs or not to believe them at all, are liberated to enjoy the beauty of these creations. Surprisingly, these categories are mostly the foreigners! The Pilkings not only envision the beauty and creativity of the *egungun* attire, but also its functionality. This is seen when Mr. Pilkings announces to his wife, the likely attendance of the Prince at the ball they were preparing for, that night. She responds in excitement:

**Mrs Pilkings:**

“Well that's lucky. If we are to be presented I won't have to start looking for a pair of gloves. It's all sewn on” (Soyinka 33).

Hence, Thieme and Eicherob observe that an understanding as well as appreciation, of Africa(n) dress becomes more difficult when the handcrafted textile so admired by the West are not apparently used (119).

Again, in the scene where *Elesin Oba* is being honoured with a bride, we see these same traditional cloths lined up on the path to the bridal chamber, like a “red carpet”. As a result, when *Amusa* comes to arrest *Elesin Oba*, the women barricade the entrance with the words:

**Women:**

“Do you think that kind of road is built for every kind of feet?”  
(35).

The function of these cloths as a “road builder” and “red carpet” goes further to prove the important and vital role it plays in honouring those termed “noble”. We can deduce from these that the *Aso-oke* of the Yoruba does not only function as a mere cladding or fashion, but also serves the functions of decorating the nobles and the venue for significant events.

Furthermore, it serves as a protection from the cold when worn and used as a blanket. Another interesting function of this cloth is the protection of babies! Because of its thickness and strength, women use it to hold babies on their

backs. This brand of hand woven cloth is known as “*Oja*”. Wole Soyinka affirms this strength of *Aso-oke* in the play when Elesin is about to transcend and he is being delayed in an exchange of poetic expressions with the Praise-Singer who obviously would miss his close associate. He asks *Elesin* for a dying wish of which he replies that it would be read after his death. Yet, this wish is locked up in his mind, to deliver it; he (*Elesin-Oba*) has to return to do it himself. The Praise –Singer then tells him to send his dog if he cannot come. To this, Elesin declined, claiming he cannot trust animals with messages between a king and his companion. When the Praise –Singer further expresses fear of the wickedness of men and the king's horseman getting lost on the way in these words:

**Praise-Singer:**

I know the wickedness of men. If there is weight on the loose end of sour sash, such weight, as no mere men can shift; if your sash earthed by evil minds who mean to part us at the last...(42).

In disagreement, Elesin cuts in:

**Elesin:**

My sash is of the deep purple *alari*; it is no tethering- rope. The elephant trails no tethering- rope; that king is not yet crowned who will peg an elephant? Not even you my friend and King (42).

In this last minute conversation between these two friends before they part ways, we can also observe from *Elesin's* words that *alari*- a brand of *Aso-Oke* is of such high quality that it cannot be compared to a tethering-rope. He even implies in his words that the traditional hand woven cloth is strong enough for the elephant to trail. Figurative though, but we are made aware that he is trying to describe the strength of this meticulously made fabric.

In contrast to all these rich cultural display of attire, is the importation of borrowed culture alongside. The vessel used for this infiltration is the person of *Olunde* Son of the king's horseman, who had just arrived from the UK where he was studying. He is seen in a “sober western suit” (p.49). *Olunde* represents those who have in one way or the other been influenced by Western mode of dressing due to their exposure and as a result got accustomed to it. They obviously find it more convenient as *Olunde*

expressed his opinion of the *egungun* costume worn by Jane Pilkings in these words: "...But don't you find it rather hot in there?" (50). *Olunde's* shock about Mrs. Pilkings outfit was more subtle and controlled than that of *Amusa*, being more diplomatic about it in spite of the fact that he did not think the "cause" for which she wore it was worthy. As a matter of fact, he described it as "desecrate an ancestral mask" (50). Yet, *Olunde* on a sacred night like this one, is seen wearing a foreign outfit. This is obviously inappropriate and has no connection with the mood of the traditional incidence about to take place, of which he is quite aware and had flown across the sea to witness. What could be responsible for this nonchalance to his appearance on an occasion that affects him directly? Could it be that, having been privileged to have travelled out of his country to pursue academic excellence overseas, he saw the need to distinguish himself through his clothing in order for his social status to be apparent? This notion forms the basis of the attitude of many Africans to their cultural garments made from indigenous material by the indigenes. The craving for uniqueness and wanting to be distinguished as a much travelled person of affluence, who has an edge over his or her contemporaries has made many young people especially, to abandon their traditional wears for the western ones. Diop & Merunka rightly quote Hopkins:

Wearing global (Western) dress may signal a more modern or cosmopolitan style. Western style also may be associated with literacy, education, power and a global sense of culture or with a loss of identity, loss of control over the youth or women's loss of morality(3).

To be fair to the playwright or the director, the audience would have had no way of seeing *Olunde's* Western exposure if he wasn't wearing their outfit, since that is the only scene he is made to appear. This same excuse also applies in real life situations as most of those who often wear western styled clothes do so to create an impression. And what impression are they trying to create? Impression of being "exposed" to a culture that seems more acceptable globally and probably, because it gives them a feeling of 'an international personality'. This stems from the need to be accepted amongst the elite. Nonetheless, there ought to be a balance so as not to be detached from our source culturally.

### **The Staging and Costuming of *Death and the King's Horseman***

*Death and the King's Horseman* was staged by the 400 level Theatre Workshop students (class of 2018) at the Open Air Theatre, Department of Theatre and Film Arts, University of Jos. The play was directed by Monijesu

Ebube (the present researcher), alongside Victor Anyagu, under the supervision of the Head of Department (Emman Frank Idoko) of the aforementioned department. It is this version of the play's production that forms the basis of this research.

The preparation of the play took several rigorous months of which elaborate costumes were made by the costumier -Agba Monica and her team, Olukosi Banke, Yayok Galadima, Dankyes Ruth, to mention a few - for each member of the cast. Thorough research was carried out with much consultation with one of the directors, (Monijesu Ebube) who has a Yoruba background and as a result in possession of some of these attire. Together they dug into the historical background of the Yoruba traditional attire so as to ensure a detailed and accurate costume is found for various characters in the play,(both for major and minor roles).

In spite of this, during the supervision of her project, which was based on the production, the costumier (Agba Monica) admitted to her supervisor (the present researcher), that it was challenging, being an epic play, set in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was difficult getting accurate information about the socio-cultural setting of the play, especially regarding the mode of dressing of *Elesin-Oba*, *Olohun-iyo* (the Praise-Singer) and *Iyaloja*.

She further stated that even the police uniforms were difficult to ascertain due to series of changes in style and colour of the uniform over the decades. The costumier, who happens to be a well-qualified seamstress, sowed most of the costumes herself, while some were rented. For instance; the attire in *Ofi* or *Aso-oke* were rented; while the tie-dye (*Adire*) fabrics were purchased and sown into appropriate styles for each character. The *Ofi* outfits had to be rented due to the fact that, it is not easily available, especially in Jos where the play was staged, since it is not a Yoruba land. Also, it takes time to weave and then make into the required styles, not just that, it will be absolutely impossible to get the superior quality and designs used back then in 1946 when the event in the play took place, hence. *Elesin's* and *Olohun-iyo's Agbada* outfits were fished out from the director's (this present researcher) archival wardrobe. The costumiers also found the hike in price between the period of market survey and the actual purchase problematic, thus, forcing them to cut down on the quantity of material they planned buying so as to also include items they did not foresee would be needed when the budget was being drawn. All the men wore *Agbada*, sown with *Aso-oke* or *Adire* in different sizes. Some were big, while some small and others were of medium sizes, depending on the importance of the role being played. *Olohun-iyo's*

*Agbada* was a medium sized *Agbada* made with *Aso-oke*, but the largest of the *Agbadas* was that of *Elesin-oba* which is worth taking note of. The complete 3piece *Aso-oke* regalia of *Elesin-oba* was gotten from the archive of this director. It consisted of a huge *Agbada* together with *Kembe* (big spacious trousers) and an *Abeti-aja* cap (cap with wings like dog's ears). Its fabric was made from the ancient *Etu*. The beauty and the generosity in the use of material of the *Agbada* was seen each time *Elesin* dances. The *Agbada* swirls round, giving the audience an impression of a man dancing in a garden of beautifully arranged flowers!

The women are seen in traditional non fitted long sleeved *Buba* and *Iro* made from tie and dye (*Adire*), accompanied with simple beaded necklaces worn by some of the women. Their hairs were woven to the famous Yoruba *Shuku* (*bun at the top*) or *Adi seyin* (*all back*) style and they were made up to have the *Ila* (tribal marks) of the Yoruba on their cheeks. The men too wore appropriate marks on their faces. *Iyaloja* was distinguished with her formal *Aso-Oke* and the *Gele* (head gear), though in another scene her *Shuku* was revealed but decorated with beads. All the characters were bare footed in line with what obtained back in the 40s when there were scarcely shoes. The women's wrappers were tied loosely, and they keep retying as was the habit of Yoruba women in those days who do not permanently knot the tying of their wrappers. The formal wear is used again in the wedding scene where the bride is seen in her *Aso-oke* together with her groom and also veiled with one.

These rich displays of the Yoruba culture in the staging of the play *Death and the King's Horseman* goes a long way in showcasing and reminding the audience of what style of dressing is obtained from the Yoruba origin. Hence the use of this attire is preserved and promoted, when this happens, the people's culture is brought up to date, leaving room for new styles to evolve from this root. It is worthy to note that the tendency to abandon ones culture for a different one is not only restricted to adopting Western culture and way of dressing, it also occurs from culture to culture within Nigeria. For instance, a Yoruba man or woman may copy or prefer to wear Ibo attire for a traditional ceremony like wedding, naming ceremony simply out of ignorance of what obtains in his or her own culture and vice versa. Another carefree attitude noted by Oguejiofor in Onwudiwe is, "a young Igbo man celebrates his traditional marriage in traditional Yoruba or Hausa costume" (132). This is likely, because he may not be conversant with his cultural/traditional clothes.

## **CONCLUSION**

Theatre can be more relevant in this 21<sup>st</sup> century if it is made more functional as well as entertaining. The aim of this paper has been to create an awareness of the vital role that the theatre plays in promoting and preserving the use of our indigenous fabrics/cultural attire. Efforts were made to check certain attitudes towards the use of these traditional clothes, both by the indigenes and non-indigenes, and it was discovered that a good number of those in custody of these claddings are not quite as aware of its beauty as those seeing it from afar. The tendency of man craving what is not within reach coupled with the need for variety and change may be responsible for this. In this piece of work, the impact of the strong influence and convenience of the Western fabric and outfits could not be ignored; nevertheless, there is need to note that in describing or portraying a people's culture, their way of dressing is at the forefront since their appearance is the first-if not the only-introduction we may ever get.

In addition, the theatre director stands the chance of flaunting what a particular culture has gotten in terms of traditional clothes and adornments through the use of costume. He has the opportunity of introducing as well as advertising a people's culture to the audience, thereby, creating a sense of pride and appreciation of one's culture, which results in its preservation. Also, the director serves as a historian through his research, who reminds a culturally rusty audience of what obtained in the past.

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## **EXPLORING SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION IN THE POPULAR MUSIC LANDSCAPE**

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### **Abstract**

*The pressure of promoting an artist may result in production companies as well as performing artistes, seeking after creative and unique ways to enhance their success. Railton and Watson, (52) suggests that providing a pleasurable experience for consumers appears to be integral to the success of the music video. To promote the images of artistes both male and female, the production team would include female models as props dressed seductively to appeal to the eyes of their consumers. In the past, black women were constantly associated with the Jezebel stereotype. Davies and Tucker-Brown, (113) opined that this comparison may have come about from the biblical figure Jezebel in Christianity who represented fallen women of pagan heritage or false prophets that masqueraded as servants of God. Also, Jezebel was associated with sexual immorality, which ended in the destruction of whoever she came across. As Mitchell & and Herring quoted in Davies, and Tucker, (113) offered, the Jezebel stereotype, which is the most overtly sexual image associated with black women, identifies them as loose and unable to control their sexual desires. Nevertheless, the Jezebel stereotype as Davies offers continues to influence how black women are perceived even to this day. To some point, it has become accepted that a female who displays herself in this way portrays sexual freedom, and is considered a feminist. A fascination with the female buttocks remains, they believe that the large buttocks indicates heightened sexuality. The objective of this study is to explore the perceived accepted practice in popular music, that includes the elaborate display of the female body, and to consider other ways to portray sexual freedom and feminism without objectifying the body. This research draw comparisons between two types of female performers in popular music a more liberated display of the female body versus a conservative performer and to shows the growing acceptance of the former in our society. In consequently, a survey was conducted among ten women within the ages of 18-30, as they are likely to have been affected by the images the media portrays of women. The survey was conducted online using Survey Monkey so that the participants have adequate time to reflect on the questions before providing their answers. It also gave them a chance to search out the youtube links of the artists so that they would be able to provide accurate responses.*

**Keywords:** Popular Music, Objectification, Feminism.

### **Introduction**

Women of the African race are sometimes disrespected, treated as lesser beings and used to exhibit a man's wealth. We recognise this in African indigenous societies where the number of women a man has is used to symbolise his wealth. The availability of the female body to be viewed for entertainment is not something that begun recently, but as Raiton and Watson, (52) suggest, the black female body was available for display or as a form of entertainment to feed the curiosity of the white population at a time when white women's bodies were covered and hidden under corsets.

In the contemporary music scene particularly in popular music, features of black women that usually attract the opposite sex, like large buttocks, and bust are often referred to both in lyrics and within music performances. In popular music, the success of a female artiste appears to be influenced by how beautiful she is and how much skin she is willing to expose.

### **Sexual Objectification in the Popular Music Scene**

Sexual objectification as Zhansheng et al, (1042) define is the use of certain parts of the female anatomy and sexual functions to promote a product. It has reached the point where anything can be advertised through a sexualised image of a woman. Frisby and Aubrey, (67) offered that most of these portrayals of women came from the female artists themselves, like Beyonce and Rihanna who have presented themselves as over-sexualised black female. In most videos particularly in the genre of popular music, the message of the lyrics may not connote sexual content but the artistes may still be presented in this way.

Also, certain gestures produced during performances draw attention and accentuate body parts of woman. Frisby & Aubrey, (75-81) offer that the pelvic thrusts may imply sexual acts, shimmying breasts, to draw attention and accentuate the bust, or touching one's self in a sexually inviting way. It was discovered at the end of their study that the majority of women who dressed provocatively were black women, therefore, feeding into the stereotyped notions of black female sexuality and what is expected from them. In an article Fredickson and Roberts quoted in Vandenbosch and Eggermont, (870) suggested that the promotion of sexual objectification does lead to self-objectification so that the beauty ideals that are presented by the media will influence how individuals view themselves.

In rap music videos Khan, (264-265) suggests music videos that were produced by a male, portrayed women as 'video vixens(hoe's),' identifying them as loose and dangerous. Another term used in referring to women within Hip Hop culture is 'Bitches' which is a term assigned to women after been stereotyped as greedy and indecent. Khan also offers that in some productions led by a female still portray themselves in this way, projecting themselves as 'greedy' and 'morally disreputable'.

### **Black Feminism in the Popular Music Scene**

It appears that many women use self-objectification to represent liberation as they believe that they are in the position to do what they want with their body and by doing this they empower other women to do the same. An example is Beyonce who is a professed feminist and often advocates for the rights of women in society but the image she mostly portrays objectifies herself. This is seen in some of her performances where she adorns herself with Leopard print and dances in a cage. In Beyonce's performance of '*Baby Boy*' (2003) Railton and Watson, (58) offered that her untamed and rough performance matches the environment she is placed in, which is a jungle and the untamed natural resources somewhat match Beyonce's uncontrolled body as she 'wiggles her hair and rear energetically.'

In referring to Beyonce, Durham, (36) opined that she was a key figure for feminists media studies as she is the image, which represents the production of celebrity and gender politics defined by hip hop and the complex negotiations of the self-image and sexuality for young women coming of age within a society. Meshell Ndegeocello on the other hand whose style also borders around Hip Hop and R&B is more subjective in the way she presents herself and allows this ideology to feed into the message she portrays in her music. Nghana, (112) observes that with Ndegeocello, we witness how the re-appropriation of symbols of black female sexuality and subjectivity in hip hop can essentially change the way black women are viewed in hip hop culture, and the contexts to which it informs.

In comparing these two artists it appears that Beyonce has gained a wider audience than that of Ndegeocello because Beyonce possesses more than 17 awards and more than 46 nominations, Ndegeocello, on the other hand, has not attained this level of recognition as it appears that she has 10 Grammy nominations with no awards. However, Ndegeocello, as observed by Nghana (112), attained a wider territory within the music industry having collaborated with artists like Chaka Khan, Madonna, and Mick Jagger. The origin of Black or African American feminism as suggested by Tong, (216)

dates back to the first wave of feminism, which at its core demanded female equality in America.

In addition to this, black feminism has for a while sought to deconstruct the stereotypical understanding of what it means to be a black female, which may have included having to deal with the notion that women are frail, powerless, irrational, and immoral. However, sexual politics of black womanhood as Collins, (227) opines, shaped the experiences of a black woman's involvement with pornography, prostitution and rape and it relied heavily on the racist, sexist and heterosexist ideologies attributed to them.

### **Methodology**

To expand further on this analysis, the researcher utilises both textual analysis and quantitative surveys, which allowed the researcher to gain insight into the respondent's views on this topic. Therefore, an online questionnaire, **Survey Monkey** was adopted in this research and was conducted among ten young black women within the ages of 18-30. The reason why the researcher chose to administer online questionnaires was to allow the participants to respond to the questions within the comfort of their homes, and to allow them the opportunity to access Youtube examples of these female artists. Below are the questions that were included in the questionnaire:

What age category do you belong to? Which of these artistes are you familiar with? What do you think of Beyonce's live performances? What do you think of Meshell's live performances? Do any of these artistes represent positive role models for young women? Why do you think they are positive role models? What do you think about female performers partly dressed in music videos? What do you think about the images displayed in Beyonce's 'Run the World' music video? What does feminism mean to you?

These questions provided an insight into the mind of the participants on each of the artists, and the level of recognition these artistes may have achieved. Therefore, this survey examined if the excessive display of a female body is necessary for the success of an artist, or a mere distraction to them. It was also able to determine whether over-sexualised images influence their appreciation of the artistes' performance, to weigh if they were able to appreciate the performances of these artiste's without getting distracted by the images portrayed in the music videos.

### **Findings and Results**

The image of a black woman, especially one that has come in contact with the beauty ideals of a white society is sure to question her own understanding of herself and how she is perceived by society. Collins (18) describes this interchange as intersectionality, which may come as a result of the race, gender and sexuality influencing how different women experience oppression. The music industry is a competitive environment, and artistes have to contest against each other to be able to succeed. Railton and Watson (52), suggested that as a result of this, it was required to provide an environment that caters to the needs and desires of the consumer.

It was discovered earlier that self-objectification is not as clear cut as we would expect, because as Perry quoted in Khan (267) offered, women who choose to present themselves in this way, may not always degrade themselves, but may showcase pride in the African body that once experienced exploitation, and disregard during the time of both slavery and the emancipation period that followed. These artistes believe that their bodies are their personal canvas, and they should be allowed to do whatever they choose with it.

In Nigeria we notice how the elaborate display of the female body is slowly creeping into our society. Mokwunyei, (2018) offered that it has become accepted in our society with artistes like Tiwa Savage(Nigeria), and Victoria Kimani (Kenya) among other female artistes.

### **General Media Analysis**

The majority of images portrayed of black women are raunchy and over-sexualised. This in turn produces a certain stereotype of black women that may not entirely represent all black women. In analysing Beyonce's performance, we witness the image of a black confident and sexualised female, whose success may inspire young women everywhere to strive towards success. On the other hand, we perceive an image that is slightly disordered. An illustration of this is within the song "Flawless".

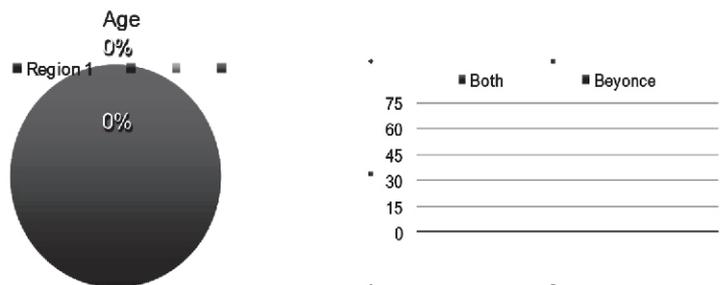
In evaluating Knowles performance we soon realised that her praiseworthy skill as a performer easily replaces the controversy behind her lyrics as Beyonce is a highly respected performer in the industry. In addition, as music provides an avenue to escape our ordinary lives, people often choose to listen to songs that are mostly uncomplicated and accessible to them. This is why Beyonce is most likely to be in the charts rather than Ndegeocello whose lyrics are weighty and political, therefore reminding us of the reality of our

lives. Dash, (27-28) observes that black people during the emancipation period began exhibiting their identity as liberated individuals. Articulating their creative and political expression using their bodies as a vehicle to do so.

### Survey Analysis

The questionnaire was issued to a group of ten women within the ages of 18-30, to get an insight into their perception of these artistes. The survey examined if the excessive display of a female body was necessary for the success of an artist or a mere distraction. Secondly, it was able to evaluate whether over-sexualised images influence their appreciation of the artistes, to weigh if they were able to listen to the lyrics of both performers, without being distracted by the images within the music videos. Chart 1: Presents the ages of those who participated in this questionnaire. It shows that 0% of the individuals were between the ages of 18-20, 10% in the ages of 21-23, 40% were aged 24-26 while 50% were within the ages of 27-30.

Chart 2: portrays their level of familiarity with each artiste. About 60% were familiar with Beyonce alone, and 40% were acquainted with both Knowles and Ndegeocello:

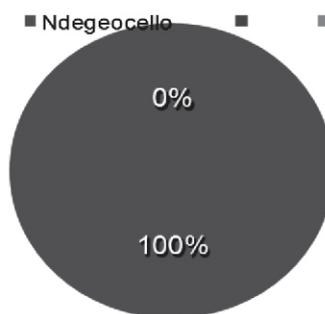


The results purported Beyonce to be more popular than Ndegeocello and was more recognised than Ndegeocello. The next question they were asked was what they thought about Beyonce's performances. It was a surprise to find that there was no mention of anyone being offended by the images she portrays in her performances. As most people were drawn to her energetic and excellent productions. On the other hand, when asked about Ndegeocello's performance, the 40% who were familiar with her, thought her production to be boring. This could be an indication that some audiences are drawn to theatrics and aesthetics more than they are to the music.

Chart 3: Presents the percentage of those who thought these artistes provided a positive image for young women. It shows that 20% thought

Ndegeocello to be a positive image, and 40% thought of Beyonce as a good role model while 40% believed both emulated positive role models for them:

In analysing the participant's views on the images of an over-sexualised female in music videos, while 30% considered them to be revoking, and 70% had other things to say about them. One participant thought they were entreating, another offered that they perceived the women to be ignorant, another offered that they were disturbing, and another respondent believed these images were objectifying women. Another participant offered that they portrayed sexuality more than femininity.



The participants were then questioned about their opinion on the production of 'Run the World'. It was astonishing to discover that not one of them considered the attire of the women to be over-sexualised. Participants considered their costumes to be creative while another thought the actions of the women were provocative and inappropriate. Another considered the women to be 'Angry' while another thought the whole production was 'strange'.

On the other hand, one participant who was able to see past the images into a positive message, considered it to be 'encouraging younger women to believe their dreams'. However, one of the comments that stood out from the rest was 'It's a ghetto rule', to be honest. It passes the message that if men can do things, so can women. While the ghetto rule may not entirely be the right term to identify it, it does indeed convey the message Knowles attempted to communicate, which is, women rule the world.

The last question inquired about what feminism meant to these participants. In observing the comments, it appears that most of them were familiar with what it entails. The analysis showed that many considered this to be a way of life that women should emulate. On the other hand, a few considered these to

be a movement whose ideals only affected those part of an elite group encouraging them to have 'zero tolerance for men.'

### **Discussion/Significance**

This research sought to disclose the growing acceptance of over-sexualised images of the female body within our society. It was observed in the findings, that these images have become integrated into society even to the extent of promoting it within the music industry. In examining the above findings, we realise that people's choices are influenced by their individual growth and development, therefore, what one person may consider objectification may not entirely apply to another.

### **Conclusion**

The objective of this study is to explore the promotion of over-sexualised images of the female body within the music industry and its growing acceptance within the Nigerian society. In conclusion, the exhibition of the body intended for flaunting beauty ideals that the media promotes is slowly escalating in our contemporary culture. To the extent that it has become a competition for who wears the least amount of clothes while performing. As a result, we become uncertain about what might happen next, and whether artistes would become even more unconventional just to promote themselves and increase sales.

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## **SHATTERED ASSUMPTION, EMBODYING TRAUMA AND THE REBIRTH OF VIOLENCE: A CRITIQUE OF ZAINABU JALLO'S *HOLY NIGHT***

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### **Abstract**

*After a traumatic event such as violence or terrorism, people become distressed with pain, hurts and anger, their assumptions about the benevolence of life gets shattered which inflicts psychological and emotional injuries that are often repressed. When painful emotions are repressed and hurts are not purged, mental stability is affected and the body bears the scar, and when these feelings are triggered, they culminate in to transfer of aggression, violence, substance abuse or other maladaptive behaviours. This paper however, examines trauma as captured and represented in Nigerian Drama through a critical analysis of Zainabu Jallo's play Holy Night. The findings of this paper reveals that the current realities in Nigeria such as violence, ethno-religious conflicts and psycho-social distress are products of unhealed trauma from previous hurts, of war, conflicts, violence and all its attending effects. These repressed hurts consequently led to wanton killings and creation of the vicious circle of violence as obtained in the present day Nigerian society. However, when violence becomes a pattern, it transcends individual trauma and becomes a communal and generational trauma. Violence cannot be curbed until healing measures are put in place, which drama offers. The paper however, suggest that drama is a pragmatic tool for understanding human societies and conflicts and have served as a viable measure for healing in post-conflict societies. If properly utilized drama can restore and socially reconstruct a fractured society such as Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Shattered Assumption, Embodying Trauma, Psychosocial Distress, Communal and Generational Trauma,

### **Introduction**

Violence, terrorism, displacement, poverty and other life threatening conditions, have brought about countless and immeasurable loss to many Nigerians such as loss of loved ones, internal displacement, injuries, loss of business and source of livelihood, leaving them with shattered dreams, false hopes, broken spirits, loss of trust and failed aspirations. For those who have not had direct traumatic experience but are living in violent prone communities, there is another type of violence that may be disturbing to them

this is the fear that replays in their heads; the potential to become victims of violence, bomb explosion or night attacks. The inevitability of these mental constructs turning into lived experiences can be a regular occurrence which may also be traumatizing. But not every victim of violence can become traumatised this is due to differences in coping mechanisms.

### **Background to the Study Area**

Plateau State is located in the Centre of Nigeria, known as the Middle Belt. It is one of the six states that make up the North Central geopolitical zone. It got its name from the Jos Plateau. Plateau State has been celebrated as the "Home of Peace and Tourism" an image that has been fractured by incessant crises, violence, bomb explosions and civil unrest. The Human Rights Watch (2001-2011) reports that from 2001 to 2004 an estimate of five thousand people were killed in Jos, Plateau State and from 2008 to 2010 two thousand lives were lost in several outbreaks of religious violence alone. The most recent is the May 2014 market twin bomb explosion that claimed about 400 lives of persons, with countless attacks on communities. Several people are traumatised with these past and present experiences of terror. People living in these communities are terrorized, vulnerable, and have become victims to accumulated trauma.

### **The Concept of Trauma**

Trauma happens when an individual or group of people experience situations that are emotionally or physically painful and distressing. These painful experiences can be an exposure to difficult situations like poverty or life-threatening experience like accident or terrorism. Separation from parents or loved ones through death or displacement can also cause traumatic effect. Trauma is a disordered psychic or behavioral state resulting from severe mental and emotional stress caused by shock or physical injury which affects the way a person or people think, learn, remember things, the way they feel about themselves, about other people, and the way they make sense of the world. Trauma has the capacity to destroy a person's internal feeling of safety and disrupts the normal functioning of the mind giving room to fear and pain.

*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV PTSD ML. (427)*

To further expatiate on the concept of trauma, Judith Herman as quoted in Patrick Duggan (46) submits that,

Traumatic events call into question basic human relationships. They breach the family, friendship, love, and community relationship. They shatter the construction of self that is formed and sustained in relation to others. They undermine the belief systems that give meaning to human experience. They violate the victim's faith in a natural or divine order and cast the victim into a state of existential crisis.

Trauma tears the fabric of peoples' lives without reason or warning, it can bring about a negative and permanent change in the construction of self-image and the likelihood of achieving life goals. An individual or community that experience life threatening situations can develop "Trauma-Worldview" (A situation where victims see life through lenses that anticipate bad things happening). This world view makes the individual or group project negative feelings into their present situations as well as their future (Julie Lowe<sup>1</sup>) which can throw them into a permanent existential crises or psychosocial distress. Psychosocial Distress is usually accompanied by the victim's perception of threat to his/her social status, threat to self-worth, respect, and acceptance.

When fear and pain whether emotional or physical is not healed it becomes repressed and gradually proceeds into a permanent experience that is difficult for the trauma victim to forget, it is at this point that the victim begins to get to the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder stage (Hereinafter referred to as PTSD) PTSD usually occurs when a past trauma has not healed. This condition by nature consists of anxiety, depression, a re-experience of trauma through vivid recollections and nightmares, accompanied by a reduced interest in physical activities. The victim can also suffer from various physical symptoms such as hyper alertness, sleep disturbances, anger, helplessness, and Inability to control emotions (Hug 22).

The effects of PTSD may have a lot of implication on the sanity and emotional stability of the individual, which can in turn affect the safety of people that may be around him/her. According to Bruce Perry (2003) most cases of violence can be associated to unhealed traumatic experience either from childhood into adulthood or from suppressed hurts, fears, and unhealed painful experiences. Trauma victims often over react to threatening situations or threaten others often, this is because they see the world as an unsafe place or have lost trust in the benevolence of the world they live in. They try to avoid memories of traumatic events by staying away from triggers/reminders, or they indulge in anti-social behaviour and substance abuse. This destructive

behaviour of trauma victims can be an enormous cost to a community according to Bruce Perry (2). However, the American Psychiatric Association (1994) stipulates that not everyone who experiences a traumatic event will develop PTSD; it is when many symptoms persist for several days, weeks and months that PTSD is developed.

### **Shattered Assumption**

There is a phenomenon that is embedded under the claim that every individual has an assumption that the world is either a safe place, meaningful or worthy, this is what gives people a sense of trust, the courage to interact and be kind to the people around them, the ability to believe in success after work and being rewarded or punished. Yet, in the face of trauma these assumptions become shattered and one can no longer identify with such views. Janoff-Bulman (1992) Carolyn Zaikowski (199) commends that; to experience trauma is

To experience a world in which the body and self are always, potentially, unsafe; a world that is ultimately incomprehensible... the effect is to "shatter" the victim's assumptive world, or to deliver "profound invalidation" of that world. Trauma takes place precisely when an event not only goes beyond, but actually destroys, our schematic understandings of the world, disabling our ability to create and trust the stories, events and time-space delineations necessary for normal functioning.

When a person's assumption is shattered it means that his former perception about the world and his environment has been distorted by negative experience. Based on Brewin and Holmes' (341-342) assertion, People's collective assumptions exist at the center of their being; in consequence, when a traumatic event violates or questions the validity of their assumptions, the "wound" affects their very identities; this is the loss of the assumptive world.

### **Embodying Trauma**

What does it mean to locate trauma memories in bodies? When a trauma victim is trapped internally with feelings of anger, fear, regrets or guilt such feelings become unpleasant memories which resurface as fragmented thoughts and images, and these memories, later become constant presence and reminders that shape current events and how the victim reacts to them. These fragmented thought begins to define his/her attitude to life, relationship with people, response to events and tolerance for others.

Embodying trauma implies that there is symptomatic (symptom of body disorder) or compulsive behaviour (driven by an irresistible inner force) and a total reaction of the body to traumatic memories, which is usually experienced in flashbacks, hysteria, violence and aggression without the consciousness of the individual. Sigmund Freud elaborates that memory of a traumatic event can be lost over time then regained in a symptomatic form when triggered by similar event, in this way; each form of new violence invokes and transforms memories of other violence leading to a cyclic movement of trauma, which Dominick LaCapra defines as compulsive repetition (574).

Bassel Van der Kolk(6) also explained that in the case of embodying trauma it is the body that controls the victim's response to trauma. He affirmed this assertion by describing the role of the body in mediating trauma through somatic impact. Somatic impact is a process through which people express emotional distress and conflict in a physical rather than a verbal language. And this comes in form of uncomfortable or painful physical sensations and anxiety. Somatic impact produces a sense of disconnection from the body that is, an unrelated feeling of the self to other parts of the body these approaches however, suggest that trauma gets stocked within the body through suppressed memories, and is made manifest in the activity of the body.

Mary Sykes Wylie(11) confirms Bassel Van der Kolk's explanation by asserting that, trauma patients may look fine on the surface but may experience nightmares, flashbacks, feelings of numbness, fearfulness, dissociative symptoms, and other problems that may not be visible especially when it is a long-term trauma or repressed trauma. She further states that, long term or repressed trauma can cause various stress-related illnesses, can increase crime rates, and can set the framework for renewed violence along the lines of the old. In the sense that when new traumas take the form of violence or mass catastrophe, the old traumas are bound to be revitalized and re-engaged, which often results to new violence. This assertion simply explains that new traumas trigger old ones, and old traumas often set the stage for new ones.

Kate Hudgins et.al (7) support this assertion thus:

Violence and trauma operate with multiplier effects: one act of violence produces more violence as the victims seek revenge or act out of a strong new desire for self-protection. As people seek vengeance or release from the pain of new wounds, old

hatreds increase along any fault lines that a group happens to have...

### **Tropes of Trauma in Nigerian Drama**

Traumatic events have long been the focus of representation in the theatre through classical tragedy as an evocative and emotive force that binds an audience to the theatrical action drawing them deeper into the performance (Duggan 44). In ancient Greece, theatre has been concerned with the representation and resolution of trauma, several thousand years after Euripides; Western playwrights continue to bring to the stage stories of the annihilation of vulnerable and innocent populations. Such plays focused on the destruction of indigenous peoples and their cultures ("ethnocide") by ignorant and violent countries and institutions seeking power, treasure, or religious domination (Skoolt 7).

The post-modern society is a time marked and defined by catastrophes both Natural and Manmade, like terrorism, violence, ethno-religious crises, bomb attacks, poverty, epidemics and so many disasters. Many playwrights therefore, have been concerned with the projection of such human suffering and its effect on people and the society. These events and their dramatic representations have shaped the way people from different parts of the world view societies and the world at large.

Slavery, colonialism, Apartheid and imperialism have unconsciously changed the history and narratives of most African societies. The painful experiences and trauma of the pre-colonial and colonial Africa is alleged to be the major reasons for violence, terror and conflicts in Africa this can be ascertained in the works of several playwrights who have been able to represent this history of terrifying experiences of Africans in their dramatic works, which were best characterized as theatre of ideology and politics which further identifies their works as commitment to social and historical reconstruction through class struggle and a proletarian consciousness. (Dapo Adelugba and Olu Obafemi 153).

Playwrights such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo have written about the tensions arising out of war and the struggles for political and cultural emancipation. Soyinka's *play Madmen and Specialists* forms part of the drama that arose directly out of the Nigerian Civil War in that it takes those circumstances as its implicit content. In its exposition of the dilemmas experienced by the powerful and non-powerful alike, it goes further to illustrate how no one is left untouched by any war. Also, Modern playwrights such as Femi Osofisan, Bode Sowande, Tess Onwueme, and Ahmed

Yerima are said to have “focused on the plight of the people rather than the leaders, and on the underprivileged instead of the kings and princes of the society” (Adelugba & Obafemi 154).

Drama that embodies and reflects the manifestations of trauma like all cultural productions have information to offer and can serve as an entrance to a particular nature of trauma. Such drama go beyond the traditional story telling but makes use of real experiences of trauma, and the many disturbing memories of terrors of violence as texts to mirror and enact the unspeakable experience of traumatised victims in societies. Drama may not be sufficient to effectively bring about *immediate* changes in societies no matter how intelligent or powerful it may be. Yet, it possesses the power to enhance better understanding of violence, conflict and terror in the world which can provide insights into human behavior, creating images that in the long run may make the world more peaceful and more just. It can also bring an emotional *connection through* empathy of individuals and groups that can cause change, because the act of representing and discussing trauma can be revealing and cathartic.

### **Trauma and Shattered Assumption in *Holy Night***

A once familiar and friendly society is suddenly thrown into terror by a bomb explosion on the eve of Christmas in Jos, Plateau State in 2012. Drawn from this actuality, the epigraph that introduces the play text sets the play on the theme of Terror, which drives all other themes in the play. *Holy Night* is a psychological inquiry into the origins and consequences of terror as well as man's complicity with it. It unravels the characters' struggles to survive the terror of bomb explosions and live past their hunted memories of internal conflicts and trauma.

On the eve of Christmas, buying and selling is at its peak, streets and markets are crowded, traffics are high and the motor parks are jam-packed, everyone is caught in the euphoria of the season. Suddenly, a bomb explodes but before they could make sense of what happened the second bomb went off.

### **It was sudden and terrifying.**

Veteran            Hannah my Wife and Keturah my daughter and her children went in search of a new table cover exactly four hours ago and two minutes ago in the main market, which is where the 6<sup>th</sup> bomb went off...(15).

Countless persons were killed others were injured and some had their body parts amputated. Those who survived it were left shattered and are continually living with the trauma. Merriment and laughter has been taken over by death, pain, fear, loss and terror. As contained in this text, so it was in Jos in 2012. Once upon a peaceful state now became a hub of terror. In the text, Jallo represents this scenario with the characters of Hameed;

Hameed in solitary meditates

...I was overcome by terror

It made me nervous

A lot of things have begun to make me nervous (26).

The terror of the explosion does not only shatter their assumptive world but it brings a lot of suspicion; dearth of trust, and triggered painful repressed memories. The playwright adopts the theme of 'Terror' to unravel the psychological effect of the bomb explosion on individuals and community, which will go beyond memories but a recollection of a past experience relived in the present. Zainabu Jallo also tries to describe how new terror triggers unhealed trauma. As stated in the introductory part of this paper, difficult life conditions are often repressed and when triggered by life threatening situations they are often expressed in symptomatic compulsive form. The characters in the play are all trapped in different difficult circumstances, every one with a past that is either characterized by guilt, regrets, untold secrets or shame, and with the unpleasant experience of violence these trauma is bound to be triggered.

The Veteran as a character re-presents people living with pains, hurts and unhealed trauma in a continuing degradation of a society that has lost its humanity. A connect to his past experiences as a war veteran and his present situation as a bomb blast survivor gives an image of a broken spirit, and a shattered mind. When the Veteran first appears in the play, he is afraid, he mourns and laments. Out of fear He could not let in and injured victim for safety. This connotes the dearth of trust. Man no longer empathizes with a fellow man. This conversation says a lot about suspicion.

Ibrahim	Let me in! I am going to get killed
Veteran	I heard that you fool! Get away from my door step. (9)
Veteran	...If you do not leave I will do so myself. That is no threat son
Ibrahim	... You will kill a son?!

Veteran            It won't be the first time (10).

A society that was once agrarian has turned into a harbinger of savagery. Life has become a survival fit. Trauma is also re-engaged in this situation, the Veteran threatens to kill the boy he just called son, in the midst of terror the human judgment about pity and empathy is usually tampered with. Terror has taken the place of serenity and suspicion the place of trust as in this conversation:

Ibrahim            ...I told you before. I got a bullet in my leg.  
Veteran            Why don't I believe you?...

The character of Ibrahim exposes the paralysis of a sane society. He is hunted by the guilt of being an accomplice in the last crises. But now He has become a victim, this is the paradox of evil, it comes around. Reluctantly, Ibrahim speaks of his connection to the last crises as he recounts his shattered dreams and ordeal.

“The protection did not work. I swallowed the protection...three years ago.  
I have many fires. Too many fires. Inside of me... these raging flames. No one can tame my fires, they devour me. The last fight before this. My fire burned... It touched belongings. It consumed histories and cattle. Smiles and futures (Jallo 35).

From the fire that burnt Ibrahim, he burned others. His unhealed “fire” became untamable thereby giving birth to more “fires” These fires are the suppressed anger, pain and guilt he embodies during the Biafra war. The war shattered his assumptions of a benevolent world and he can no longer identify with the schemas that make people trust, tolerate and relate with others. These unhealed feelings set the stage for new violence. Veteran's empathy is in mockery of what Ibrahim has been reduced to, a 'Faceless Man' and a “mole”

Ibrahim            You wouldn't look at my face!  
Veteran            You do not have a face haven't you realized that?  
Ibrahim            I have a face!  
Veteran            You are a mole. You were made for the hole.

This facelessness shows the contradictory human impulse that permit people to both accept and reject responsibility for evil.

The conversation that ensued between Ibrahim and the Veteran takes them to a familiar world of pain, they have a common history and they both lost so much to the war. The Biafra war has stolen their beautiful memories leaving them with fragmented thoughts and images of the war.

Ibrahim	The Biafra war took me, my brothers and father away (43).
Veteran	After the final offensive of sixty nine... I came home, to nothing. My mother was there...her very essence emptied out. She had lost everyone (45). I cried. I buried her in our green patch... alongside thousands of memories (47). Every green grew again...before this absurdity.
Ibrahim	...The Harmattan howls.
Veteran	it comes with recollection of who we use to be (47).
Ibrahim	Our rocks and hills looked away today. They have failed to protect us. The hyenas lost their teeth. The Zebras question their stripes.
Veteran	Dogs now live on trees (48).

Nothing is left but a recollection of memories of pleasant days that have been lost to wars, violence and difficult life situations. A lot of things have changed, things are no longer where they use to be and people are no longer who they use to be. Kindness is misconstrued and suspicion becomes a new order. The five strangers that ran for safety into the butcher's shop cannot trust the butcher's act of kindness their over reaction to this perceived threat turns Hameed into a victim.

Hameed	welcome to my meat shop
Woman	please do not take our lives ...We have run into the arms of the enemy...please just let us out.
Hameed	I will not open the door. Not for any reason at this time (20). What is this! I let you into the safety of my shop and you want to tie me up? ...This is a place of peace do not defile it! (21).

The stage instruction exposes the five strangers in an attempt to tie Hameed up because he is a meat seller, he is the other, he does have a common religion and culture with the five strangers as such he is the dangerous one. But he peacefully walked through a door leading to the back. Hameed's attitude suggests that irrespective of the hate, intolerance, suspicion and lack of trust that have eaten deep into the fabric of the society there are a few people whose belief about hospitality and kindness is not shattered. In spite of the stranger's suspicion and the assumption that Hameed is an enemy, he still protects them.

The conversation that ensued among the five strangers captures the aspirations, pains, fears and loss of a displaced People. It is also a difficult time as most of the characters cannot confront their fears:

Hauwa            It is Christmas Eve; we may not see the sun up to tomorrow...(22)  
                      May I borrow any of your phones? I need to put a call through to my Husband...  
                      I need to find him... why is he not picking up? (23)  
                      My husband waits for me! It is our first baby! (24).

Their world become shattered when all of a sudden their normal lives are interrupted, halted, and destroyed. Their beliefs about safety have been shattered, it is no longer a peaceful and secured world, it is no longer normal to expect the return of a loved one. As the day goes by, they lose hope of living, of finding their loved ones, of going home to their families:

Alex              Shhh!Calm down don't let them find us here!  
Bulus             Let them find us here what else is there to live for?! (24)  
                      Professor(fiddles with his pockets) I must have lost it.  
Bulus             In my car... set ablaze (22).

There are also a lot of painful memories and regrets that have been triggered by the reprisal crises.

Veteran           In the lush expanse of Barkin Ladi. I grew my potatoes, spring onions...my father was a farmer, so was his father...

For us, our soil yielded to us, it understood us, it treated us well (41)

So, for a flock of white birds often took flight over our skies, they brought us good luck...(42)

When the war came, we became individuals.

We became hogs

Cordelia was a widow... she was my nest. I buried myself and my fears in her. She took them.

Terror has also improved from the simple use of machete and cutlasses to the use of sophisticated weapons, when wars were fought in past, it was one man to a man, but in this age it is mass catastrophe, thousands of people fall within seconds. Man destroys man, there is abundant terror and bloodletting, humanity is on the brink of extinction.

Professor Here we are catching up remarkably fast. It was sticks and stones...machetes, setting buildings ablaze. Now we have bombs going off. Remarkable journey through evolution...we don't hear of bombs going off in china as often (52).

Professor When I say to people there is evil in every DNA of every human they think am insane (53).

Hauwa what makes you think you are not?

Dancer ...that's not yours why did you do that? (54)

Professor Because he is on the brink of losing his mind.

A lot of things do not make sense again, people are thrown into existential crises, they are losing their sanity but they must find an outlet, a means to survive, they have to fight, flee or freeze, they have to survive the painthus, they employ all kinds of means.

Professor I need to inhale one of these...I am losing my mind...Come, sit here, Have a smoke.

Hauwa I want to erupt. I am searing. I want to knock the kitchen table over. To set the house on fire...

I scream into the pillow calmness comes to me temporally (81).

Senses can only but convulse...ruptured senses. (84).

When an individual embodies trauma and assumption becomes shattered, there is usually an emotional outburst and the victim becomes psychologically unstable which can lead to altered consciousness: This is characterised by alterations in the defense mechanisms and changes in personal identity usually accompanied by feelings of shame, guilt, anger and inadequacy creating room for psychosocial distress.

Professor	I desire for the earth to be wipe off this moment! All of its existence! Because it has not been good to me. (65) I am unable to be the man I truly am! (66) Let the earth be wiped off this minute. Let the meat shop be blown into unrecognizable pieces. Only then can we be our true selves...ashes of irrelevance!
Alex	He is too troubled to shut his eyes (67)
Hauwa	He runs when no one is chasing.
Dancer	He wakes with his neck aching
Alex	He smiles in the day time
Hauwa	He sweats at night.
Professor	He sweats. He smokes. He sits up in bed pondering...thinking over why he remains unfulfilled He drinks half a bottle of scotch...he drove around the red light district seeking carnal...amorous love to vanish into.
Hauwa	He became Sadder.
Alex	And madder at himself.
Professor	He cried. He didn't feel better. He drank barrels but never got drunk.
Bulus	His brains was all he had (68)
Professor	He was on the verge of losing them too. (69) ...suffocating as we fight to keep our sanity (85).

The bomb explosion and reprisal violence provided an opportunity for the strangers to loose themselves from the shackles of their dark secrets. This reveals the pains of failed relationships, guilt, disappointments, betrayal and the wounds they nurtured long before the crises erupted.

- Professor     My mentor, my dean and my wife had been copulating like two restless bonobos, while I had my head buried in research
- Hauwa        My husband... He does not know me. He thinks he does (79)  
The teenage boy he thinks is my brother is my son... whose father I do not even know.  
I don't want this baby... He was conceived on a bed of untruth... of betrayals and lies.
- Hameed       My tears soaked the cloth in happiness  
And in bitterness for not being able to tell you the things I mean to say (39).

But all these hurtful memories and secrets only reveal the hopelessness of man in a world that has been shattered. The present circumstances only made worse of their past, it triggered a feeling of meaninglessness of human existence; they all feel trapped in their fears, pain, lies, shame and guilt. There seems to be no way out of their internal and external crises, hopes are lost, dreams have become debris.

### **Conclusion**

*Zainabu Jallo's Holy Night* explores trauma and its consequent effect on individuals and communities. It creates themes of conflict and violence as human phenomena that destroy the essence of humanity as manifested through the psychological disturbances of the characters in the play. The play aims to provide material for the study of the effect of unhealed trauma on an individual's psyche and community wellbeing. It is worthy of note that trauma, when not properly apprehended destroys a person's schema of viewing the world as a safe place and replaces these fragmented thoughts with anger, violence, hysteria and aggression which has a multiplier effect especially when triggered by new forms of violence. Though it may not be possible to prevent all forms of violence or conflict in human society, the future however, will depend upon a growing strategy for human security and understanding of the threats that affect societies, which either begins from the individual to the society or vice versa. Individuals and community members can harmoniously work together to ameliorate the effects of violence and even prevent further occurrence, by engaging in communal healing and reconciliatory activities. Drama as a viable tool for healing and social reconstruction can be applied as it awakens in man his true authenticity; to mediate and understand the dynamics of violence as threat to human existence, his role in improving a fractured society and to provoke him to think and take action.

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## **HORATIAN, MENIPPEAN OR JUVENALIAN SATIRE: WHICH WAY FOR NIGERIAN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP QUESTION?**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper proposes to mediate the shaky political space in Nigeria by using the instrument of satire to comment on its ills and vices. Drama all through history has always provided a form or genre for every kind of situation faced by a people. Some of the critical dramatic works that made a couple of Nigerian playwrights popular, like Soyinka, Clark, Osofisan among others were satirical. But since the late eighties, the genre has witnessed a downward trend of impact and influence on the Nigerian theatre and literary spaces. There is need to assess its usage now and ascertain its potency to exert influence on the shaky and precarious political space in Nigeria that even the voice of reason is drowning. A lot of people fear that the situation faced in the country may snowball into the dismemberment or dissolution of the nation by generating confederal units from it. The paper proposes to proffer the intervention of literary and dramatic artists to utilize satire which appears in three types with the aim of steering the consciousness of Nigerian leaders to do the right thing. Horatian or Juvenalian satire may be a way out of the present political and social malignancies facing the country. This paper will further add up to the process of restoration of the image of the playwright which his silence over the few years has caused.*

**Keywords:** Horatian, Menippean, Juvenalian, Leadership, Satire

### **Introduction**

In every historical epoch, nations face peculiar challenges, ranging from socio-economic, cultural, psychological and political problems among others that require concerted attention from all fields of human endeavour. In terms of the dexterity of approaches for tackling societal maladies and malignancies, art and literature are availed with a variety of genres at their disposal for use (Mao, 172). Among the genres of literature, drama has the dual advantage of being read and performed before an audience.

Drama which started in the West with three major genres, that have had sub-genres or substantive genres recoiling from each other, some intersecting each other. Drama in the West had three broad categories of tragedy,

comedy and tragicomedy, now has genres such as satire, burlesque, farce, romantic, historical, political, satire, melodrama among others, which have been popular at different historical moments in the world of art and literature. The Irish dramatist and poet, Samuel Beckett posits about satire as a space that help “To find a form that accommodates the mess, that is the task of the artist now”. This quote captures the objective of this article, which suggests the return to 'satire' as a which genre of drama in tackling the leadership issues facing Nigeria of the present generation. A phenomenon that can sustain the gusto in the arts of the theatre is that of the struggle to finding a form that fits every prevailing situation a country faces. From the three major categories that were presented by the foremost classical Greek dramatists: tragedy, comedy and a satyr play to the creation of tragi-comedy and much later in the Nineteen Century of so many theatrical movements, based on the tumultuous discoveries of realistic and anti-realistic theatrical movements of that time, many genre have emerged.

### **Defining 'Satire' for Contemporary Usage**

Satire has come to mean a different concept to different individual scholars. The basic definition of the term 'satire' from Merriam Webster Dictionary means “a literary work holding up human vices and folly to ridicule or scorn. Secondly, the same dictionary also defines the term as trenchant wit, irony, or sarcasm used to expose and discredit vice or folly.

Satire is said to have come into English at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, and its meaning has not strayed very far from its original sense. It Draws from its earliest meaning, which was primarily applied to poetry. Even before this, Brockett and Ball (62) claim that in ancient Greece, there was the performance of a satyr play which was short and comic or satiric in tone, poked out fun at some Greek myth using a chorus or satyrs, and was presented following the tragedies.

Scholes et al (1344) sees satire as a mode of drama that uses characters and events to present an intensified but completely negative view of human imperfection. The view here is on human frailties catalogued in a dramatic work. Yet, the question is that: What about the deliberate ills or vices perpetrated by persons within a country? Should those not form the issues in satirical drama? Satire is mostly a fictional representation of vices, follies, abuses and short comings which are held to ridicule, with the intention of shaming those individuals, corporations, government, or society generally into improvement.

Cash argues that satire is traditionally a form of comedy, but can sometimes be found at the heart of more serious drama. This form of drama now transgresses even its own presupposition by taking other forms. Stand-up comedy mostly has become, arguably, fully satirical in the sense that most issues that are brought to the fore are meant to lampoon or lambast human frailties, misgivings or chastise people for ills or vices perpetrated by them. It is a term that is closely linked to parody which mostly discredit an individual of the public worth or value. There are individuals whose popularity is as a result of a smokescreen that they have put up to deceive the public. Satirical artists whose sensibilities are acute, and who are endowed with brilliant wit can boldly discredit such individuals and reveal the real characters of such uncanny individuals. This form is sometimes called political satire.

Satire has evolved over the years in the theatre, from Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* that questioned the sincerity of the intent of men for peace during the protracted war between Sparta and Athens; to Moliere's *Tartuffe*, to Soyinka's *Jero's Plays* or *The Beatification of Area Boy*. Pickering (8) categorized *Lysistrata* as a satiric comedy because it ridicules for a corrective purpose.

Cash argues that Bertolt Brecht's dramas were of political satire and in the realm of parody. These plays were meant to correct some certain ills within the German society of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. But other critics argued that his plays were for political propaganda. Brecht was accused of parodying Adolf Hitler in his play *'The Resistible Rise of Arturo UI* in which the location is the gangster-ridden 1930's Chicago. But a closer look at the play would reveal the parodying of the injustices occurring in Nazi Germany, where the character UI is Adolf Hitler.

### **Nigerian Political Space and Theatre**

Theatre from the pre-Colonial Era to the late 1980's sought to tackle the ills that were within its view. Issues of culture, colonialism, post-colonialism, internecine conflicts of the 80's, corruption, high-handedness, extra-judicial killings, totalitarian regimes of the military, educational backwardness, economic backwardness, religious hypocrisy and other myriad problems that have continued to plague the nation. Several forms have surfaced which were utilized in order to address the issues. The dramatic forms/devices have been borrowed from European/American theatre in order to solve Nigerian local issues.

In an article titled 'Politics of the Theatre and the Theatre of Politics in Nigeria', Olu Obafemi started the article by citing Ngugi wa Thiong'o who said:

The performance space of the artist stands for openness; that of the state, for confinement. Art breaks down barriers between people; the state erects them... Art yearns for maximum physical, social and spiritual space for human action. The state tries demarcation, limitation and control (147).

This quote sheds light on the dialectical relationship between art, and particularly, theatre and the state. No literary work will deliberately aim at deceiving the populace except it is being deployed by the powerful class for its own selfish gains. Although Harold Pinter in his Nobel Prize lecture of 2005 argues that there is no one truth in drama. But the realities of life still remain the same, and the citizens of a nation feel the heat of a bad government almost the same way. The state especially in Nigeria pursues an agenda that is quite the opposite of what theatre pursues. From Hubert Ogunde's *Yoruba Ronu*, to Soyinka's *Beatification of Area Boy* or *The Jero's plays*; to J.P. Clark's *Wives' Revolt*, to Ola Rotimi's *'If: The Tragedy of the Ruled'* e.t.c., the playwright has always found himself in a situation where he or she has to make difficult decisions.

The dilemma the playwright face are; first, whether to tell the truth or not. Secondly, what themes to focus on. The playwright may not face the conventional politician in an open space of contestation, but through his writings, he can influence some certain decisions in all sectors of the society. Obafemi (168) argues that to the playwright, there is politics in theatre, from the script to staging; issues of ideology (thematic concerns, from conflict generation to its resolutions), material and human management, and so on. The choice to go satirical is also in the politics of a writer. This is also a different one to make; the liberal satirist may avoid certain aspects of the issues or ills that can be brought on board as he pitches his story. The radical satirical playwright would conjure the power of his art fully and spares no aspect for the societal ills. He may attempt to even name his characters close to the real names of the actual perpetrators of such ills in the society.

Some of the major issues in the area of Nigerian politics have always been there before independence. One of those issues is leadership ineptitude or the wrong decisions most political leaders make while in power in terms of policies of government and the consequences that come with such decisions or choices of action. There have been regimes in Nigeria that did not even

recognize the power of theatre as a veritable tool or instrument that can foster progress in a country. During Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida's regime, there was a general recognition of the power of the theatre as a strong tool for change. It was at the time that Soyinka won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1986. At that time, the political theatre in Nigeria was very active. Issues of politics were always dominating acres of news print and the literary theatre. The Nigerian prose fictions championed by Achebe and other novelists equally gained a lot of popularity.

### **Satire and Nigerian Politics**

Certain Nigerian playwrights deployed the form/genre of satire in their writings in the past because of the obvious advantages that it has over other forms. Satire makes the theatre space a terrain for clear communication in the sense that the storylines are not convoluted – the plot is simple. Just like the satire of Moliere (Jean Baptiste Poquiline) of the French Classical Era, the *Jero's plays* satirized Christianity and religious hypocrisy, particularly, the unquestioning devotion that many converts display towards their spiritual leaders, often exposing themselves to manipulation.

The same way, Soyinka's *The Beautification of Area Boy* which as a sub-title: A Lagosian Kaleidoscope and that very aptly describes its form according to Banham (7). He goes on to say that the street life of contemporary Lagos is brought onto the stage in a series of satirical and musical incidents that held together by the story of Sanda- the king of the 'Area boys – who organizes the exploited and the oppressed in the face of the corruption and brutality of the military regime and its parasites. The play has been described as a force piece of political theatre. Soyinka with his satirical masterpieces through *A Play of Giants*, to *King Baabu*; all parodying and lampooning Africa's checkered socio-political conditions. *A Play of Giants* is a fantasia of Aminian theme. A story of despotism and tyranny that Africa, and indeed, Nigeria was bedeviled with.

J.P. Clark's early dramas have less of satirical formation/formulation, but his later play, *The Wives Revolt* bothers itself with the portrayal of a world in which women are fed up with the injustices meted out to them by men. So, they demand equal opportunities as men. The payout from an oil company becomes a cause of revolution because of the formula for sharing the money (Eniola, 2019). This direction to his story which is satirical cannot be found in his earlier plays, like *Song of a Goat*, *The Raft* or *Ozidi*.

Ola Rotimi and Femi Osofisan also explored the instrument of satire in their drama. Rotimi moved from tragedy and the recreation of history in his early plays like *'The Gods Are Not To Blame, Ovoramven Nobaisi, and Kurummi*, to more radical and satirical plays like *'Our Husband has Gone Mad Again' 'If: the tragedy of the Ruled'*, and *Holding Talks*. As for a satire writer, it takes a radical or a revolutionary to achieve that feat. Osofisan who is for the younger generation next to Soyinka's sought to be more radical and revolutionary in lampooning the society and lambasting certain authorities and institutions of the society. In *Chattering and the Song* and *Once Upon Four Robbers*, Osofisan shows clearly that he is against all kinds of autocracy by raising a set of enlightened individuals that will determine the kind of society that is free from subjugation, oppression, and exploitation of the under-privileged (Obafemi, 168); while the latter play questions the decree that was promulgated by Gowon that pronounced public execution for armed robbers. Osofisan questions certain individuals who are guilty of another crime and have the audacity to create laws to punish offenders of other crimes. The play laughs at a situation where the economic conditions are not favourable to citizens and they resort to armed robbery (Ajidahun, 115).

There are, however, younger generation of writers who have opted for the satirical genre/form that may combine more than a single category of satire in their plays. These playwrights may not be as established as the ones we have mentioned above. Nevertheless, their plays carry substance of satire that other contemporary writers can emulate in order to address basic issues of governance, leadership, administration and rule of law in Nigeria. But first and foremost, let us deepen our discussion on satire.

### **Horatian, Juvenalian or Menippean Satire for Nigerian Theatre Space**

In the second section of this article, we defined satire as a genre in drama or literature in which vices, follies, abuses and shortcomings are held to ridicule, ideally with the intent of shaming individuals, corporations, government, or society itself into improvement. The way to achieving these objectives of works of art has not been monolithic just as the other genres, say tragedy or comedy. There are three types of categories of satire to be discussed in this article.

Horatian satire derived from the Roman critic and satirist Horace (65-8 BCE) playfully attacks some social vice through gentle, mild, and light-hearted humour. Edley (2017) instructs users of satire that if a writer's aim is only to make people laugh, then it is Horatian satire he or she is after. Horace's aim always was to entertain with wry humour, wit and light-hearted mockery, avoiding negativity by refusing to place blame on others for any perceived

misgiving. Edley goes ahead to say that, the actual aim or objective of a Horatian satire is to be clever and knowing, while evoking humour by exposing the peculiarities of human behavior.

In drama, a farcical play or 'comedy of errors' could possess Horatian flavour. It does not attack head long issues and problems in the society like it is with other categories. This kind of satire is not seeking to change the world, but merely to highlight human follies in all their many ways. This is done through anecdotes and characterization than through plot. The chief purpose of Horatian satire is merely to amuse.

Directly contrasting Horatian satire, is the Juvenalian satire which draws from human hurtful minds or anger at the prevailing status quo within a society. So, if you wanted subverting the status quo and attack the venality of the political class or religious leaders, like we have seen in Jero's plays by Soyinka or Moliere's *Tartuffe*, then Juvenalian satire is your best bet (Edley, 2017). Unlike Horatian that is highly humorous, mild and gentle seeking to amuse, Juvenalian is freed from the "shackles of being outright funny". While Horatian deals with the follies of humans, Juvenalian attacks what is perceived as evil. Horatian seeks to heal the situation with a smile, Juvenalian with anger. So, the mission of Juvenalian satire is usually to attack individuals, government and organizations (corporations) to expose hypocrisy and moral transgressions. Most writers of this category of satire mostly display stronger doses of irony and sarcasm in this concoction.

Evidently, even from the Roman satirist, Juvenal that the term originated from, his works were imbued with aspects that were abrasive and accusatory. In theatre, *A Play of Giants* by Soyinka, *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga can be placed under Juvenalian satire because of their outright attack on evil perceived within societies that these plays represent. In prose, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* fits the mold that is being talked about here. Juvenalian satire is the most daring and revolutionary of all the categories of satire that there are.

The third category of satire which the title of the paper does not capture is Menippean satire which has had its exploration mostly in the novel, also can lend its substance to the writing of contemporary drama, which will have far-reaching impact in the political space in Nigeria. Kharperian in his 'A Hand to Turn the Time: The Menippean satires of Thomas Pynchon' opines that Menippean satire is a form of satire, usually in prose, which has a length and structure similar to a novel and is characterized by attacking mental attitudes

rather than specific individuals or entities. This is broadly contrasting the other two categories which largely target individuals and corporation to ridicule, correct and shame. It goes ahead to critique series of myths inherited from traditional culture. Derived from the Greek cynic Parodist and Polemicist Menippus (Third Century BC), the category is a form of indirect satire, implying that it attacks general habits or behaviour pattern within the society.

A skillful extrapolation of Bakhtin's theory of the Menippean satire for utilization, in dramatic arts for the purpose of political gain in Nigeria is instructive. He proposes this thesis in 'Problem of Dostoevsky's Poetics' as he treats Menippean satire as a classical "serio-comic" genre, alongside Socratic dialogue and other forms that are united by a "carnival sense of the world". The Socratic dialogue comes with a series of leading questions that unravel hidden or underlying facts and a state of realization of a situation.

In contemporary theatre practice, one cannot say that playwrights or artists have been proficient, or even efficient in deploying these categories of satire to the notice of theatre or dramatics critics in Nigeria. At best, it is very visible in stand-up comedy practice in Nigeria. It is easier to hear I Go Die or Basket Mouth attacking the government of the day for its lies or ineptitude or attack MTN for its exorbitant call charges, than to watch a play being performed attacking government's operation in relation to its citizens. The dexterity at which these genres are handled, if all at all they are deployed, is often poor. Little wonder, the stage is fast losing its audience's gusto and enthusiasm hence, the low patronage that comes with such scenario.

Now that Nigeria is facing myriad of challenges that are multi-dimensional, one would expect that, there should have been masterpieces of satirical output in the corpus of all the known genres of literature that we all know, especially in theatre and film; and also, the novel since it can be filmed. Nigerians are continuously losing faith in the country and what it has to offer them. A lot of brain-drain is going on, moral decadence is on the rise, political thuggery increasing, corruption persisting and its fight questionable, leadership ineptitude glaring, pleasure-seeking in leaders amid infrastructural decay becoming rampant among other pressing issues. Amidst all these mind-boggling problems confronting the nation of Nigeria, the theatre is cold, play writing is not at its best to attack the issues at stake.

For example, Peter Handke, the 2019 Nobel Prize in Literature winner, won the prize "for an influential work that with linguistic ingenuity has explored the

periphery and the specificity of human experience”. Handke understands the issues confronting his Austrian people and leverages on art to play a part in solving them. The same can be said about Olga Tokarczuk, 2018 winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, “for a narrative imagination that with encyclopedic passion represents the crossing of boundaries as a form of life”. Encyclopedic passion connotes the full knowledge of the issues that boarders her Polish people and narratively introduces the “crossing of boundaries” as now a way of life.

Ours may be a display of encyclopedic superficiality or those issues confronting the country of Nigeria, using an art poorly, when we allude to the literary or dramatic works that are being churned out every day. It, perhaps, is a bad combination of the two. We do not write purposely to win prizes, but talk about our conditions of life and our subjective experiences clearly in very awesome ways that can elicit feeling of awe and shock in our readers and audience as the case may be. The three options/categories of satire we have looked at above offer playwrights, performers and novelists what they perhaps need to rejig our passion for the arts like it was the case before and after independence because of the sphere of freedom of creativity it offers writers if the right language, devices and moods are employed for this duty.

### **Postmodern Option for Harnessing Satire in Nigerian Theatre Space**

Postmodernism is a concept that is used in describing the artistic movement that succeeded modernism when the latter began to lose a rigid order in the art creation. It became a distortion to the known canons and archetypes in arguably all the broad areas of art-both liberal and plastic arts. Key among the subsidiary features of this movement are variety, bricolage, eclecticism, parody, aporia and consumerism. The contemporary artistic space is replete with these complex phenomena or features. Here, we suggest in this article the adoption of this option of the selective integration of aspects from the three categories of satire we have looked at above because of the taste of contemporary audience, which is tilted towards the desire to see many things in a single art work.

Here is an Allusion to an unpublished play titled, 'His Excellency, the Governor', that I read recently, which largely looks satirical in its portrayal of characters, the plot and language. The play has sixteen scenes which have captured the major institutions/sectors that are full of decay in Nigeria, which the Governor plans to visit in Cognito. These institutions are the police Divisions and hospitals whose personnel get to know about the visit late. In the play, a character known as Herbert who is actually the Governor visits a

hospital disguised with a sick old man without enough money and is denied treatment and chased out. He goes to a police station to report a case of theft of his motorcycle, but for not having enough money to mobilize the policemen for the operation he is arrested. At the end, these individuals who have treated the Governor badly suddenly realize Herbert's true identity, but too late, they are punished by the Governor relieves them of their jobs.

From the language, the plot and the characterization of the play, it is obvious the playwright was attempting a Juvenalian satire, may be not knowing. Such attempts are encouraging. However, aligning our creative impulses with the contemporary philosophical or ideological positions now in vogue or in use can be striking.

I had the opportunity of watching the performance of the play in Plateau State University, Bokokos Open-Air-Theatre and it commanded a standing ovation. How much more of a satirical play that can accommodate aspects or features of the types of satire discussed earlier? The work will be remarkable and will go places. We could have aspects showing the serious issues confronting the country being laughed at or lampooned and the story happening smoothly. A more serious playwright can skillfully combine the aspects creatively in a single-story line without making it look like a mumbo-jumbo or a mish-mash of strange sorts. The language must be deployed in a very skillful and versatile manner to denote different moods and elicit the right emotions.

### **Conclusion**

From the foregoing, we have seen options from the types of satire that playwrights of today can borrow to engage actively in the political conversations going on in the country. Theatre ought not to operate at the sidelines in this moment of socio-economic, political and religious decay in the political space. Theatre was once very active in the political affairs of Nigeria; it can still regain its position when the right creative energy is infused into the creative process of our playwrights, and when the right genres are adopted. Revisiting satire in its diverse forms stirs a new energy and mood in the leisure industry and the political space in the country because it is not shamefaced over the ills or vices of the society; it is not reticent over areas that other instruments are silent about. Satire will provide humour and at the same time tugs a spectator or reader to reason with what is being presented. Satire is a weapon of change. But as a weapon of change, it is not like the AK47 which takes life completely out of existence, however, it gives a new lease of life. It persuades the individual to change for good. It could laugh at your follies, or confronts you directly and transforms you. Satire could correct

the way elections are conducted in Nigeria; it can comment on its police, army, education, healthcare provision, bureaucracy, leadership etc. It could rekindle people's love for their country and for themselves. It could stir a true and positive revolution for true development. This is because there is no issue, injustice, problem, malignancy, or retrogressive thinking that is beyond the probing pertinence and capacity of art or creative writing.

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## **AWARENESS PROSPECTS IN NATIONAL AGENCY FOR FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL'S COMMUNICATION INTERVENTIONS AGAINST FAKE DRUGS IN SELECTED COMMUNITIES IN ABUJA, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*Creating awareness is fundamental towards building audience understanding, influencing opinion and motivating behaviour. This paper therefore examines the awareness prospects in National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control's communication interventions in the control of fake drugs in some rural communities in Federal Capital territory, Abuja, with a view to enhancing its awareness efforts. The paper's objective is to determine the level of awareness created among the population in the research locations. Descriptive survey was adopted, using research instruments such as questionnaire, focus group guide and key informant interviews for data collection. Study outcome revealed that NAFDAC has created, to some extent, awareness on how to overcome incidences of fake drugs, its side effect and detection mechanism. However, awareness of respondents on the use of mobile authentication service technology and reporting of fake drugs incidences to relevant authorities were low. The paper recommends that NAFDAC should intensify and improve on its communication strategy in order to increase consumer's level of awareness, especially the technology of mobile authentication service (MAS) for easier detection of fake drugs in the rural communities.*

**Keywords:** Communication, awareness, Fake Drugs, Intervention, Mobilization

### **Introduction**

Awareness generally means being knowledgeable, conscious, cognizant and informed. It is the state or ability to perceive, to feel or to be conscious of events, objects or sensory patterns. Creating awareness is an important step toward building audience understanding. This can only be achieved by communication which remains fundamental to existence and survival of humans as well as an organization. Communication is a process of creating and sharing ideas, information, views, facts, feelings etc. among them.. people to reach a common understanding. It is therefore imperative for

NAFDAC to engage its varied audience.

NAFDAC's Communication Campaign activities include sensitization workshops, seminars, publications, consultative meetings, billboards, and jingles on radio and television as well as advocacy visits. These efforts are geared towards reaching out to stake holders.

It must be noted that the challenge of eradicating fake drugs from the shores of Nigeria remains a protracted venture. This is because manufacturers and peddlers of fake drugs are getting smarter by the day. It therefore calls for aggressive and sustained consumer awareness, so that they are well sensitized and become knowledgeable towards taking responsibilities to safeguard their own health.

According to Jacob (10) "NAFDAC's effort at creating public awareness appears popular amongst urban dwellers, the literate or educated as a result of the Agency's heavy reliance on conventional media which limited accessibility of consumers in the rural areas of Nigeria to NAFDAC messages." Therefore, this paper measures the awareness prospects in NAFDAC Communication interventions amongst rural communities in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

This paper is aimed at assessing the awareness prospects in NAFDAC communication interventions in the control of fake drugs in some rural communities in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, with specific objective of determining the awareness level of NAFDAC communication campaign amongst the population.

### **Communication Trajectory**

Communication is fundamental to existence and survival of humans as well as an organization. Indeed the relevance of communication in society has never been in doubt. It remains a viable medium through which relationship are established, extended and maintained. Izuu (345) states unequivocally that "society exists not only by transmission, by communication, but it may be fairly said to exist in transmission, in communication". Perhaps, this is why its study has continued to engage the attention of scholars, researchers and practitioners over the years towards a better understanding of how best it could serve society.

In more specific terms, according to Izuu, the transmission view of communication more often than not downplays the feelings, biases, social

realities, and circumstance of the receiver of the message. It is epitomized in theories of communication that do not create avenues for reliable feedback from the receivers of the message sent. Izuu believes that the mass media has been implicated so much in this, owing to the fact that more often than not, the processes of getting audiences' feedback is not in real time. The point here is that the transmission view of communication deals with outcome or end-effect, as its aim. This is exactly the position of Mody (41):

When we talk about approximating or achieving communication, we are using the word to refer to an outcome or end-effect. Another use of the term refers to the process. The aim of "communication" as an outcome is to "make common", to share. Communication is achieved, when the sender and the receiver hold meaning in common; that is, when the meaning the sender wanted to share is identical, (Isomorphic with) to the meaning the audience receive.

However, as human thinking advanced and became sophisticated the focus of communication scholars shifted from messages to meaning creation rather than transmission of meaning. Communication is now seen as a process involving series of activities, exchange or set of behaviours.

"Communication is dynamic, ongoing, transactional process. It is dynamic because it is constantly in motion; it is ongoing because it has no fixed beginning or end; it is transactional because the elements occur simultaneously and the people communicating are interdependent."(Ndolo 78)

Further clarification on the new attributes of communication as identified in the ritual view of communication was reinforced by Musa (289) who added "systemic", "symbolic" interaction" and "meaning". According to him, communication process is systemic because a system consists of a group of elements which interacts to influence each other and the system as a whole. By symbolic interaction it refers to language as a form of symbols which people use in interacting with each other, in describing and classifying experiences, how we select these symbols and how we organize them will affect how others will interpret our messages.

Earlier, Serveas (15) had aptly referred to this new perspectives as "another" communication that favours multiplicity, smallness of scale, locality, de-institutionalization, interchange or sender-receiver roles (and)

### Data Presentation and Analysis

**Table: The Awareness Level of the Communities under Study**

Statement	Communities	Degree of Agreement				Mean
		SA	A	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
I was informed on all the NAFDAC methods for identifying fake drugs	Yangoji	61 (26.3)	34 (14.7)	30(46.1)	103 (34.8)	2.2
	Gaba	11 (23.9)	19 (41.3)	9 (19.6)	7 (15.2)	2.7
	Chibiri	60 (25.9)	66 (28.4)	34 (14.7)	72 (31.0)	2.5
I know the side effects of fake drugs on Human lives	Yangoji	91 (39.2)	66 (28.4)	0.0 (00.0)	75 (32.3)	2.7
	Gaba	15 (32.6)	23 (50.0)	4 (6.5)	4 (6.5)	3.0
	Chibiri	81 (34.9)	87 (37.5)	8 (3.4)	56 (24.1)	2.8
I understand that the Mobile authentication service technology is For identifying fake drugs.	Yangoji	6 (2.6)	33 (14.2)	18 (7.8)	175 (75.4)	1.4
	Gaba	4(8.7)	6(13.0)	6(13.0)	30 (65.2)	1.6
	Chibiri	11 (4.7)	33 (14.2)	23 (9.9)	165 (71.1)	1.5
I am aware that I should Report cases of fake drugs To NAFDAC	Yangoji	6 (2.6)	18 (7.8)	41 (17.7)	167 (72.0)	1.4
	Gaba	6(13.0)	6(13.0)	5(10.9)	29(63.0)	1.7
	Chibiri	15(6.5)	22 (9.5)	39 (16.8)	156 (67.2)	1.5
I know that I am a stakeholder in the NAFDAC Campaign against fake Drugs	Yangoji	30 (12.9)	20 (8.6)	21 (9.1)	161 (72.0)	1.6
	Gaba	8(17.4)	17(37.0)	2(4.3)	19(41.3)	2.3
	Chibiri	32(13.8)	47(20.3)	18(7.8)	135(58.2)	1.8
I am aware that when there is no NAFDAC number on any drug it is fake	Yangoji	95 (40.9)	40 (17.2)	19 (8.2)	78 (33.6)	2.6
	Gaba	29(63.0)	9(19.6)	2(4.3)	6(13.0)	3.3
	Chibiri	116(50.)	44(19.0)	15(6.5)	57(24.6)	2.9
I know all the roles of NAFDAC	Yangoji	32(13.8)	19(8.2)	53(22.8)	128(55.2)	1.8
	Gaba	9(19.6)	5(10.9)	9(19.6)	23(50.0)	2.0
As an Agency of government.	Chibiri	37(15.9)	22(9.5)	51(22.0)	122(52.6)	1.8
I am aware that I should always buy drugs From government approved sources	Yangoji	56(24.1)	21(9.1)	83(35.8)	72(31.0)	2.2
	Gaba	20(43.5)	12(26.1)	7(15.2)	7(15.2)	2.9
	Chibiri	77(33.2)	38(16.4)	64(27.6)	53(22.8)	2.5

**Source: Researcher's Field work, 2017**

The table above indicates that there was greater awareness on issues of fake drugs, menace and detection amongst the respondents who took part in the study in Gaba and Chibiri than those respondents from Yangoji. The figure in table shows that 60 respondents constituting 25.9 percent Strongly Agreed while 66 respondents representing 28.4 percent Agreed that they know all the NAFDAC methods of identifying fake drugs. In the same vein, 11 respondents representing 23.9 percent and 19 respondents constituting 41.3 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively that they know all the NAFDAC methods of identifying fake drugs.

However, 61 respondents from Yangoji representing 26.3 percent and 34 respondents constituting 14.7 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively that they know all the NAFDAC method of identifying fake drugs. On the other hand, 107 respondents representing 46.1 percent and 26 respondents constituting 8.8 percent from Yangoji Strongly Disagreed and Disagreed that they know all the NAFDAC methods of identifying fake drugs.

Furthermore, 9 respondents representing 19.6 percent and 7 respondents constituting 15.2 percent from Gaba Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed respectively, while 72 respondents representing 31.1 percent and 34 respondents making 14.7 percent Strongly Disagreed and Disagreed respectively.

The table as analysed, indicates an overwhelming awareness of the side effects of fake drugs on human lives. The figures showed that Gaba community has the highest awareness with 82.0 percent cumulatively (i.e the combination of respondents who Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively), followed by Chibiri with 72.4 percent cumulative while Yangoji ranked least with 67.6 percent cumulatively.

On the other hand, 75 respondents representing 32.3 percent in Yangoji Strongly Disagreed that they know the side effects of fake drugs on human lives. Similarly, in Gaba 4 respondents representing 8.7 percent Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed respectively that they know the side effects of fake drugs on human lives while 8 respondents representing 17.4 percent Disagreed and 15 respondents constituting 32.6 percent Strongly Disagreed respectively that they know the side effects of fake drugs on human lives.

The table provides insight into respondents' awareness of the deployment of mobile authentication service (MAS) technology by NAFDAC for the identification of fake drugs. Result indicates overwhelming disagreement by

respondents that they are aware of the deployment of the technology for detection of fake drugs.

In Yangoji, 75.4 percent of the respondents Strongly Disagreed with the statement, while 7.8 percent Disagreed that they are aware of the technology as tool for the detection of fake drugs. Meanwhile, 2.6 percent and 14.2 percent of the respondents Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively, that they are aware of the deployment of mobile authentication service.

Furthermore, 30 respondents representing 65.2 percent in Gaba Strongly Disagreed while 13.0 percent Disagreed that they are aware of deployment of MAS by NAFDAC. Also, 4 respondents constituting 8.7 percent Strongly Agreed while 13.0 percent Agreed that they are aware of the availability of that device.

In the same vein, 165 respondents in Chibiri representing 71.1 percent Strongly Disagreed while 23 respondents constituting 9.9 percent Disagreed that they are aware of MAS technology.

The table equally indicates wide disparity between respondents who Disagreed and those who Agreed that they should report cases of fake drugs to NAFDAC. The above analysis shows that 72.0 percent respondents in Yangoji; 63.0 percent in Gaba and 67.2 percent in Chibiri Strongly Disagreed that they should report cases of fake drugs to NAFDAC. In the same vein, 41 respondents in Yangoji representing 17.7 percent; 5 respondents in Gaba constituting 10.9 percent and 39 respondents in Gaba representing 16.8 percent Disagreed respectively that they are aware of the obligation to report cases of fake drugs to the authority.

Furthermore, in Yangoji only 2.6 percent and 7.8 percent respondents Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively that they should report cases of fake drugs to NAFDAC, while in Gaba it was 8.7 percent of the respondents that Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively. Meanwhile, 15 respondents in Chibiri representing 6.5 percent and 22 respondents constituting 9.5 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed that it is necessary to report cases of fake drugs to NAFDAC.

The table also measured the issue of whether respondents are aware that they are stakeholders in NAFDAC campaign against fake drugs. It is quite clear from the analysis that majority of the respondents across the study locations Strongly Disagreed that they are stakeholders in the campaign

against fake drugs. 161 respondents from Yangoji representing 69.4 percent, 19 respondents from Gaba constituting 41.3 percent, and 135 respondents from Chibiri representing 58.2 percent respectively, Strongly Disagreed that they are stakeholders in the campaign against fake drugs. Similarly, in Yangoji, 9.1 percent of respondents; 4.3 percent in Gaba and 7.8 percent from Chibiri respectively also Disagreed that they are stakeholders in the campaign.

Meanwhile, 30 respondents in Yangoji representing 12.9 percent and 20 respondents representing 8.6 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively that they are stakeholders in the campaign. It also reveals that 17.4 percent and 30.7 percent respondents from Gaba Strongly Agreed and Agreed that they are stakeholders.

In Chibiri, 32 respondents representing 13.8 percent and 47 respondents constituting 20.3 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively that they are stakeholders in NAFDAC campaign against fake drugs. However, it is observed that the disparity between respondents who Disagreed and those that Agreed was very high. The aggregate of Strongly Agreed and Agreed shows 34.1 percent while the aggregate of Strongly Disagreed and Disagreed shows 66.0 percent.

The data obtained in the table above have shown that majority of the respondents Strongly Agreed that when there is no NAFDAC number on any drug such drug is fake. Figures on the table shows that 95 respondents constituting 40.9 percent in Yangoji and 40 respondents representing 17.2 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively that the absence of NAFDAC number on any drugs makes such drugs a fake one. In the same vein, 29 respondents in Gaba representing 63.0 percent and 9 respondents constituting 9.6 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively that when there is no NAFDAC number on any drug, it is fake. Furthermore, in Chibiri, 116 respondents representing 50 percent Strongly Agreed while 44 respondents which is 19 percent of the population Agreed that when there is no NAFDAC number on a drug, it is fake.

On the other hand, in Yangoji, 19 respondents representing 8.2 percent Disagreed while 78 respondents constituting 33.6 percent Strongly Disagreed with the statement. Similarly, 2 respondents from Gaba representing 4.3 percent and 6 respondents constituting 13.0 percent Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed respectively, that they are aware that when there is no NAFDAC number on any drugs such drugs is a fake drugs.

Also, in Chibiri, 15 respondents representing 6.5 percent and 57 respondents constituting 24.6 percent Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed respectively with the statement.

The table equally provides insight into the issue regarding the role of NAFDAC as an agency of government. The analysis indicates that 55.2 percent of respondent, from Yangoji Strongly Disagreed and 22.8 percent Disagreed knowing all the roles of NAFDAC, while 13.8 percent Strongly Agreed and 8.2 percent Agreed being aware of all the roles of NAFDAC. For Gaba, the figure for Strongly disagree was 50.0 percent while those who Disagreed was 19.6 percent. Also, 19.6 percent Strongly Agreed and 10.9 percent Agreed that they know all the roles of NAFDAC.

Furthermore, in Chibiri, 52.6 percent of the respondents Strongly Disagreed and 22.0 percent Disagreed with the statement. Similarly, 15.9 percent indicated Strongly Agreed while 9.5 percent Agreed they know all the roles of NAFDAC. Since the mean scores fell below the 2.5 set mean, the variable statement has been rejected across the communities for the study. The sample clearly showed that majority of the respondents do not know all the roles of NAFDAC.

The analysis as shown in the table measures respondents' knowledge on the need to always buy drugs from government approved sources. In Yangoji, 56 respondents representing 24.1 percent and 21 respondents constituting 9.1 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively that they are aware that drugs should be purchased from only places approved by government. However, 83 respondents representing 35.8 percent and 72 respondents constituting 31.0 percent Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed that they are aware that they should buy drugs from government approved sources.

In Gaba, 20 respondents representing 43.5 percent and 12 respondents representing 26.1 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed with the statement respectively, while 7 respondents representing 15.2 percent Strongly Disagreed and Disagreed that they are aware of such messages by NAFDAC. In the same vein, 77 respondents from Chibiri representing 33.2 percent and 38 respondents representing 16.4 percent Strongly Agreed and Agreed respectively, with the statement, while 64 respondents constituting 27.6 percent and 53 respondents representing 22.8 percent Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed that they are aware.

Comparatively, the figures showed that respondents from Gaba has the highest awareness, followed by respondents in Chibiri while that of Yangoji was the least.

### **Discussion of Findings**

In determining the awareness level, answers were sought, questions asked bordering on the respondents knowledge on methods of identifying fake drugs; side effects of fake drugs on human body; mobile authentication service technology; reporting cases of fake drugs to NAFDAC; being stakeholders in the NAFDAC Campaign; NAFDAC Number; roles of NAFDAC and buying drugs from government approved sources. Percentage of awareness of the people on fake drugs menace was 73%, NAFDAC Number 69% while that of detection mechanism peaked at 56% cumulatively. The finding showed that Respondents awareness were significantly impressive in the areas of methods of identifying fake drugs, side effects of fake drugs, NAFDAC number on drugs and buying drugs from government approved sources. However, their knowledge about mobile authentication service, reporting incidences of fake drugs to NAFDAC, being stakeholders in the campaign and the roles of NAFDAC were not impressive.

However, NAFDAC should intensify efforts to step up awareness on mobile authentication service technology (MAS) and reporting of incidences of fake drugs since the device can enhance the people's capacity in detecting fake drugs.

### **Conclusion**

Awareness remains a critical pedestal for mutual understanding of issues in any society. To empower drugs consumers in the rural communities, there should be sustained campaigns that will enable people to have regular access to such messages. This is necessary going by the findings on the low awareness on the technology device for detecting fake drugs at the point of sale or purchase and that of being stakeholders in the fight against fake drugs.

When consumers buy-in into NAFDAC campaigns and they are aware that they have a stake in the fight against fake drugs, it will help in no small measure reducing the menace of fake drugs in Nigeria.

Despite the level of awareness created by National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control as shown in this paper, a lot still need to be done by the agency. NAFDAC should improve on their communication

intervention, especially the content and delivery. This will go long way empowering drug consumers in the rural communities towards safeguarding their health.

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