



KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY, MALETE, NIGERIA
SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES (SPGS)

**A FEMINIST STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF WOMEN PORTRAYAL IN SELECTED
NIGERIAN NOVELS**

BILIKIS ATOKE, RAHEEM
17/27/MEN007

MAY, 2021



SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES (SPGS)

A FEMINIST STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF WOMEN PORTRAYAL IN SELECTED
NIGERIAN NOVELS

A MASTER OF ARTS [M.A] DEGREE THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
LINGUISTICS, AFRICAN AND EUROPEAN LANGUAGES [ENGLISH UNIT], FACULTY
OF HUMANITIES, MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, KWARA STATE
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BY
BILIKIS ATOKE, RAHEEM
17/27/MEN007

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER
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DECLARATION PAGE

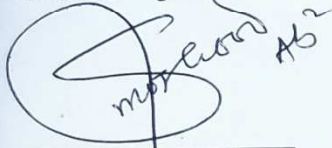
I hereby declare that this thesis titled “A Feminist Stylistic Analysis of Women Portrayal in Selected Nigerian Novels” is a record of my research. It has neither been presented nor accepted in any previous application for higher degree.

BILIKIS ATOKE RAHEEM

Signature/Date

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that the research report titled 'A Feminist Stylistic Analysis of Women Portrayal in Selected Nigerian Novels' was carried out by Bilikis Atoke Raheem. The report has been read and approved as meeting the requirements for the award of Master of Arts (M.A.) Degree in the English Unit, Department of Linguistics, African and European Languages, Faculty of Humanities, Management and Social Sciences, Kwara State University, Malete, Kwara State, Nigeria.



Dr. Moshood Zakariyah
Supervisor

10/06/2021

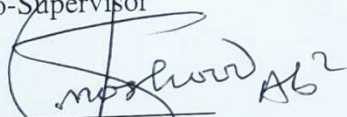
Signature/Date



Dr. (Mrs.) O.O. Adeoti
Co-Supervisor

10/06/2021

Signature/Date



Dr. Salih Jum'ah Alaso
Head of Department

10/06/2021

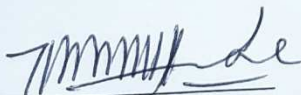
Signature/Date



Dr. Reuben Kehinde Akano
Internal Examiner

9/7/2021

Signature/Date

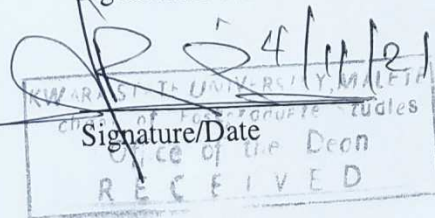


Prof. Sola Timothy Babatunde
External Examiner

12/07/2021

Signature/Date

Prof. Hamzat Ishola Abdulraheem
Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies (SPGS)



DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my loving, caring and supportive parents; my awesome husband cum editor for the words of encouragements; my siblings who babysat my babies while I was busy with this and my children for their patience. I love them more than they could ever imagine.

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ABSTRACT

Language is regarded as one of the repositories of societal construct. It is a reflection of society and a determining factor in social change. This study provides a feminist analysis of two Nigerian novels; *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Adichie and *The Secret lives of Baba Segi's wives* by Lola Shoneyin. The transitivity model by Michael Halliday and analysis at the word level which are part of the toolkit proposed by Mills (1995) were deployed for the analysis. This study focuses on the transitivity processes associated with the major female characters in the selected novels. The objective was to examine what the transitivity patterns attributed to these characters reveal about them. Both quantitative and qualitative research design were used for this study.

Findings of the study reveal that there are more material processes than the other processes. Gender stereotyping and sexism are also found in the novels. By employing a female narrator-focaliser, the writers try to create a new point of view on gender roles. The study concludes that the writers of the selected texts create two types of female characters; the traditional women who are submissive and the modern women who are assertive and independent.

Keywords: transitivity, domestic violence, feminist stylistics

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Language is a reflection of society and it is also, a determining factor in social change. Not only does language serve as a medium of communication, it performs multiple roles, ranging from the projection of culture, gender and politics, to the distortion and construction of reality (Ufot, 2012). Language is used in constructing realities and orientating individuals on “what to believe”, “how to express what is believed” and so on. In summary, language projects our ideology. The position of women is undermined by African culture and society. Barja(1995) asserts that “the negativeness and positiveness of the women’s image depends on how well they play their roles. This implies that women are denied the freedom to define themselves. Women’s domestic role and feminine personality combine to encourage cultural definitions of the female gender that tend to be degrading. Women are subjected to unequal treatment due to traditional roles and gender stereotyping (Ruppel, 2008). Modern feminist writers write in protest to patriarchy and also to salvage the plight of women, re-create and re-brand the image of woman. The woman’s position is believed to be a cultural product that can be altered. Some feminists also believe that the society is organized in such a way that it works in general to benefit men rather than women; that is, it is patriarchal. Many women in Africa are raised to be good wives and mothers and because of these cultural expectations, they assume these roles without protest (Wilka, 2018). Men, on the other hand are usually associated with social roles of dominance and authority and activities done by men are always recognized as predominantly important. Women’s goals and ideologies are assumed to be co-ordinate with those of men. The female gender is an oppressed category within

patriarchal structures. The sociological status of women in Nigeria and Africa in general has influenced writers. Adedoja (2010) as cited in (Wilka, 2018) asserts that “the social relevance of literature cannot be overlooked, because literature cannot be separated from social values.”

Feminist stylistics challenges the fact that women are contended with their roles as wives and mothers. Feminist stylistics provides an avenue for exploring and exposing the realities of social injustice against women in the society and in works of arts and also challenges women subjugation and exploitation in texts. (Wilka, 2018)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The representation of women in every facets of life is the central focus of many feminist works. This has made feminist stylistics receive considerable attention among researchers in recent years. Feminist stylisticians are keen to emphasis that the notion of gender still needs much more evaluation, feminist issues such as subordination and downgrading of women in patriarchal societies are far from being resolved and it is through the systematic and methodical investigations characteristically defining stylistics that these issues can be properly investigated and discussed (Montoro, 2014). Literature reflects and shapes stereotypes and other cultural assumptions. This research work intends to find out how works of female writers embody patriarchal attitudes or under-cut them. By taking a look at male domination and women subjugation in literary works, feminist stylistics tries to present a counter- image of women in literature texts. As Arikan (2014) states “unless the representation of women in literature is improved, women’s status in the society will always remain secondary.” The researcher intends to contribute towards filling this gap by focusing on works by female writers and their portrayal of women in their writings using “*The*

secret lives of Baba Segi's wives and *"Purple Hibiscus"* by Lola Shoneyin and Chimamanda Adichie respectively.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the Study

The broad aim of this study is to deploy linguistic theory to the analysis of literary texts in order to reveal how women are portrayed in those texts. However, the study is guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To examine how language is used to foster gender issues in the selected texts.
2. To investigate the transitivity patterns of the selected female characters and their roles in playing out the thematic concerns in the novels.
3. To determine whether the writers challenge or reinforce stereotypical representation of women in their texts.

1.4 Research Questions

1. In what way does language foster gender issues in the selected texts?
2. How does the transitivity pattern of the female characters contribute to the thematic concerns of the selected texts?
3. To what extent do the selected writers challenge or reinforce stereotypical representation of women in their texts?

1.5 Justification of the study

This study focuses on analysing the language style of Lola Shoneyin and Chimamanda Adichie in the selected texts from a feminist perspective. Feminist stylistics is best suited for this research since it is qualitative and quantitative in nature and it relies on the transitivity approach by M.A.K Halliday. It adds gender issues to its list of interesting elements to analyse and places gender issues at the centre of academic study. Lola Shoneyin and Chimamanda Adichie in the selected novels offer distinct depictions of female independence. By employing a female narrator, the writers give a new lens of reading and understanding women in a manner that represents them as human beings far beyond the sociological expectations attached to being a woman. The area of focus of most researchers has been on how women are portrayed in literary works by male writers. This analysis is majorly concerned with representation, discrimination and exploitation of women in the Nigerian society and also to know whether the writers of the selected texts portray a positive image of women in their works. Also, this study attempts to reveal the inner thoughts, feelings, perceptions and experiences of the major female characters in the selected texts. This study offers an explanation of women's oppression which is reflected in their linguistic behaviour. By studying the language and linguistic choices employed in the texts, readers will be made to understand whether stereotypical representations of Nigerian women are reinforced or challenged in the selected texts.

1.6 Research Methodology

This research employs a descriptive design which is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. It involves an investigation of feminine features in the selected text using transitivity model by Halliday and the work is also guided by the framework of Sarah Mills. *The Secret Lives of Baba*

Segi's Wives by Lola Shoneyin and *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Adichie were purposively selected for this work. Issues related to the womenfolk are predominant in the selected texts. Extracts were purposively selected from these texts because they relate to the aims and objectives of the study. The analytical model is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The qualitative procedure is concerned with the actual utterances of the characters in terms of their functional value. It deals with what the utterances reveal about the characters. The quantitative procedure deals with the frequency of occurrence of the processes. Transitivity was purposely selected as a theoretical framework for the analysis because it treats language beyond formal structures and deals with the context in revealing the themes embedded in the texts. It explains how and why the text means what it does (Halliday, 2014). By deploying transitivity model for the analysis, the intent of the writer is made known to the readers. Lastly, this framework is more rigorous and systematic and has proved to be very suitable for a feminist stylistic analysis.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

Stylistics is quite a broad field. For effective management of this study, this study will focus on only four female characters in *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* and two female characters in *Purple Hibiscus*. The characters were selected because they are the major female characters in the novel. Also, the extracts were selected based on purposive sampling rather than through random sampling. Halliday's transitivity model was selected because it allows for rigorous and systematic analysis. It also helps in decoding the thematic concerns of the writer and aids in determining the active and passive characters in the text.

1.8 Synopsis of ‘The Secret Lives Baba Segi’s Wives’

Lola Shoneyin in this debut depicts the real Nigerian society. In this award winning novel, she tells the story of a polygamous home in the modern day Nigeria. She goes further to reveal how complex and complicated the relationship could be. Baba Segi as he is fondly called is the head of the family and he is an interesting and loveable character. Iya Segi, his first wife has two children and regards herself as the most important wife in the household. Iya Tope, the second wife is quite docile and this makes Iya Segi dominates her. Iya Femi, the third wife is quite materialistic and modern. Most times, she teams up with Iya Segi to dominate Iya Tope. Everything went well until Bolanle, the only educated woman in the family became a part of the household. Bolanle is a graduate of the university and unlike her co- wives who have got children of their own, she has none. Like every other woman in the house, she has a story to tell. She has her reasons for marrying an illiterate man who is only interested in siring children with her. Bolanle’s childlessness opened the can of worms that had been closed for years. In an attempt to proffer solution to Bolanle’s childlessness, Teacher, Baba Segi’s friend suggested that they visit a hospital to ascertain what was wrong with Bolanle since Baba Segi believes that nothing was wrong with him and it could only be Bolanle’s fault. To the reader’s amazement and Baba Segi’s shock, it was discovered that the children believed to have been sired by Baba Segi have different fathers and that is why Bolanle the only faithful one could not get pregnant. Baba Segi was at fault.

Most of the story is told from Bolanle’s point of view but other three wives, Baba Segi and even his driver are all allowed to tell their own tales of the family dynamics in Baba Segi’s household. The display of jealousy by Iya Femi and Iya Segi is seen. For instance, a plate of delicious chicken dish was poisoned and placed in Bolanle’s room by Iya Femi all in a bid to be rid of Bolanle.

Unfortunately, the food was eaten by Segilola. Baba Segi accepts his fate and he agrees to accept the children as his own. Bolanle resolves to leave the household and resumes life on her own.

1.9 Synopsis of Purple Hibiscus

The novel is an exquisite novel about the emotional turmoil of adolescence, the powerful bonds of family and the bright promise of freedom. Fifteen-year old, Kambili and her older brother, Jaja leads a privileged life in Enugu, Nigeria. They live in a beautiful house, protected by the high walls and frangipani trees of her family compound. Papa is generous outside the home, but a fanatically religious person and a tyrant at home. As a result of this, Kambili and Jaja cannot tell the truth from lies. Throughout the novel, Eugene enforces many strict religious practices and behaviour, failure to comply results in beatings. This makes the house as silent as a graveyard. The story is told through Kambili's eyes and is about the disintegration of her family unit and her struggles to grow to maturity. At a time, Kambili and her brother visit their father's sister, Ifeoma and her three children. Their household is completely different from Eugene's household. Though Catholic, the home practices a completely form of Catholicism, making for a happy and liberal place that encourages its members to speak their minds. When Beatrice could not cope with Eugene's violence, she poisons him. Jaja takes the blame for the crime and he is sent to jail. Aunty Ifeoma and her family go to America after she is unfairly dismissed from her job as a lecturer at the University of Nigeria.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Feminism

The term “feminism” was derived from the Latin word “Femina” meaning “woman” and it was first used with regards to the issues of equality and Women’s Right Movement. For several decades now, there have been women fighting to free themselves from male oppression. Feminism is used to represent women’s problems, sufferings and exploitation in addition to their dream of equal opportunities in a society controlled by man. Zara Huda Faris (2013) asserts that “women have been dehumanized by a male dominated society which they call patriarchy.” Feminism is concerned with females not only as a biological category but the female issue as a social category and therefore, feminist share the view that women’s oppression is tied to their sexuality. As a theory, social movement or political movement, feminism focuses on women’s experiences and highlights various forms of oppression that the female gender has been exposed to in the society (Ghorfarti, 2015). Feminists believe there that there is a general difference in the way that men and women are treated in the society as a whole and in the way that females view themselves (Mills, 1995) It is quite difficult to define feminism as there are many approaches to it and various kinds of feminism exist today. Bell Hooks (2000) defines feminism in a simple and concise way as “a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression.” Hooks (2000) goes a step further to give an in-depth definition of feminism as “a struggle to end sexist oppression. Therefore, it is necessarily a struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination that permeates all culture on various levels as well as a commitment to reorganizing society so that the self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion and material

desires...A commitment to feminism so defined that each individual participant acquires a critical political consciousness based on ideas and beliefs” (Hooks, 2000).

Quest for women emancipation is on the increase in all spheres in the society. The society is patriarchal, hence, men have more privileges than women. Men show their superiority over their women counterparts, who are usually relegated to the background. Politically, socially, economically and religiously, women are to a large extent, disadvantaged since most decisions are taken for women by men (Famulusi, 2012). There are various aspects of the African culture which allows for dehumanization of women and discrimination against women. Within the home, issues of domestic violence against women is far from being resolved, women are held responsible for infertility even when the husband is the source of the problem. She is relegated to the home front since the society believes her major responsibility is to procreate and look after the children. Feminists believe women must no longer be viewed in a negative and retrospective manner. They are not inferior to men and can play important roles both at home and in the society. Their contribution to the home and society should not go unnoticed and they should be recognized as important members of the society.

2.2 Types of Feminism

Feminism is both an intellectual commitment and a political movement that seeks justice for women and the end of sexism in all forms. There are different types of feminism and each of them gives principles and conditions for giving women her rights.

2.2.1 Radical Feminism

This movement deeply believes sexism is so rooted in the society that the only cure is to eliminate the concept of gender. It emerged in the late 1960s by the famous leaders T. Grace Atkinson and Shulamith Firestone. Radical feminism is a perspective of feminism which calls for social reordering of the society in which male supremacy is eliminated in all social and economic contexts, while recognizing that women's experiences are also affected by other social divisions such as race and class. Radical feminists view the society as fundamentally patriarchal in which men dominate and oppress women. Radical feminists argue that women are viewed as the "other" (Simone de Beauvoir, 2011). It denies the liberal claim that the lack of political or civil rights causes women's oppression, rather, it is based on assumption of patriarchy as a system of power that society into a complex of relationships with the belief that male supremacy oppresses women (Ghorfarti, 2015). This group views the oppression of women as the most fundamental form of oppression, one that cuts across boundaries of race, culture and economic class. They attribute the oppression of women to men. Radical feminists believe that total uprooting and reconstructing the society is the best way to achieve reforms in the society.

2.2.2 Liberal Feminism

This variety of feminism can be traced back to the social contract theory of the government instituted by the American Revolution. It can be traced to the first –wave feminism that focused mainly on women's suffrage and access to education. It is aimed at giving women equal rights and opportunities. Liberal feminists argue that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women's entrance to success in the so- called public world (Tong, 1992). Abigail Adams and Mary Wollstonecraft are the forerunners of this movement proposing

equality for women. It is an approach to achieving equality between men and women. It is considered as the most important kind of feminism which works within the society to integrate women into it. Women should have the same rights as men and the same educational and work opportunities. Liberal feminism aims for individuals to use their own abilities and the democratic process to help women and men to become equal in the eyes of the law and in the society. The tenets of liberal feminism are perhaps the most familiar and widespread forms of feminism given its emphasis on individual rights, its influence in advancing equality for both sexes in legal, political and social spheres and its visibility as a guiding philosophy in well-known women's organization for women (Suzanne, 1996).

By organizing women into larger groups that can speak at a higher level, push for legislation and raise awareness of issues, those taking a liberal feminist approach will use the resources and tools available in our society to advocate for change. Liberal feminists are criticized for focusing too much on equality with men, ignoring oppression of women which is the biggest challenge (Hooks, 2000).

2.2.3 Eco-Feminism

Eco-Feminism believes that patriarchal philosophies are harmful to women, children and other living things. In resisting patriarchal culture, eco-feminists believe they are also resisting plundering of the earth. Western patriarchal systems are held responsible for the oppression of women and destruction of the natural environment. Eco-feminists are of the view that men in power control the land and they exploit it for their own profit, success and pleasure.

They believe women and the environment are both exploited as passive pawns in the race to domination. They argue that women and the environment are taken advantage of by men in power

because they are seen to be passive and helpless (MacGregor, 2006). Eco- feminist asserts that there is a connection between women and nature that comes from their shared history of oppression by a patriarchal western society.

However, eco-feminists have been criticized for focusing too much on a mystical connection between women and nature and not paying much attention to the actual conditions of women in the society (Biehl, 1991).

2.3 Waves of Feminism

Feminist history can be divided into three waves.

2.3.1 The first Feminist wave

The first wave emerged in the 19th and early 20th century. Mary Wollstonecraft's work "A vindication of the Rights of Women" contributed to the mobilization of women toward this suffrage movement (Reuter, 2017). Wollstonecraft based her work on the ideas of Rousseau. The book came up when women were denied any role outside the home because they were regarded as the property of their husbands. Bryson (1999) claimed that Wollstonecraft's idea is based on the premise that women are not made to please men. She calls for a positive image for women. Although, at first, it seemed contradictory, her idea was to expand Rousseau's democratic society but based on gender equality (Reuter, 2017). Wollstonecraft is regarded as the "fore-mother" of this movement and her ideas shaped the thinking of the suffragettes, who campaigned for women's vote (Tauchert, 2002). Goldrick-Jones (2002) states that the objectives of first wave feminism include: the right to vote, abolition of slave trade and women's access to higher education and property. First wave feminism offered women an opportunity to improve their positions in the society. It promoted equal contract and property rights for women, opposing ownership of married

women b their husbands. By the late 19th century, feminist activism was primarily focused on the right to vote.

Initially, the movement centred on equal rights for women, particularly the recognition of women as legal and legitimate citizens. This stage of feminism is characterized by foundational movements in the field of feminism and its subsequent development, First wave feminism helped to carve a new path for women to gain autonomy in the largely dominated men's society.

2.3.2 Second – wave Feminism

The women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s was the largest social movement in the history of the United States. Its impact was felt in every aspect of personal and public life. The second-wave women's movement emerged in the late 1960s to 1980s. It was led by the whites. It marginalized the world views of women of colours, focusing mainly on the United States and treats sexism as the ultimate oppression (Thompson, 2002). This movement's most important contribution was consciousness raising (CR), a form of structured discussion in which women developed the understanding that many of their "personal" problems – physical and domestic abuse – were not individual failings but a result of discrimination. It focused on issues of equality and discrimination. It identified women's cultural and political inequalities as inextricably linked and encouraged women to understand how their personal lives reflected sexist power structures (Johnson, 2017).It widened the debate to include cultural inequalities, gender norms and the role of women in the society. It began with Betty Friedan's "The Feminine Mystique" which came out in 1963.This book opened women's eyes to the fact that they were victims of a mystique. "Mystique" is defined as "finding fulfilment in sexual passivity, male domination and nurturing maternal love" (Friedan, 1963) as cited in (Johnson, 2017). In other words, women focused on

those around them and neglected themselves. Friedan questioned the idea that women were only seen as housewives and that they did not have the political influence they needed to make a change in the world. The book inspired many women to get out into the society and create a voice for themselves (Johnson, 2017). Prominent feminist thinkers like Simone de Beauvoir are associated with this wave of feminism. Friedan hypothesizes that women are victims of false beliefs requiring them to find identity in their lives through their husbands and children. It causes women to lose their own identities in that of their family. It focused on total gender equality, women as a group having the same social, political and economic rights as men.

2.3.3 Third- wave Feminism

It began in the early 1990s, responding to the perceived failures of the second wave feminism. It sought to challenge the ideas of the second-wave feminists who over-emphasized the experiences of the upper and middle class white women. Many writers criticized second wave feminism for its focus primarily on the problems of white women. Rebecca Walker, a young African- American and Jewish feminist co-founded the third-wave foundation. Third- wave feminism is not just a reaction to second- wave feminism but a movement in itself. The mission of this wave was to politicize and organize young women from diverse cultural and economic background (Bronstein, 2005) as cited in (Johnson, 2015). Apart from the inclusion of other groups, third- wave feminist focused on sexual assault and violence on women. The goal of this group is to abolish gender- role stereotypes and expand feminism to include women with diverse racial and cultural identities (Walker, 1992).

Third-wave feminist focuses on more constructionist models of gender, that is, they see gender difference and gender identity as socially constructed models of gender, rather than as originating

in biological difference. Third- wave feminism is not just a reaction to second- wave feminism but a movement in itself. Third- wave feminists allow for “space- determination, new ways of imagining and new forms of social actions that can serve as a model for social movements facing complex circumstances (Littlejohn, 2017) as cited in (Johnson, 2017). Much third-wave feminist draws on the works of Judith Butler, particularly, the notion of performativity (Butler, 1997) as cited in Mills (1997).

2.4 Feminist Criticism

Defining ‘woman’ based on the theories of feminist criticism appears as a significant approach not only in society but also in language. Feminist criticism not only examines the way female characters are defined, it tries to challenge the male-centred outlook of author and also actively supports including women’s knowledge in literature and valuing women’s experience. Feminist criticism is concerned with “... ways in which literature reinforce or undermine the economic, political, social and psychological oppression of women” (Tyson, 2006). Tyson adds “this school of theory looks at how aspects of culture are inherently patriarchal (male dominated) and aims to expose misogyny in writings about women which can take both implicit and explicit forms (Tyson, 2006). Feminist critics accept the fact that literature reflects and shapes stereotypes and other cultural assumptions, therefore, they examine how works of literature embody patriarchal attitudes or undercut them. By taking a look at male domination in society and literary works, feminist stylistics tries to present a counter- image of women both in language and social construction. Feminist stylistics can be traced to feminist criticism which began in the United States and France. Feminist criticism itself derives its theoretical basis from the larger feminist movement which advocates for social, political and economic equality between sexes (Ufot, 2012). Feminist criticism primarily responds to the way women are presented in literature. It has two main

premises; firstly, woman presented in literature by male writers from their own point of view and ‘woman’ presented in the writings of female writers from their own point of view. Simone de Beauvoir seems to have laid the foundation of feminist criticism in his book titled “The second sex”. In that book, he opines that a woman’s idea of herself as inferior to man and dependent on him springs from her realization that the world is masculine on the whole.

2.5 Language and Gender Studies

Feminism has inspired language and gender study since the late 1960s. There have been different feminisms with different natures and objectives and they have had different impact on language and gender study. Different phases of feminism can be seen as the driving force behind language and gender study. Within linguistics, it has links not only with sociolinguistics but also with stylistics (Corbett, 2004). Works on gender and text analysis has to take into consideration, works by prominent figures in sociolinguistics such as Deborah Cameron and Jennifer Coates (Cameron, 1988) as (quoted in Mills, 1995). These linguists approach their work with an assumption that there are features in language which can be explained only by reference to gender. Coates has analysed differences in women’s and men’s conversation styles, identifying features of all-female group discussions which differ from those found in mixed or male- only discussion groups. There has been a considerable amount done on differences in pronunciation, lexis and syntax between men and women. Cameron’s work includes analysis of how men and women are represented in language. In addition, Dierdre Burton’s work supports an approach which places gender issues at the centre of academic research. This field is a vibrant area of research and theory development within the larger study of language and the society.

Studies on language and gender usually highlights the differences of language use as employed

by both men and women, although, those linguistic variations are not always necessarily proven to be based exclusively on the gender variable. Robin Lakoff's "Language and Woman's Place (1975)" was a crucial early work in the study of language and gender. The book was a crucial early work in the study of language and gender and it has been hugely influential both in the popular and academic sphere (Sunderland, 2006). In this book, Lakoff identified a woman's register which she believes serves to maintain women's role in the society. She argued that women use linguistic forms that reflect and reinforce a subordinate role (Robin, 2004).

As far as this field is concerned, the most scholarly works of the past has generally centred around three major axes; each one representing a particular standpoint concerning the differences between men and women's linguistic practices; Deficit theory, Dominance theory and Difference theory.

2.5.1 Deficit theory

The inspiring work by American sociolinguist Robin Lakoff (1975) laid the foundations of the deficit theory. Lakoff pioneered the research with a focus on the study of the relationship between language and gender. He argues that there are some things that underlie the emergence of differences between women and men's language (Susanti *et.al.*, 2017). She introduced the so-called features of women's language from her own perspective. Lakoff, according to Holmes (2013) contends that "women are partly responsible for their subordinate status, participating in their own subordination by the way they speak (Holmes, 2013:301). Lakoff identified a number of features claiming them to be distinctively used more by women than men. Such features according to her express women's uncertainty and lack of confidence. The features as explained in Holmes (2013) are:

- Lexical Hedges or fillers
- Tag questions
- Rising intonation on declaratives
- ‘Empty’ adjectives
- Precise colour terms
- Intensifiers
- ‘Hypercorrect’ grammar
- ‘Super polite’ forms
- Avoidance of strong swear words
- Emphatic stress

Despite the fact that Lakoff’s study paved the way for more serious research as regards language and gender studies, she has been criticized for basing her work primarily on her intuitions and observations rather than on empirical data.

2.5.2 Dominance Theory

It came about as a kind of confutation to the deficit theory and it could be credited to the investigations of Barbie Thorne and Nancy Henley (1975). Thorne and Henley, instead of accepting certain lacks in the linguistic characteristics that define females, emphasize that it is societal constraints and patriarchal values that actually determine the way women are viewed, discussed and conceptualized (Montoro, 2014). Simpson (1993) describes it as “one of the most influential contributions to the debate on sexism in language in recent years, though different from Lakoff, it adopts the same notion of control by males and submission of females with this submission embodied linguistically in their speech.

The dominance approach sees the linguistic differences between men and women as a result of men's dominance and women's subordination. "Women are often seen through an ethno-methodological frame, as negotiating their relatively powerless position in interaction with men. They are regarded as passive victims and are depicted as subordinates to men especially, in multi-sex talk (Adel, 2018). Language in the dominance approach offers a pan -contextual approach which is governed by male dominance (Adel, 2018).

Dominance approach was criticized by some scholars. Talbot (1998) expostulates that Spender was biased in her account for women's language and her choice of vocabulary was criticized for its lack of clarity.

2.5.3 Difference Theory

Deborah Tannen (1990) is an advocate of this approach. As the title indicates, it is the idea that males and females communicate differently. Tannen (1990) states "women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence." She compares differences in linguistic use to cultural differences. It has roots in the studies of John Gumperz who examined differences in cross- cultural communication. This theory is summarized into six categories, each of the pairs contrasting uses of language by males and females. These categories are mentioned and explained below.

- Status vs Support
- Advice vs Understanding.
- Information vs Feelings
- Orders vs Proposals
- Conflict vs Compromise

- Independence vs Intimacy

Of all the three theories, the difference theory sounds appealing and appears most acceptable because it does not portray men as villains and women as anti- male.”(Mills,1995). The three approaches agree that men’s linguistic pattern is different from that of women. That is, the two genders do not share the same linguistic behaviour.

2.6 Stylistics

Stylistics is defined as “the effective use of language, especially in prose whether to make statements or to rouse emotions. It involves the power to put fact with clarity and brevity. Stylistics is also defined as a study of the different styles that are present in either a given utterance or a written text or document. The consistent appearance of certain structures, items and elements in a speech, an utterance or in a given text is one of the major concerns of stylistics. Downes (1998) states “Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that deals with the study of varieties of language, its properties, principles behind choice, dialogue, accent, length and register. It is a borderline discipline between language and literature. Arikan (2016) defines stylistics as “the study of a writer’s style which has incorporated various approaches, especially in the last few decades. Simpson defines stylistics as “a method of textual interpretation in which primary place is assigned to language. Language is very important to stylisticians because the various forms, patterns and levels that constitute linguistic structure are an important index of the function of the text. While linguistic features do not themselves constitute a text’s meaning, an account of linguistic features nonetheless serves to ground a stylistic interpretation and helps to explain why the analyst can explain or analyses a text in different ways and get certain types of meanings. Also, the text’s functional significance as discourse acts in turn as a gateway to its interpretation (Simpson, 2004).

Simpson (2004) further expounds that “stylistic analysis is not primarily intrigued by new and startling interpretations of the text, rather the main aim of stylistics is to elucidate how our understanding of a text is achieved by examining the linguistic organization of the text and how a reader interacts with that linguistic organization to make sense of the text.” Stylistics explores language, more specifically creativity in language use and it enriches our ways of thinking about language. To exemplify stylistic methodology, Burke (2014) compares the stylistician to a language detective who uses a text as a crime scene and the stylistic methodology as the magnifying glass to find linguistic clues in order to produce an interpretation of the text.

Doing stylistics enables us to have a better understanding of language and literary text because “to do stylistics is to explore language and more specifically to explore creativity in language use (Simpson, 2004). Stylistics according to Mills (1995) is “the analysis of the language of literary texts, usually taking its theoretical models from linguistics, in order to undertake this analysis. Simpson (1992) as cited in Mills (1995) adds “stylistics uses linguistic analysis to provide a particular window on the devices which characterize a particular work. Mills (1995) adds “Stylistics sets out to analyze literary texts in a seemingly scientific way drawing on linguistics. This is what distinguishes it from other literary analysis more frequently taking place in English Literature departments. It offers numerous interesting and valuable ways of analyzing texts and it can be used to elicit for more worthwhile information in a text. It makes the readers to be aware of aspects of texts, for example, grammatical choices or lexical choices which skew the interpretation of a text, something which a simple close reading cannot do. In recent years, stylistics has undergone a profound revolution, it has moved into the area of “literary linguistics”, “poetic linguistics”, “contextual stylistics”, “discourse stylistics” and a relatively new aspect which is feminist stylistics has been added to look at how gender is represented in literary texts.

2.6.1 Feminist Stylistics

Feminism and feminist criticism have given rise to a host of critical views about language. Some of these views have metamorphosed into a fresh linguistic theory and also a new dimension to the study of stylistics known as feminist stylistics. Stylistics developed as an alternative form of analysis, more objective form of analysis in contrast to the type of literary analysis which had developed within educational institutions....By focusing on the language of texts, it was felt that it would be possible to make a rigorous, objective analysis of the text rather than a subjective appreciation of literary worth (Steen, 1989) as cited in Mills (1995). Within language and gender research, stylistics has been informed by feminist literary criticism and feminist linguistics. The contribution of feminist stylistics to the study of language and gender has really shown how the interface of language and gender issues materializes in literary texts. Modern stylistics began to develop in the 19th and 20th centuries from rhetorics. Dierdre Burton, Paul Simpson and Sarah Mills are the important figures in the area of feminist stylistics. Stylistics has traditionally been concerned with the differences between or within texts and those differences have commonly been explored in terms of the formal parameters of lexico-grammar (Montgommery, 1988) as cited in Mills (1995). Feminist stylistics is a move away from text- immanent criticism to a theorized concern with those factors outside the text which may determine or interact with the elements in the text. As the name implies, it combines the notion of feminism and the linguistic branch of stylistics. Montoro (2014) defines feminist stylistics as “the sub- branch of stylistics which aims to account for the way in which gender concerns are linguistically encoded in texts and it attempts to do so by employing some of the frameworks and models used in the stylistics tool kit.” Feminist stylistics tends to focus on texts that promote dominant cultural ideologies which are revealed and challenged in the course of the analysis. It is a bridge which links two discipline; literary criticism

and linguistics. It is mainly concerned with the analysis of how feminist ideology is expressed through the choices of language (Mills, 1995). Stylistics investigation combined with feminist theory has proved to be very useful in offering a new perspective for the interpretation of underlying feminist themes in literary works.

The most fully articulated theory of stylistics as a critical and liberatory feminist project has been carried out by Sarah Mills (1995). Under the label of feminist stylistics or post- feminist text analysis, Mill's form of stylistics greatly expands the contextual parameters of traditional stylistic analysis to include its history, its relationship to other texts and its relationship to the readers. Her central goal is with the ways in which a text signals through how it is to be read. This "dominant reading" draws on ideologies of gender, often in ways that assign gender position to readers as well. Mills relies on recent feminist theory and language and gender scholarship to argue for the possibility of multiple and contradictory interpretation of texts". Ufot (2012) adds "feminist stylistics achieves its goals through close linguistic scrutiny and the explication of linguistic theory to set out rationale for feminist textual analysis. According to Blaine (1990) as quoted by Ufot (2012), "Feminist stylistics is the strongest successor of critical stylistics with more specific concerns of unmasking patriarchal ideologies and denaturalizing patriarchal assumptions". According to Holmes (2013), feminist stylistics focuses on the linguistic devices and the sphere which surrounds the texts to find out how female writers express women's issues in their writings."

Arikan (2016) adds "a feminist stylistic analysis aims to "read against the grain" and turn the traditional discourses upside down by the power of language. Mills (1995) asserts that a feminist stylistic approach aims to document the ways in which gender differences are represented in texts in order to change the ways that this happen. Mills give a list of possible questions which can be addressed to a text` and states that by this way, it will be possible for any text to be subjected to a

thorough analysis of its representation of gender relations. Feminist stylistics looks at how linguistic devices are capable of signaling the shift from a primarily dichotomous understanding of the notions of maleness and femaleness to a more encompassing definition of 'gender' as non-discerning because these genders do not form homogeneous groups to begin with. It provides a new linguistic perspective to analyze gender and sex problems under current circumstances.

Feminist stylistics seeks to investigate the way text producers employ linguistic feature which specifically project male or female values. It explores the ways in which literature expresses a decidedly female consciousness, by so doing, it tries to formulate an authentic counter- image of women through their writings. Also, stylisticians consider the way readers identify specific gendered meanings in texts. It aims to make explicit some of the untenable assumptions underlying conventional stylistics. In feminist stylistics, it is necessary to analyze the text using a model of meaning and reference quite different from what is used in traditional stylistics. In feminist stylistics, emphasis placed on the interaction between the text and the reader in the production of interpretation, also, the factors beyond the conscious control of both the writer and reader in the analysis is stressed upon.

Ufot (2012) adds "the purpose of this approach to stylistics is to explore the ways in which literature expresses a decidedly female consciousness. In the process, literary art is seen essentially as a medium for the foregrounding of female experiences and the destruction of male stereotypes about women. Feminist stylisticians seek to write the women into relevance". Women are stereotypically presented as sex objects, wife and mothers. At the heart of feminist stylistics is a change in focus of analysis from the strict analysis to an analysis of the factors which determine the meaning of text in its social context. Feminist Stylistics aims to make explicit some of the untenable assumptions underlying conventional stylistics and by not simply adding gender to its

list of interesting elements to analyse, to take stylistics to a new phase. It aims to lead stylistics away from the analysis of the language of texts, as if that language were simply there to an analysis of the socioeconomic factors which have allowed the language to appear or which have determined its appearance or which have determined the type of interpretations of that text which are possible. It also aims to reveal that gender is foregrounded in texts at certain key moments and is usually dealt with in ways which can be speculated. (Mills, 1995)

2.6.2 Theories of Feminist Stylistics

Feminist stylistics, as described by Sarah Mills in *Feminist Stylistics* is a critical analytical approach which is feminist in nature and adopts “linguistic or language analysis in the examination of texts. It aims to develop an awareness of the way gender is handled in texts by combining feminism and stylistics. This theory is not only aimed at addressing sexism but also the way “point of view, agency, metaphor or transitivity are unexpectedly closely related to matters of gender” to discover whether women’s writings can be described and so on (Mills, 2005). Feminist stylistics provides insight and awareness of underlying messages, allowing for a detailed analysis of texts thereby uncovering how texts represents and describe women (Mills, 1998) as cited in (Absalom, 2018).

Sarah Mills proposed a framework for analysis of texts. According to Mills (1995), text can be analysed at three levels:

Analysis at word level: The analysis at this stage focuses on gender bias that can be noticed in the use of individual words or lexical items.

- Generic nouns
- Women as the marked form

- Naming and andocentrism
- The Semantic derogation of women
- Endearment and Diminutives

Analysis at the level of phrase/ sentence

The criteria for analysing texts at this level include:

- Ready-made phrases
- Metaphor
- Jokes and humour
- Transitivity choices

Analysis at the level of discourse: A general discourse theory sees content as something which is the negotiation of textual elements and codes and forces outside the text which influence both the way that text is constructed and the way that text is constructed and the way we decipher what is written(Mills, 2005)

- Characterisation
- Fragmentation
- Focalisation

2.7 Review of Previous Studies

Many scholars have deployed the tools of feminist stylistics as proposed by Sarah Mills to the analysis of various works from various perspectives in different fields of study. A review of these studies would assist the researcher to gain information which is relevant, needed and similar to

this present study. Ufot (2012) in his work “Feminist Stylistics: A Lexico- grammatical Study of the Female Sentence in Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* and Hume- Sotomi’s *The General Wife*” employs the principles of feminist stylisticians such as Sarah Mills, Virginia Woolf, Dredre Burton among others supported by Halliday’s scale and category grammar as its theoretical basis, he evaluates the major lexical and grammatical components of the female sentence. By doing this, he attempts to discover whether it is stylistically different or a deviation from men’s writing which is considered the norm. According to Ufot (2012), Application of feminist stylistics to a text enables the exemplification of the relationship between language and power especially in the way in which language contributes to the patriarchal domination of women in texts. Halliday, the proponent of the model studied and analysed some selected chapters of “*The Inheritors*” written by William Goldings using the transitivity model in 1971.

Iwamoto (2007) carried out an analysis of passage from a short story published in a women’s magazine. He used the transitivity model paying close attention to feminist features in the book. Both qualitative and quantitative research designs were employed in his work. Arikani (2016) in his work, “Angela Carter’s *The Bloody Chamber*: A Feminist Approach” employed Sarah Mills (1995) approach to the analysis of his work. As a female writer deconstructing fairy tales written by males, Carter has subverted the representational male and female characters. In traditional tales, the text contains ideological patriarchal messages and there is almost a direct address to female characters warning them against males, sexuality and liberty. In Carter’s stories, it is different. The addressee is predominantly female and the message is different. Stories written by female for other females differ in style compared with tales written by males for females. His study focused on the “genderlect” and “gendered style” in *The Bloody Chamber*. Three stories narrated by female narrators were chosen for the analysis. These stories narrated from the view of female characters

reveal the idea of female liberation. This work opens a new point of view that operates with free will of female identity which is against internalized submission by women. This is in line with the objectives of feminist stylistics.

Nazima (2008) in his work “Representation of Malay Women in Dina Zaman’s Selected Short Stories: A feminist Stylistics Analysis engaged the tools proposed by Sarah Mills in his analysis. The linguistic features investigated comprise of; naming, transitivity and character/role respectively. From the analysis, it can be deduced that the author has deconstructed the way in which the Malay women characters are portrayed in literary texts.

Williams (2008) in her work “Sexism in Language use: A Feminist Stylistic Analysis of Yejide Kilanko’s *Daughters Who Walk the Path*” explored socially constructed meanings in a literary text and a community of people. Data was analysed using Mills(1995) Reader-Response Examination theory. The result of the analysis revealed that females play an active role in sustaining sex stereotypes and sexist ideologies in the country. Also, sexism in language is largely unnoticed in the society. She recommended that more attention should be paid to implied meanings in language use.

Though, feminist analysis of that is quite prevalent and has been carried out in so many African novels but it was discovered from the earlier discussions that only few employed transitivity analysis which is a major tool in feminist stylistics.

Most of the works focused on analysis at the level of word and at the level of phrase. This study is one of the few to employ transitivity especially in Nigerian novels. Also, this study is different from others because transitivity model is applied to portray the behaviour of the female characters.

This study is restricted to how transitivity model helps to make meaning out of the form of clauses employed by Lola Shoneyin and Chimamanda Adichie and also analysis at the word level.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

2.8.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics

Halliday (1985) states “a language is interpreted as a system of meanings, accompanied by forms through which the meanings can be realized and answer the question, “how are the meanings expressed?” This puts the forms of a language in a different perspective; as a means to an end, rather than as end in themselves. ” SFL developed from this point of view of language.

SFL is based on the model of language as a “social semiotic” as outlined in the works of Halliday. Language is also a social activity which always takes place in a context. The context of situation handles the dimensions of the situation which have a bearing on the language used.

Related to the contextual dimensions, language is interpreted as fulfilling a number of different functions: ideational, interpersonal and textual, in that it enables people to express different types of meaning.

The ideational function provides for the expression of our experiences of the world as the factual or ‘content’ element of what we say. Ideational function is broken down into the experiential and logical functions.

The logical function relates the propositional ideas and elements of these ideas to each other on an equal or subordinate basis. It encompasses relationships of coordination, subordination, apposition, and modification.

The experiential function organizes our experience and understanding of the world. It is involved in construing the flux of experience through the units of the clause.

The interpersonal function mirrors the tenor/ parameters of register and it is introduced in two ways; through verbal interaction and exchanges with others and through personal mediation/modulation of the main ideas/content. Language, as used here, serves to establish and maintain social relations, as found in greetings and various forms of phatic communication.

The textual function allows us to organize what we say or write into a coherent and cohesive piece of text which will both relate to what has already been said and take account of relevant aspects of the context.

2.8.2 The Transitivity Model

Our most powerful impression of experience is that it consists of a flow of events or “goings-on”. This flow of events is chunked into quanta of change by the grammar of the clause; each quantum of change is modeled as a figure – a figure of happening, doing, sensing, saying, being or having. All figures consist of a process unfolding through time and of participants being directly involved in this process in some way and in addition; there may be circumstances of time, space, cause, manner or one of a few other types. These circumstances are not directly involved in the process; rather they are attendant on it. All of such figures are sorted out in the grammar of the clause. The clause, apart from being a mode of action-or rather of interaction, it is also mode of reflection, of imposing linguistic order on our experience of the endless variation and flow of events. The grammatical system by which this is achieved is that of TRANSITIVITY (Halliday, 1967 and Halliday & Mathessen, 1999) as quoted in (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004)

Transitivity refers generally to how meaning is represented in the clause. It shows how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them. It is concerned with the transmission of ideas which is part of the ideational function of language. It carries out this ideational function by expressing processes. Processes can be classified according to whether they represent actions, speech, states of mind or simply states of being (Simpson, 2005).

The transitivity model has proved a popular analytic framework ever since Halliday's influential analysis of William Golding's "*The inheritors*" published in 1971. Halliday's concern was to illustrate how the analysis of transitivity might contribute to an understanding of the particular 'mind- style' projected in a text. It is proposed as one way of analyzing a text's meaning. Although, no single model of language will yield an exhaustive account of textual meaning, however, it would be hard to imagine what an exhaustive account of the meaning of the text would look like if it ignored patterns of transitivity(Montgomery, 1986) as cited in (Simpson, 2004). Transitivity is concerned with "who does what to whom" (Iwamoto, 2008). In simple terms, transitivity analysis is helpful in revealing the participants involved in an action, how they relate to others and if they take an active or passive role in utterance (Nguyen, 2012).

Transitivity system classifies a clause into three components; the process which is realized by the verb phrase; the participants carrying out the process and the circumstances forming the adjunct component of the clause generally expressed by the prepositional and adverbial phrases (Simpson, 2004). The process makes up the nucleus of the clause. Halliday (1994) identifies six process types under transitivity. They include Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioral and Existential.

Material processes are processes of “happenings or doings”. Material processes have two inherent participant roles associated with them. The first of these is the ACTOR, an obligatory element which represents the doer of the action and an optional GOAL which represents the person or entity affected by the process.

Examples

ACTOR	PROCESS	GOAL
Tola	kicked	the ball.

ACTOR	PROCESS
The boy	ran.

Mental processes represent “perception, cognition and affection”. These processes are internalized. Perception processes involves. It involves two participants: a sensor who carries out the process and a phenomenon – what is perceived, thought or felt by the sensor.

Relational processes reflect the relationship of “having” and “being” between the participants. They are further divided into attributive and identifying relational processes.

Attributive category takes two participants – a carrier and an attribute while identifying category also involves two participants; token and a value.

Verbal process represents the act of “saying”. It includes any form of exchange of meaning. The one who speaks is called the sayer and the one who is addressed is termed The TARGET, what is said is termed “VERBIAGE”.

Behavioural processes represent “our outer manifestation of inner workup, the acting out of processes of consciousness and physiological states (Halliday, 1994)”. These processes represent psychological or physiological behaviour and lie between the material and mental processes.

Essential process asserts that something exists. It involves just one participant – the Existent which refers to what exists.

Feminist stylistics is a recent addition to stylistic analyses which has diversely been used to garner stylistic inferences from literary and non- literary texts. It is classified as being a linguistic stylistic method of analysis because it looks at the peculiarities in linguistic features of the texts.

2.9 Character/Roles

Gender is a social construct of sex, it is the interpretation imposed upon human beings. As a result of this, certain qualities and roles are attributed to males and females, these roles and qualities over the years become internalized and manifest through the behavior and beliefs of men and women. Feminists see women as oppressed both by gender inequality and class inequality. This social construction of gender is apparent in what Althusser (1999) refers to as ideological state apparatuses. To Althusser (1999), these apparatuses produce discourses that have power to produce and promote representations of gender.

Characters are made of words; they are not simulacra of humans- they are simply words which the reader has learnt how to construct into a set of ideological messages drawing on her knowledge of the way that texts have been written and continue to be written, and the views which are circulated within society about how women and men are (Mills, 1995).

Male characters are described in terms of their overall appearance. They are discussed in terms of their trustworthiness, their strength and whether the narrator likes them or not (Mills, 1995). They are portrayed as being aggressive and this is considered to be a biological part of being male rather than as a set of characteristics which are acquired in a complex negotiation between the individual and what they hypothesize to be the values of their communities of practice and the wider society (Mills, 1995). Men are referred to with respect to their occupation or profession. Male characters are forceful and direct in speech making.

In describing female characters, a degree of sexual attractiveness and sexual availability is established. Elements which are described for female characters are those which have to be observed when the character is portrayed as an object to be seen. The narrator observes the character without her being aware. Women are not only referred to in terms of their sexuality but also in terms of their relation to others (Mills, 1995). Women tend to describe themselves in terms of their physical and emotional characteristics and they are quite specific about what they want (Mills, 1995). Women are often the recipient of action, they are the vehicle through which a problem is solved.

Roles given to women are determined by the stereotypes of what women are like; they are concerned with emotions rather than actions, relegated to the private sphere and the values associated with that sphere rather than the public sphere. Women are seen as an attachment of males rather than characters in their own right.

Characters and roles for women and men in fiction and other arenas are informed by stereotypes of what is appropriate according to gender norms, though, this is restricting on women in particular, since they are restricted to inactivity, sexual attractiveness among others (Mills, 1995).

CHAPTER THREE

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

3.1 Data Analysis of Lola Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* processes

Excerpts related to the topic of the research are extracted from the novel. Shoneyin allows the female characters in the novel to share their experiences themselves by employing the first person narrative technique. Each character is given a chapter in the novel to relate his/ her experiences. The selected excerpts are chosen from chapters dedicated to female characters in the novel.

Excerpt One: Iya Segi

I was an enormous child. My mother said I made her back curve like a cat’s tail. By the time I was eighteen, Ishola, who would be my future husband had gone to Ibadan to be a bricklayer’s apprentice. I had become quite adept at making fufu and like my mother, I had a stash of money under my mattress. But, it was a small mattress in a small room, in a tiny two-bed house. I troubled Mama about getting my own quarters; I was tired of squeezing past her at every doorway....My money grew until I had to hide it in old water pots in my room. ...My fingers liked the feel of money. My eyes liked to see the piles of money swell. I worshipped money.

Datum 1: I was an enormous child

I	was	an enormous child
Identified: female	relational	Identifier

Datum 2: My mother said I made her back curve like a cat’s tail

My mother	Said	I made her back curve like a cat’s tail.
Sayer	Proc: Verbal	Verbiage

Iya Segi assumes the role of the identified here. An analysis of the verbiage shows that she is a huge woman, quite fierce, determined and a force to reckon with. Not just huge in size, but a hugely wealthy woman. By making use of the first person singular, “I”, Iya Segi is presented as a woman who is bold and courageous.

Datum 3: I never knew my father.

I	never knew	My father
Senser: female	Proc: mental	Phenomenon

Datum 4: I had become quite adept at making fufu.

I	had become	quite adept at making fufu
Senser: female	Proc: mental	Phenomenon

She was raised by her mother alone. Her father left before she was born. This made her mother a tough woman and this influenced the way she raised her child.

Datum 5: I troubled Mama about getting my own quarters

I	Troubled	Mama	about getting my own quarters
Actor: female	Proc: material	Goal	Circ: reason

The material process “troubled” is used here to show how much Iya Segi craved for independence. She wants to have a house of her own and show the men how much a woman could achieve without depending on the menfolk. Iya Segi is used by the writer to pass across to the reader the importance of financial freedom to women.

Datum 6: I was tired of squeezing past her at every doorway.

I	was tired	of squeezing past her	at every doorway
Senser: female	proc: mental	Phenomenon	Circ: location

Datum 7: My fingers like the feel of money

My fingers	Like	the feel of money
Senser: female	proc: mental	Phenomenon

Unlike the other women who depend on their husband for survival, Iya Segi “likes” to make her own money. She works to spend. If not for the way the society views unmarried women, she would not have got married and would have concentrated on her business instead.

Datum 8: I worshipped money

I	Worshipped	Money
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Senser: female	Proc: mental	Phenomenon
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My fingers, here represents Iya Segi, a businesswoman right from a very young age. She is a career-driven woman, who rocked the same boat with men. She trained under the tutelage of her mother, independent and loved business. “I” as used here represents Iya Segi, an assertive woman who values money over everything. Unlike the typical African woman, Iya Segi represents the modern woman who knows the importance of being independent.

Datum 9: The other wives do not offend me

The other wives	do not offend	Me
Actor: female	Proc: material	Goal

The other wives are the actors here. Iya Segi is pleased with them because they follow her orders and do not pose a threat to her ambitions. She got married just to follow her money. She never loved her husband but married him to please her mother and to safeguard her wealth which was given out to Baba Segi by Iya Segi’s mother.

Datum 10: They are like humble maidservants.

They	Are	like humble maidservants
Identified: female	Proc: relational	Identifier

Datum 11: They know I am the true provider.

They	Know	I am the true provider
Sayer: female	Proc: Verbal	Verbiage

Datum 11: The wives are likened to humble maidservants. Being housewives, the other wives, apart from Bolanle rely on Iya Segi for their livelihood. Being the first wife, Iya Segi is in charge of the home and oversees the affair of the home. She distributes the monthly provisions to Iya Tope and Iya Femi and rules the house as she so wishes.

Datum 12: My husband only thinks he controls the household

My husband	Only thinks	He controls the household
Senser: male	Proc: mental	Phenomenon

Baba Segi, the senser, here performs a mental internalized process. He believes he dominates and rules his household. He even boasts of this to others. Unfortunately, he is just a puppet who is used by his wives to achieve their aims and satisfy their whims.

Datum 13: I let him believe he does.

I	Let	Him	Believe	he does
Actor: female	Proc: material	Recipient	Proc: mental	Phenomenon

Datum 13: Iya Segi, the actor here carries out a material process. Since she is not allowed to control the home as a woman, she manipulates her husband to her will. She ensures he does as she wishes.

Datum 14: I want him to believe that he does

I	Want	Him	to believe	that he does
Actor: female	Proc: material	Goal	Proc: mental	Phenomenon

Datum 15: I am the only one who keeps the household together

I	am	the one who keeps the household together
Carrier: female	Proc: relational	Attribute

Datum 16: I allow them.

I	Allow	them
Actor: female	Proc: material	Recipient

Datum 17: I alone can approve vengeance.

I alone	can approve	vengeance
Actor: female	Proc: material	Goal

In datum 14 – 17, Shoneyin employs an authorial tone. The continuous use of “I” indicates how highly she thinks of herself above everyone. Being the first wife, she is second in command in the house. She is feared and respected by the other wives except for Bolanle. She believes she is superior to everyone including her husband.

Excerpt Two: Iya Tope

Just when the sun began its journey into the tree tops, my father summoned me. I was surprised to find him and Baba Segi sitting together, their arms touching as they drained the bottle of Schnapps that was normally only sipped at weddings and funerals. my father told me to bring the food in and I returned with a wide tray. But as I stooped at the doorframe, the men stopped talking. Baba Segi inspected me as I placed the plates on a low stool and fetched cool water from the earthen pot. He examined my face as I poured it into two plastic cups. My father watched him watching me....

Taju threw my belongings in the back....I sat between the two men in the pick-up and stared ahead at roads. I had never travelled before....In the middle of all this noise, Baba Segi asked me if I was happy about being his wife. I couldn't utter a single word. I wanted to say something. I should have said something but I couldn't. . Just before I left, I went to the father's hut and stood by the door. I didn't need to say anything; the same way he didn't need to look at me. 'I have made my decision and it's final,' he said

Datum 18: Just when the sun its journey into tree tops, my father summoned me

Just when the sun its journey into tree tops	my father	summoned	me
circ: time	actor	Proc: material	goal

Datum 19: As I stooped at the doorframe, the men stopped talking

as I stooped at the doorframe	the men	Stopped talking
Circ: time	Actor: male	Proc: material

Datum 20: Baba Segi inspected me as I placed the plates on the low stool.

Baba Segi	Inspected	Me	as I placed the plates on the low stool.
Actor: male	Proc: material	Goal	Circ: time

Datum 21: I fetched cool water from the earthen pot.

I	Fetched	cool water	from the earthen pot.
Actor: female	Proc: material	Goal	Circ: place

Datum 22: He examined my face as I poured it into two plastic cups.

He	Examined	My face	as I poured it into two plastic cups
Actor: male	Proc: material	Goal	Circ: time

Datum 23: My father watched him watching me

My father	Watched	Him	watching	Me
Behaver	Proc: behavioural	Behaviour	Proc: material	Goal

In datum 19-23, verbs such as examined, inspected, watched are employed to express the actions of the senser, Baba Segi. Just as he examines his goods before purchasing them, he takes a look at his newly possessed wife to ensure he was not given damaged goods.

Datum 24: Taju threw my belongings in the back.

Taju	Threw	My belongings	In the back
Actor: male	Proc: material	Goal	Circ:place

Datum 24: The verb “threw” is employed by the writer to show how lowly, Baba Segi’s driver, Taju, thinks of Iya Tope. Just as Baba Segi regards her as a commodity, he treats her the same way.

Datum 25: I stared ahead at the road

I	Stared	Ahead	at the road
Behaver	Proc: behavioural	Circ: place	Circ: place

The behaver here is a female character , Iya Tope who performs a behavioural process of watching.

Datum 26: Baba Segi asked me if I was happy being his wife.

Baba Segi	Asked	Me	if I was happy being his wife
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Sayer	Proc: verbal	Receiver	Verbiage
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Datum 27: I couldn't utter a single word.

I	couldn't utter	a single word
Sayer	Proc: verbal	Verbiage

In datum 25-27, Baba Segi asks his newly possessed wife how glad she was even though she was given out in marriage by her father without seeking her consent. Typical of Iya Tope, she could not find words to express herself.

Datum 28: Just before I left, I went to the father's hut and stood by the door

Just before I left	I	Went	To the father's hut	and	Stood	by the door
Circ: time	Actor: female	Proc: material	Circ: place		Proc: material	Circ: place

Datum 29: I have made my decision and it's final.

I	have made	My decision
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Senser: male	Proc: mental	Phenomenon
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Shoneyin tries to portray the male characters as villains. One of such is Iya Tope's father who gave out his daughter as compensation for failed crops. The verb "have made" shows Iya Tope being a woman is not considered when decisions are made, even when the decisions affect her.

Excerpt Three: Bolanle

Bolanle sat up in bed. Pretending to be startled, she rubbed her eyes and turned to acknowledge the looming silhouette by her bedroom door. Baba Segi's large form was curled inwards like a boxing glove. He reached for the doorframe and rapped it with his fingernails, "Where did you read that a wife should leave the room when her husband is ailing?" he asked., as if Bolanle's education meant her every action was dictated by a manual. He didn't come in, nor did he close the door. He wanted every ghost that stalked the corridor to bear witness to her unseemliness....

Bolanle was determined to deny him the pleasure of hurting her feelings. She lifted the bowl from her bedside table and pushed it towards his face so he got a full view of the rich oxblood clay. Baba Segi glanced at the bowl and winced. .

Datum 30: Bolanle sat up in bed.

Bolanle	sat up	in bed
Actor: female	Proc: material	Circ: place

Datum 31: Pretending to be startled, she rubbed her eyes and turned to acknowledge the looming silhouette by her bedroom door.

Pretending to be startled	she	Rubbed	her eyes	and	turned to acknowledge	the looming silhouette	by her bedroom door
Circ: manner	Actor: female	Proc: material	recipient		Proc: material	Recipient	Circ: place

In datum 30 and 31, Bolanle is labeled as the actor who performs an action firstly on her eyes which serves as the goal and then on Baba Segi, her husband. Bolanle, the quiet but bold woman would not allow Baba Segi intimidate her. She behaves as if he is not there to show she does not threatened by his presence.

Datum 32: Baba Segi’s large form was curled inwards like a boxing glove

Baba Segi's large form	was curled	Inwards	like a boxing glove
Behaver	Behavioural process	Circ: place	Circ: manner

Datum 33: He reached for the doorframe and rapped it with his fingernails.

He	Reached	for the doorframe	And	Rapped	It	with his fingernails
Actor:male	Proc: material	Goal		Proc: material	Goal	Circ: manner

The verb “rap” means a quick light hit and it is employed to show the kind of disregard Baba Segi has for the occupier of the room. Baba Segi could have knocked on the door which is quite the polite thing to do but he rapped it with his fingernails. He considers her insignificant.

Datum 34: “Where did you read that a wife should leave the room when the husband is ailing?” he asked

“Where did you read that a wife should leave the room when the husband is ailing?”	He	Asked
Verbiage	Sayer	Proc:Verbal

Datum 35: He wanted every ghost that stalked to bear witness to her unseemliness.

He	Wanted	every ghost that stalked to bear witness to her unseemliness
Senser	Proc: mental	Phenomenon

In datum 34- 35, Bolanle considers herself important and at times, she doesn't engage herself in what the other wives do. While the other wives rallied around him when he threw up, she left the scene. Baba Segi was not pleased with this, he considers it as an impolite behaviour.

Datum 36: Bolanle was determined to deny him the pleasure of hurting her feelings

Bolanle	Was determined	to deny him the pleasure of hurting her feelings
Senser	Proc: mental	Phenomenon

Datum 37: She lifted the bowl and pushed it towards his face so he got a full view of the rich oxblood clay.

She	Lifted	the bowl	And	pushed	It	towards	so he got a full view of his face
Actor: female	proc: material	Goal		Proc: material	Goal	Circ: place	Circ: reason

In datum 36-37, the verbs “determined”, “ lifted” and “ pushed” are employed by the writer to show how prepared Bolanle was to get back at her husband.

Datum 38: Baba Segi glanced at the bowl and winced.

Baba Segi	Glanced	at the bowl	And	Wincing
Senser	Mental process	phenomenon		Mental process

The senser, Baba Segi, unhappy with what he saw expresses a sign of disapproval. This pleases Bolanle. Contrary to what exists in African novels where the women are portrayed as meek characters and weaklings, the characters in this novel are bold, assertive, daunting and submissive. They are not easily unnerved. Bolanle, the only educated wife of Baba Segi and a fourth wife at that would not allow herself to be an object of ridicule in the hands of Baba Segi. Baba Segi considers his wives as part of his possession, he believes he owns them and treats them as such. He humiliates his wives and derogates them at will. Bolanle has a way of getting back at him and in the end, she wins.

Excerpt Four: Iya Femi

Since the day my uncle sold me, this was the first time Grandma hadn't been able to send me on errands. I soon began to believe that I too had dropped from between a woman's legs! While her husband and her children spent their days by her side in a private hospital, I He was supplying the plumbing materials and he looked powerful yet kind in his yellow safety helmet. I offered him Grandma's precious boiled water. He accepted it and thanked me. The next day he brought me a basket of oranges. It was Taju who delivered them. I didn't waste time in telling Taju I was looking for a man to marry me. I was desperate. I didn't want Grandma to come and find me there wandered beyond our fence. There was a new house being built across the road and hat is where I met Baba Segi.

Datum 39: Since the day my uncle sold me, this was the first time Grandma hadn't been able to send me on errands

Since the day my uncle sold me	This	Was	the first time Grandma hadn't been able to send me on errands
Circ: time	Carrier	Proc: Relational	Attribute

Iya Tope, Baba Segi's fourth wife was sold into slavery by her uncle after her father's death. Women are considered inferior and they are not allowed to inherit their father's properties. This is the case of Iya Tope whose parents died when she was young. Being the only child and a female at that, her Uncle believes she has no right to her parents' properties and to achieve this, he cunningly sends her off to work as a maid in Ibadan.

Datum 40: I soon began to believe that I too had dropped from between a woman's legs

I	soon	began to believe	that I too had dropped from between a woman's legs
Senser	Circ: time	Proc: Mental	Phenomenon

This is her first time of experiencing freedom having being maltreated for a long time by her boss.

Datum 41: While her husband and her children spent their days by her side in a private hospital

While her husband and her children	spent	their days	by her side	in a private hospital
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Actor	Proc: material	Circ: time	Circ: place	Circ: place
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Datum 42: I wandered beyond our fence

I	Wandered	beyond our fence
Actor	Proc: Material	Circ: place

The maid experiences freedom for the first time and this is because, her boss is sick and she is being attended to in a hospital. “Wandered” as used here means to walk aimlessly around. Someone who experiences freedom for the first time is bound to act like this. Her boss, Grandma maltreats her a lot and she is confined to the just their home except when she is sent on errand.

Datum 43: There was a new house being built across the road

There	Was	a new house being built across the road
Carrier	Proc: relational	Attribute

Datum 44: That is where I met Baba Segi

That	Is	where I met Baba Segi
Carrier	Proc: relational	Circ:place

Datum 45: He was supplying the plumbing materials

He	was supplying	the plumbing materials
Actor	Proc: material	Goal

In datum 43 -45, Iya Tope narrates how she met her husband, Baba Segi, a rich businessman who engages in supplying building materials to construction sites.

Datum 46: He looked powerful yet kind in his yellow safety helmet.

He	looked	powerful yet kind	in his yellow safety helmet
Carrier	Proc: relational	Attribute	Circ: place

The carrier is Baba Segi. He is described as a powerful man and also kind.

Datum 47: I offered him Grandma’s precious boiled water

I	offered	him	Grandma’s precious boiled water
Actor	Proc: material	recipient	Goal

"Offered" was used here to show that the female character made the proposal to Baba Segi. She needed a favour from him and for this reason, she gave him Grandma's precious water which she was not allowed to drink being a maid in the house. The narrator understands that the water would taste better compared to just the ordinary tap water.

Datum 48: He accepted it and thanked me.

He	Accepted	It	And	thanked	Me
Actor	Proc: material	Goal		Proc: material	Goal

Datum 49: The next day he brought me a basket of oranges

The next day	He	brought	Me	a basket of oranges
Circ:time	Actor	Proc: material	recipient	Goal

The actor, here, Baba Segi is satisfied with her gesture and he reciprocates by buying her a basket of oranges. This shows he is really a nice and caring man. He really knows how to win a woman's heart

Datum 50: It was Taju who delivered them.

It	Was	Taju who delivered them
Carrier	Proc: relational	Attribute

Taju , the actor here is Baba Segi’s driver.

Datum 51: I didn’t waste time in telling Taju I was looking for a man to marry me

I	didn’t waste	Time	in telling	Taju	I was looking for a man to marry me
Actor	Proc: material	Goal	Proc: material	recipient	Goal

Having being maltreated and denied of her rights for quite a long time, Iya Tope desires freedom by all means and quickly before grandma returns home even if it means getting married to an unknown person. This shows how maids are being subjected to ill- treatment by their boss just because they have no one to come to their rescue.

Datum 52: I was desperate

I	Was	Desperate
Identifier	Proc: relational	Identified

Iya Tope was desperate to get out of the situation her uncle put her in. She was sold into slavery at a very young age and has spent twelve years of her life serving the Adeigbe’s household. She needs to get out of there and start a life of her own. “Desperate” as used here means to be in dire need of something. Having suffered for many years, Iya Tope is in dire need of freedom. She needs to get out of the situation her uncle put her in. She was sold into slavery at a very young age and

has spent twelve years of her life serving the Adeigbe's household. She needs to get out of there and start a life of her own and she can only do that then when everyone is not at home. This shows she is a determined person and quite manipulative as well.

Process Types found in *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives*

Process Type	Material	Mental	Relational	verbal	Behavioural
Frequency	30	12	7	4	2

3.2 Discussion

55% of the processes are material processes, 22% are mental processes, 13% are relational processes, 7% are verbal processes while 3% are behavioural processes. By making use of selective linguistic choices as demonstrated in the transitivity analysis, Shoneyin challenges the stereotypical representation of the female gender in her novel. There is a rich representation of the female gender, though, patriarchy and oppression of women are also observed in the novel. The men act more while the women are the receiver of their actions.

The male characters in the novel engage more in concrete and physical actions. The men perform the role of the actor while the women are the receiver of their actions. The women are actively involved in mental processes and relational processes which are more of feelings and thoughts. They communicate with their thoughts, they communicate without speaking. They know their strength and use it to their advantage. Amongst themselves, they control the home. They use their whims to manipulate decisions made in the home.

The first wife, Iya Segi is presented as a successful business woman. She sells cement, a business which is felt to be meant for the menfolk. Bolanle, the fourth wife would not subject herself to ridicule and humiliation by a man. Contrary to custom where the man chooses a woman, Bolanle chooses Baba Segi because she needs a place to heal. "She describes herself as an empty shell who married Baba Segi to heal and find herself" Shoneyin(2010). Iya Femi also does the same thing. She chooses Baba Segi because she needed freedom and a place of refuge. Baba Segi, the major male character and their husband is made a laughing stock in the novel. Iya Tope despite being given as a peace offering to Baba Segi stays because she wants to. She prefers Baba Segi's home to the village. The women, by engaging more in mental cognitive processes than other processes which means that they are actively in control of their thoughts, feelings and actions. They engage in lesser material processes, which is quite understandable considering the society they find themselves.

Male supremacy and patriarchy is observed in the novel. The male character, Baba Segi is an arrogant man who feels he is superior to his wives. He is recognized as the head of the family while his wives are regarded as his subordinates. He believes the man provides for the family while the women take care of the home and children. Baba Segi believes the women perform no other role than this. He subjects his wives to verbal abuse especially those that are yet to give birth. They are ridiculed and humiliated and are also emotionally traumatized.

In addition, the women are used as a form of exchange for marriage purposes. The women are downgraded and reduced to commodities that are used for exchange purposes. The rights of the female characters are trampled upon in the novel.

The story reveals the idea of women liberation which modern feminist writers are trying to depict. Shoneyin opens the way to a new point of view that operates with free will of female identity in the novel. She tries to reconstruct the identity of African women in her novel which is in line with the objective of feminist stylistics.

3.3 Analysis at Word Level

3.3.1 Generic nouns and pronouns

1. Your barrenness brings shame to me” (p.14)
2. They would have been more than ten now if this woman’s womb was not hostile to my seed.(p.37)

In sentences 1 and 2, the pronouns, “your” and “this” are stereotypically used to refer to a female character in the text. The use of “your” in this sentence shows he believes that his wife is solely responsible for their inability to have children whereas it could be the fault of either the man or woman. Also, “this” is used to refer to Bolanle’s womb as if the womb on its own without the effort of the man can bring forth children. The pronouns are used in a gender-specific way here and also in a derogatory manner to the female gender.

3. The world has no patience for spinsters (pg.10)

The word “spinster” is used in a negative and derogatory manner in this sentence. Spinster refers to a woman who is no longer young and seems unlikely ever to marry. Unfortunately, the male alternative doesn’t have the same connotation. Spinsters are considered as women who are sad lonely and do not aspire to be great in life. They are scorned at in the society. The African society is of the belief that a woman is created just to get married and bring forth children.

4. My wives do not visit my workplace. They are well taken care of, they have no reason to trouble me.

Shoneyin presents the male character as a chauvinistic arrogant polygamist who is so full of himself. By employing the pronoun “my”, the wives are reduced to possessions owned and managed by the man of the house. He is a proud polygamist who takes pride in marrying many wives. Just as it is expected of an African man, he caters for the needs of his family and confines his wives to the home. “They” as used here doesn’t include Baba Segi. It is used in a gender-specific way to refer to just the female characters in the novel.

3.3.2 Semantic Derogation of women

Here, the use of demeaning and insulting words towards women in the novel is looked at.

Baba Segi on several occasions insults his wives.

1. Doctor , when you buy rotten guavas in the marketplace, you cannot open every single one to check for rottenness...”(pg. 39)
2. “...Baba Segi asked me what was wrong with my womb.” If your father has sold me a rotten fruit, it will be returned to him” (Shoneyin, 2010)’.

In sentences 1 and 2, the women are referred to as rotten fruits. Rotten means something completely destroyed or decayed. Baba Segi believes a woman who cannot procreate is useless and she is of no value in the home. The woman’s purpose in the home is to give birth to children and look after the house.

3. “I took a second wife, a peace offering from a desperate farmer.

The verb “took” is employed by Shoneyin to reflect how lowly Baba Segi thinks of his wives. The wife was given to him in exchange for a bad harvest. She was used to appeal to him, to seek for his favour. The woman has no say in the marriage. A peace offering is used to procure peace, Iya Tope was used by her father to appease Baba Segi.

4. She is a mere wife, and the fourth one at that.

“Mere” is used as an adjective to describe a female character here. “Mere” as used here means just only, nothing worthy. The women are seen as objects of no value and importance, they are not recognized by the male characters in the text.

5. Doctor , when you buy rotten guavas in the marketplace, you cannot open every single one to check for rottenness...”(pg. 39)

“Rotten” as used here refers to a female character in the text. “Rotten” means something spoilt, badly damaged or decayed. This word as used here refers to women who are unable to procreate. This diminishes and belittles the women. A woman who has no child is referred to as a damaged woman, a woman of no importance or usefulness and she is mocked at in the society.

3.3.3 Naming and Andocentrism

Names are represented from a masculine point of view and in accordance with stereotypical beliefs about the sexes. Also, women’s experiences are viewed from the male point of view. We have instances in the novel.

1. “A daughter can never be like a son”, he said.

It is clear that Baba Segi believes the male child is more useful and valuable than the female child. “Can never” is used here to show the male character believes adamantly that a daughter cannot be compared to a son. The African culture is of belief that the female child’s place is the home and she has no place in the society. The female child is insignificant while the male child is glorified and placed in an exalted position in the society.

2. Only a son can become a true heir.
3. This is not your house and it will never be. A girl cannot inherit her father’s house.

In sentences, 2-3, Shoneyin (2010) buttresses the stereotypical presupposition that women cannot inherit their father’s properties and do not possess the leadership qualities needed to lead the home. The heir can only be a male while the women are subordinates in their homes. The male characters believe male children are superior to the female ones.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Data Analysis of Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*

Let me stay in the car and wait, biko," Mama said, leaning against the Mercedes door. "I feel vomit in my throat."

Papa turned to stare at her. I held my breath. It seemed a long moment, but it might have been only seconds.

"Are you sure you want to stay in the car?" Papa asked

Mama was looking down; her hands were placed on her belly, to hold the wrapper from untying itself or to keep her bread and tea breakfast down. "My body does not feel right," she mumbled.

"I asked if you were sure you wanted to stay in the car."

Mama looked up. "I'll come with you. It's really not that bad."

Papa's face did not change. He waited for to walk towards him, and then he turned and they started to walk to the priest's house. Jaja and I followed.(Adichie, 2003)

Aunty Ifeoma came the next day, in the evening, ...Her laughter floated upstairs into the living room, where I sat reading, but I would know that cackling, hearty cackling sound anywhere. I had not heard it in two years. Aunty Ifeoma was as tall as Papa, with a well -proportioned body. She walked fast, like one who knew just where she was going and what she was going to do there. And

she spoke the way she walked, as if to get as many words out of her mouth as she could in the shortest time.

“Eugene,” Aunty Ifeoma called out. “I was saying that Jaja and Kambili should spend some time with me and the children tomorrow.”

Papa grunted and kept walking to the door.

Every time Aunty Ifeoma spoke to Papa, my heart stopped, then started again in a hurry. It was the flippant tone ; she did not seem to recognize that it was Papa ,that he was different, special.

“Where do you want to take them?” Papa asked, standing by the door.

“Just to look around.”

“Sightseeing?” Papa asked. He spoke English, while Aunty Ifeoma spoke Igbo

“Eugene, let the children come with us!” Aunty Ifeoma sounded irritated; her voice was slightly raised...

Okay. They can go with you, but you know I do not want my children near anything ungodly. If you drive past mmuo, keep your windows up.

“I have heard you, Eugene,” Aunty Ifeoma said with an exaggerated formality.

“Why don’t we all have lunch on Christmas day?” Papa asked.

“The children can spend some time together then.”

“You know that the children and I spend Christmas day with their Papa-Nnukwu.”

“What do idol- worshippers know about Christmas?”

“Eugene...” Aunty Ifeoma took a deep breath.” Okay, the children and I will come on Christmas day.”

Papa had gone back downstairs, and I was still sitting on the sofa, watching Aunty Ifeoma talk to Mama when my cousins arrived. Amaka was a thinner, teenage copy of her mother

She walked and talked even faster and with more purpose than Aunty Ifeoma did. Only her eyes were different; they did not have the unconditional warmth of Aunty Ifeoma’s. They were quizzical eyes, eyes that asked many questions and did not accept many answers.

Datum 1: “Let me stay in the car and wait, biko”, Mama said, leaning against the Mercedes door.

Let me stay in the car and wait, biko,	Mama	Said	leaning against the Mercedes door
Verbiage	Sayer: female	Proc: verbal	Circ: place

Datum 2: I feel vomit in my throat.

I	Feel	Vomit	in my throat.
Senser	Proc: Mental	Phenomenon	Circ: place

In datum 1-2, Beatrice, Eugene’s wife is the sayer. She is the subject of the clause. She performs a verbal process of saying. She complains about her condition to her husband, Eugene.

Datum 3: Papa turned to stare at her.

Papa	Turned	to stare	At her
Actor: male	Material process		Goal

Datum 4: Are you sure you want to stay back in the car?" Papa asked.

Are you sure you want to stay back in the car?"	Papa	asked
Verbiage	Sayer	Verbal process

Eugene is the subject of the clause, ‘turned’ is classified as the material process of doing. The goal here is his wife, Beatrice. Eugene is known to be a strict father and husband and also, a religious fanatic who doesn’t joke with his religious obligations. In this excerpt, the Eugene’s family intends to visit the church priest, a tradition of the family. Beatrice, his wife is pregnant and this has affected her health negatively. She needs rest but her husband, Eugene would not allow her stay back in the car. He feels it is a desecration of faith.

Datum 5: “My body does not feel right,” she mumbled.

“My body does not feel right	She	mumbled
Verbiage	Sayer	Verbal process

Here, Beatrice “mumbled” instead of speaking aloud because she is afraid of her husband. She is a submissive and passive character.

Datum 6: "I asked if you wanted to stay in the car."

I	Asked	if you wanted to stay in the car
Sayer	Verbal process	Verbiage

"Asked" is used as a form of emphasis here. He knows she is aware of the repercussion of not following him. There is an implied meaning in the word. Not following him could lead to being beaten or dealt with at home. He asks a logical question with an indifferent tone to show how uncaring he is.

Datum 7: Mama looked up.

Mama	Looked	up
Actor	Material process: female	Circ: place

Datum 8: "I'll come with you."

I	will come	with you
Actor: female	Material process	Circ: place

Datum 9: "It's really not that bad"

It	Is	really not that bad
Carrier	relational process	Attribute

In datum 7-9, knowing the type of husband she has, she looked up and resolved to follow him despite not feeling fine. Eugene dislikes people going against his rules and members of his family are harshly punished for doing this. Beatrice decides to follow him to avoid his punishment.

Datum 10: Papa's face did not change

Papa's face	did not change
Actor: male	Material process

Datum 11: He waited for her to walk towards him...

He	Waited	for her	to walk towards him
Actor: male	Material process	Goal	Circ: reason

Datum 12: Jaja and I followed.

Jaja and I	followed
Actor	Material process

In datum 10- 12, verbs such as did not change and waited are employed by the writer to show how dogmatic Eugene could be. He did not allow his wife stay back, though he never forced her but he manipulated her into following him to the priest’s house despite her ill-health.

Datum 13: Aunty Ifeoma came the next day, in the evening.

Aunty Ifeoma	Came	the next day	in the evening
Actor: female	Material process	circ: time	Circ: time

Datum 14: Her laughter floated upstairs into the living room where I sat reading.

Her laughter	Floated	upstairs	into the living room where I sat reading
Actor: female	Material process	Circ: place	Circ: place

In datum 13 and 14, Aunty Ifeoma is described as an interesting character everyone would love to be with. Someone like Kambili who lives in awe of fear of her father envies aunty Ifeoma. She has a huge impact on Kambili who sees her as a role model. “Floated” as used here means her voice

could be heard everywhere in the room. This buttresses the point that she is lively, jovial and high-spirited. This is quite different from what obtains in Eugene’s household where people talk in subdued tone.

Datum 15: But I would know that cackling, hearty cackling sound anywhere.

I	would know	that cackling, hearty cackling sound	anywhere
Senser	Mental process	Phenomenon	Circ: place

Datum 16: I had not heard it in two years

I	had not heard	it	in two years
Senser	Mental process	Phenomenon	Circ: time

Datum 17: Aunty Ifeoma was as tall as Papa, with a well -proportioned body

Aunty Ifeoma	Was	as tall as Papa	with a well -proportioned body
Identifying	Relational process	Identifier	Circ: manner

In datum 15- 17, the writer gives a description of Aunty Ifeoma, Eugene’s sister. She is not only tall and huge, she is bold and daring. She is a stark contrast of her brother, Eugene.

Datum 18: “Eugene,” Aunty Ifeoma called out.

Eugene	Aunty Ifeoma	called out
Verbiage	Sayer	Verbal process

Datum 19: I was saying that Jaja and Kambili should spend some time with me and the children tomorrow.

I	was saying	that Jaja and Kambili should spend some time with me and the children tomorrow.
Sayer	verbal process	Verbiage

In datum 19, the sayer is a female character who performs a verbal process of saying to someone else. Here, Aunt Ifeoma tries to implore Eugene to allow his children go out with their cousins even though she knows Eugene would not agree. Being a strong-willed lady, she never gives up.

Datum 20: Papa grunted and kept walking to the door

Papa	Grunted	and	kept walking	to the door
Senser	Mental process		Material process	Circ: place

“Grunted” means to speak in low rough voice, showing that you do not want to have a conversation. Eugene knows Aunty Ifeoma is not like every other person who gets easily

intimidated and that is why he pretends as if he never heard her. He tries to avoid having a conversation with her because he knows she would not succumb until he grants her request.

Datum 21: Every time Aunty Ifeoma spoke to Papa, my heart stopped, then started again in a hurry.

Every time	Aunty Ifeoma	spoke	to Papa	my heart	stopped	then	started again	in a hurry
Circ: time	Sayer	Verbal process	Goal	Senser	Mental process		Mental process	Circ: manner

Aunty Ifeoma speaks in a carefree tone, not bothered about who she was addressing. Kambili is surprised because everyone in the family and even members of the society revere their father and address him with utmost respect.

Datum 22: It was the flippant tone

It	Was	the flippant tone
Identifier	Relational process	Identified

“Flippant” as used here means not being serious about something that other people think you should be serious about, so that they think you do not care. Kambili, the narrator expects Aunty Ifeoma to be cautious of the fact that the person she is discussing with is Eugene, the most revered person who is feared by all. Rather, Aunty Ifeoma talks and acts in a carefree manner with Eugene.

Datum 23: She did not seem to recognize that it was Papa

She	did not seem to recognize	that it was Papa
Senser	Mental process	Phenomenon

Datum 24: That he was different, special

He	Was	different
Identifier: male	Relational process	Identified

In datum 21-24, the narrator believes Aunty Ifeoma is not aware of who Eugene is or how ruthless Eugene could be. Eugene is considered a very important personality, a modernist whom everyone considers as a role model.

Datum 25: “Where do you want to take them?” Papa asked, standing by the door.

Where do you want to take them?	Papa	asked	standing	by the door
Verbiage	Sayer: male	Verbal process	Material process	Circ: place

Datum 26: “Sightseeing?” Papa asked.

Sightseeing?	Papa	asked
Verbiage	Sayer: male	Verbal process

Datum 27: He spoke English

He	spoke	English
Sayer: male	Verbal process	Goal

He tries as much as possible to associate himself with the British and distances himself from his African roots as much as possible because he believes he is a modernist. Because of this, he prefers to converse in English language.

Datum 28: While Aunty Ifeoma spoke Igbo

Aunty Ifeoma	spoke	Igbo
Sayer : female	Verbal process	Goal

Aunty Ifeoma is a liberal person who adores her culture and the native language. Despite being a Professor, she speaks her native language at every given opportunity. She is quite different from her brother.

Datum 29: “Eugene, let the children come with us!” Aunty Ifeoma sounded irritated

Eugene, let the children come with us	Aunty Ifeoma	sounded	irritated
Verbiage	Sayer	Verbal process	Circ: manner

Datum 30: Her voice was slightly raised...

Her voice	was slightly raised
Senser	Mental process

Aunty Ifeoma despite being a gentle person is frustrated and this makes her raise her voice at her brother.

Datum 31: They can go with you

They	can go	with you
Actor	Material process	Goal

Eugene eventually gives in to her demand. Ifeoma is quite manipulative and would not give up until her request is granted.

Datum 32: but you know I do not want my children near anything ungodly

You	Know	I do not want my children near anything ungodly
Senser	Mental process	Phenomenon

Datum 33: If you drive past mmuo, keep your windows up.

If you drive past mmuo,	Keep	your windows up
Circ: place	Material process	Goal

“Know” as used in datum 32 indicates here that Eugene expects everyone around him to know how he likes things to be done. He doesn’t engage in things he considers ungodly and would not allow his children do such things. To drive home his point, he orders them Ifeoma to keep her car windows up in datum 33. This buttresses the point that he is a religious fanatic.

Datum 34: “I have heard you, Eugene,” Aunty Ifeoma said with an exaggerated formality.

“I have heard you, Eugene,”	Aunty Ifeoma	said	with an exaggerated formality.
Verbiage	Sayer	Verbal process	Circ: manner

Datum 35: “Why don’t we all have lunch on Christmas day?” Papa asked.

Why don't we all have lunch on Christmas day?	Papa	asked
Verbiage	Sayer	verbal process

Datum 36: The children can spend some time together then.

The children	can spend	some time	together	then
Actor	Material process	Goal	Circ: place	Circ: time

In datum 35- 36, Eugene tries as much as possible to ensure his children do not follow his sister, Ifeoma. He believes Ifeoma is not a perfectionist and modernist like him because she believes in the religion of their father and the tradition of the people which he detests and he believes she still engages in some things she believes are contradictory to Christianity religion.

Datum 37: You know that the children and I spend Christmas day with their Papa-Nnukwu.

You	know	that the children and I spend Christmas day with their Papa-Nnukwu.
Sayer	verbal process	Verbiage

Ifeoma is quite smart and impulsive. She knows it takes wisdom and courage to win Eugene's heart and she will not relent until Eugene permits her to take his children with her on a ride. She knows the children are confined to the home and they are not allowed to relate with others.

Datum 38: “Eugene...” Aunty Ifeoma took a deep breath

Eugene...	Aunty Ifeoma	took	a deep breath
Verbiage	Senser	Mental process	Phenomenon

Aunty Ifeoma who is the senser here gets tired of trying to convince Eugene even though, she never gives up.

Datum 39: Okay, the children and I will come on Christmas day.”

Okay	the children and I	will come	On Christmas day
	Actor	Material process	Circ: place

Here, Ifeoma reluctantly accepts Eugene’s offer so that he would grant her request.

Datum 40: Papa had gone back downstairs

Papa	had gone	back	downstairs
Actor: male	Material process	Circ: place	Circ: place

Datum 41: I was still sitting on the sofa

I	was still sitting	on the sofa
Actor: female	Material process	Circ: place

Datum 42: I was watching Aunty Ifeoma talk to Mama when my cousins arrived.

I	Was watching	Aunty Ifeoma	Talk	to Mama	when my cousins arrived
Senser	Mental process	Goal	Material process	Goal	Circ: place

In datum 42, Kambili is described as a reserved person who was raised to talk with her eyes. Having been raised by a strict disciplinarian, she is an introvert who cannot express herself like her peers. She watches more and speaks less.

Datum 43: Amaka was a thinner, teenage copy of her mother.

Amaka	Was	a thinner, teenage copy of her mother
Carrier	Relational process	Attribute

Datum 44: She walked and talked even faster and with more purpose than Aunty Ifeoma did

She	Walked and talked	even faster and with more purpose than Aunty Ifeoma did
Actor	Material process	Circ: manner

In datum 43- 44, the narrator gives a description of Amaka’s physical appearance. Amaka, the carrier, here resembles her mother. She looks like her mother not only in appearance but also, the way she acts. She is also a fearless and daunting lady.

Datum 45: Only her eyes were different

Her eyes	Were	Different
Carrier	Relational process	Attribute

Datum 46: They did not have the unconditional warmth of Aunty Ifeoma’s

They	did not have	the unconditional warmth of Aunty Ifeoma’s
Carrier	Relational process	Attribute

Datum 47: They were quizzical eyes, eyes that asked many questions and did not accept many answers.

They	Were	quizzical eyes, eyes that asked many questions and did not accept many answers.
Identifier	Relational process	Identified

In datum 45- 47,Ifeoma is described as someone who is not as welcoming as her mother. Quite outspoken and an activist in the making, she asks too many questions and does not get satisfied easily with the answers provided. Unlike Kambili, her cousin, she relates well with her peers and she is quite sociable.

Datum 48: Obiora was a year younger

Obiora	Was	a year younger
Identifier	Relational process	Identified

Datum 49: Chioma had skin as dark as the bottom of a burnt pot of rice, and was tall for a boy of seven.

Chioma	had	skin as dark as the bottom of a burnt pot of rice, and was tall for a boy of seven
Carrier	Relational process	Attribute

Datum 50: They all laughed alike...

They all	Laughed	Alike
Senser	Mental process	Phenomenon

In datum 48- 50, the narrator gives a description of Ifeoma’s children. Quite different from what obtains in Eugene’s household, these children are lively and outspoken. They are allowed to express themselves and are fun to be with.

Process Types	Material	Verbal	Mental	Relational
Frequency	13	16	12	10

4.2 Discussion

Adichie employs a female omniscient narrator, Kambili who narrates the story to the readers. By employing a first person narrative, the readers are given direct access into the mind, feelings and thoughts of the narrator. Adichie tries to establish a sympathetic relationship between the readers and the female characters in the text. The major male character is portrayed as cruel and hard hearted while the female characters are created in a way to draw empathy from the reader.

From the 50 samples that were selected for the analysis, 26% of the processes are material processes, 24% are mental processes, 20% are relational processes while 32% are verbal processes. Of all the processes, they engaged more in verbal processes than other processes. This is because in the extracted excerpts from the text, the characters are engaged in a conversation. In a conversation between Eugene and members of his nuclear family, Eugene acts more. He is in

control of the situation. Within his nuclear family, he is a tyrant who is feared by all and he rules the house with an iron fist. In this excerpt, the other members do not voice their opinions, they are silent.

Eugene Achike, the head of the Achike household is known for his strict adherence to catholic beliefs which made him disregard his father and turned him to a tyrant at home. His wife, Beatrice is maltreated and oppressed alongside her children, yet, she keeps silence. Beatrice and her children revere Eugene. They fear for his punishment which is meted out in an oppressive way. The narrator, Kambili is a victim of domestic violence. Verbs such as “followed”, “watched”, “mumbled”, “held my breath” are employed by the writer to show the feeling of confinement experienced by the narrator. She would love to act but having been raised by an oppressive father, she lost her voice. Dehumanization and denigration of the female gender is observed in the novel. Beatrice, a full time housewife is helpless and cannot stop her children from being oppressed by their father.

His sister, Ifeoma is not in awe of him like other people. Aunty Ifeoma, a lecturer and Eugene’s younger sister is not afraid of him or anyone. She is a fearless and daring woman. She is a widow who fends for herself and her children. Being an educated woman, she relies on her job and does not depend on Eugene for help especially when there are strings attached. Her education makes her enlightened and courageous. Despite being Eugene’s sister, she encourages Beatrice to leave the oppressive marriage though Beatrice refuses. Ifeoma represents the independent woman who would not keep mute in the face of violence and oppression.

4.3 Analysis at Word Level

Generic Noun and Pronouns

1. But you are a woman. You do not count.

“A woman” as used here is used to humiliate the female gender. The speaker, despite being maltreated by his only son still believes his son is more important than the female child. The female gender is not recognised and she is belittled in the society. Papa Nnukwu’s statement shows the society’s view about women. Much importance and attention are given to the male children while the female gender is ridiculed in the society.

2. So that Chukwu will send a good man to take care of you and your children.”
3. A husband crowns a woman’s life.

“Man” and “husband” as used in these sentences indicate a very important person who performs essential roles in the life of a woman. According to these sentences, every woman needs a man to feel complete and also to live a successful and happy life. A crown is used to make something complete or perfect by adding success or happiness. The same connotation is not given to the word “woman”. The society is gender-biased and this reflects in literary works. Papa Nnukwu, the speaker believes Ifeoma will fare better if she has a husband. In African societies, women without husbands are derogated and relegated. She is considered as a house without a roof.

Naming and Androcentrism

1. “Nekene, see the boy that will inherit his father’s riches.”

This indicates that the female child cannot inherit his father’s properties. The society values the male child more than the female child. The male child is considered the successor who

would carry on the family name. In the African culture, women are scolded for not giving birth to male children. Such women are considered useless and insignificant in the home.

Semantic Derogation of Women

1. “Mama had greeted him the traditional way that women were supposed to, bending low and offering him her back so that he could pat it with his fan ...”

Here, the status of the women is depicted in the society. They are submissive and controlled by men in the society. The ruler, a male character shows approval of their actions by giving the woman a pat on her back. This corroborates the fact that women are considered as entities who seek for approval from men.

2. If we did not have the same blood in our veins, I would have sold you my daughter.
3. Their husbands buy them stereos and refrigerators, and when they graduate, the husbands own them and their degrees....”

In sentences 2 and 3, the female child is reduced to a commodity. African mothers believe selling their daughters to wealthy men is one of the easiest ways to become rich. The female child is commoditized and objectified. The female gender is seen as an object that is bought and sold, something used as a form of exchange. They are reduced to material possessions which are bought and automatically owned by their husbands.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary

This study focuses on how women are represented in two Nigerian novels: *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's wives* by Lola Shoneyin and *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Adichie by employing some of the tools of feminist stylistics. Feminist stylistics presents the concept of gender focusing mainly on how women are portrayed in the society. Transitivity and characterization, some of the tools employed in feminist stylistics are used to explicate the representation of characters in a work of art. The stories are analysed paying attention only to the female characters in the novel; their behaviours, strengths and weaknesses and physical appearance. This chapter presents the findings of this study and draws conclusions.

Chapter one deals with the background of the study, it corroborates the purpose of the research, the aims and objectives of the study, justification of the study, delimitation of the study and the research method deployed for this research.

Chapter two critically examines the different related literature to the topic. The researcher was able to bridge the gap between the previous studies and this present research. Chapter three focused on the analysis of data got from Lola Shoneyin's "*The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives*" while chapter four was meant for the analysis of data got from Chimamande Adichie's "*The Purple Hibiscus*". Chapter five which is the last chapter states the summary, findings of the analysis and conclusions derived from them.

5.2 Findings

The analysis of the data proved that the major process types used in the selected texts are material, mental, relational processes and verbal. The male participants are active participants in almost all the material processes while the female characters are the recipients of their actions. By making use of selective linguistic choices, Shoneyin challenges the stereotypical representation of the female gender in her novel. There is a rich representation of the female gender, though, patriarchy and oppression of women are also observed in the novel. The men act more while the women are the receiver of their actions. They are not allowed to act rather, they are acted upon. They engage more in mental processes which means they influence the decision -making process in the home. Quite expected of a feminist writer, Shoneyin presents her female characters as fierce, outspoken and manipulative. Contrary to what operates in the society, where the man chooses his wife, here, the wives choose the home. They marry Baba Segi for different reasons and choose to stay or leave. In their own way, they control the affairs of the home. They are not weak though submissive and act as subordinates to their husbands. The female characters are victims of domestic abuse. They are verbally and emotionally abused by the male characters. They are insulted and ridiculed especially those seeking for the fruit of the womb. They are held responsible for infertility.

Patriarchy and male subordination is displayed in the novel as the male character provides for the family, while the female characters tend to the home and look after the children. They are confined to the private sphere. The female characters are also objectified and commoditized. The women are not only used as exchange for marriage purposes, they are also sold to their husbands who own them and their degrees.

Chimamanda Adichie, on the other hand presents her characters in an empathic manner. Beatrice is a reserved character who remains calm and silence even when she is brutalized. She is a stereotype of the traditional African woman though, being, the loving and caring mother she is, she takes desperate actions when the lives of her children are in danger. Ifeoma on the other hand represents the modern, liberal African woman. She is outspoken and fearless. She is a widow who fend for herself and children without depending on anyone not even her wealthy brother. Unlike Beatrice who depends solely on her husband, Ifeoma is an educated woman who has a source of livelihood, a Professor at the university whose values does not affect her cultural values. Adichie, through Ifeoma, a major character in the text shows the importance of education to the liberation and emancipation of women in the African society.

The selected authors write in protest to patriarchy and also to salvage the plight of women, to re-create and re-brand the image of woman. They clamour for a positive representation of women in their texts. They present two types of female characters in their works; the traditional women who are weak, submissive and dependent and the modern women who are assertive, bold, independent and educated. The modern woman has a control over her environment. By using a female- focalizer and also a different point of view, the writers allow their female characters to operate with unrestrained will in their stories thereby creating a new identity which is in line with the objectives of feminist stylistics.

5.3 Recommendation for further studies

This work focuses on transitivity patterns of major female characters in the novels. It is recommended that the other characters should be studied to make the study a wholesome one.

Also, a full feminist stylistic analysis of the selected novels should be carried out to reinforce the findings of this study and the characters of the males in the novel should be investigated to create a balanced view of sexism in the novels.

In addition, a comparative study of the male characters in the two novels can be explored. This will help to bring out the similarities and differences in how the writers portray the male gender.

5.4 Conclusion

The linguistic choices employed by the writer helped in projecting their thematic concerns. The writers try to create a vivid imagination of how women are treated in the society. The readers are given an insight into what obtains in a Nigerian household. Being female writers, the male characters are depicted as cruel, violent and unjust human beings. The choice of words used for the male characters corroborates the fact that they have domineering attitude which has an effect on the female characters. In addition, stereotypical representation of women is challenged in the two texts. Though, the wives are submissive, they are not silent, they are bold and fierce.

As evident in the research, transitivity model still remains one of the best tools that can be used for determining how characters are portrayed in literary works.

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