

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF A NATION

IFEOMA ABANA (PhD)
Department of English
Madonna University
Nigeria

Abstract

*This study examines the effort of two African writers, Manama Ba and Chimamanda Adichie in projecting a new image and identity for the women in their novels *So Long A Letter* and *Purple Hibiscus* respectively. These writers capture various challenges of the African Women. Currently, most African female writers are addressing themselves seriously to the task of redeeming the African women's personality. This study has shown that women not only have the potential for contributing meaningfully to the progress of the society but have indeed contributed immensely to society's progress, and that they deserve a better position than what they have been credited with. It is hoped that this research will contribute towards building up knowledge of the new woman in Africa as reflected in the works studied.*

Introduction

In the words of Ngugi WaThiongo, "Literature does not grow or develop in a vacuum, it is shaped and given direction by the society". (Homecoming, 19). This implies that literature is a reflection of his work from the society. Ngugi argues that literature is primarily concerned with what any political and economic arrangement is to do to the spirit and the value governing human relations. In essence, literature as it affects man. Women's place in the African Society is distinct from that of the men in almost all facets.

An attempt to stereotype women in Africa is the greatest barrier towards a fulfillment of oneself. This is seen in the religious, socio-cultural and economic lives of women. Most African women are trained and oriented from infancy to realize themselves and their true worth outside themselves, thereby negating any knowledge of self, this thereby is when we consider the true essence of women's fulfillment. A woman's greatest aspiration is finding a mate and bearing children. Every other thing is secondary. Education, career, material wealth and social accomplishment are subsumed to marriage and motherhood.

Pre-literate societies in Africa are remarkable for their clear definition of sex roles. The man is the head of the family, and supreme. The female on the other hand is comparatively subjected to an inferior secondary position. Man's domineering influence over the female is institutionalised and threatening to the female image. Rose Acholonu writes:

"In contemporary African society, the female's position very often, is no better than that of a "slave". The illiterate female is despised, abused and exploited, while the educated woman (in Nigeria spitefully labelled "anacadd") is often suspected by men who feel their superior status . . . as under threat (p. 24)

The female character in Africa . . . hitherto, is a fierce lack-luster human being, the quiet member of a household, content only to bear children, unfulfilled if she does not, and handicapped if she bears only daughters. In the home, she is not part of the decision-making both as a daughter, wife and mother even when the decision affects her directly.

Docility and complete sublimation of will is demanded and enacted from her. This traditional image of woman as indeterminate human beings, dependent, gullible and voiceless stuck, especially in the background of patriarchy which marked most African societies.

Consequently, many African men do not value the economic contributions of their wives. They do not view women's job and household work as tasking; for the most part, African men consistently take their wives for granted. Moreover, even with economic opportunities, African women lack certain rights. As a rule, men do

not have any legal responsibility for their offspring and they often abandon women expecting them to carry the functional burden of the family.

Again, examining the -role in terms of marriage which is very crucial in our society, the institution of marriage is unconventional by Western standards. The traditional system of polygamy flourish with every social class. Women do not expect much from men as regards companionship, personal care and fidelity their relationship exists without emotional elements.

The natural duties of wives and motherhood are edifying in themselves and would have stayed like that except for women over the years that started showing a marked resentment of the limitation and circumspection of such roles. They yearned for a wider spectrum, for another form of fulfillment other than the traditional ones. In effect, women developed and become more aware and so more questioning. Their discontent is predicated on the state of the society where roles are worthwhile only if they stand up to the harsh dynamics of economies. Latent idle wives and mother suddenly become household burdens which the male swathe to carry or take on so readily.

Marriage is delayed and the bride-to-be must offer more than pretty faces and fertile ovary. They are expected in addition to their traditional wife and motherhood to equip their selves wives for life in the modern times by being not only consumers but producers and co-producers of the family income. Thus, their social expectations become more complex and demanding. The women therefore strive to upgrade their worth and use these as bait to men for marriage.

Women are subjected to the background in various fields of human endeavours. The quest to cross this interior stigma in fields like politic, government, professional fields of study and even sports has taken different dimensions and forms. One of their form is the novelist medium, the use of novel as vehicle for feminist identification. Novels here is been used to mirror the attitudes, strength, weakness and conflicts that arise

from feminism. The novels, Purple Hibiscus by Chimamanda Adielie and so long a letter by Mariama Ba, all portray various perspectives of the image of women in the family, society, and also government. These qualities justify the use of their works as case study in our attempt to analyses the image of women in African society. The role that the members of the different gender perform to an extent is determined partly by the biological capacity of the different sexes: male and female. Over the years, the manner in which the role has been allocated is termed inferior when compared with the other. In every sphere of life, African women undergo one humiliation or the other. It is the women that gives birth and woe betides the women that gives birth to girls only. Before now, they (women) are deprived rights of education in preference to the male. They are not to do heard in public not to talk of working. Asking for a political placement would be considered as asking for too much and these women might even be termed a prostitute for flaunting their body for public consumption.

A women's ability is already determined before she carries out a responsibility. Female writers like Chimamanda and Mariana Ba have explored women's life in various ways in order to draw attention to the plight of the women as they struggle to define their identity and personality.

Both Chimamada and Mariama Ba have expressed the need for women not to reflect the great essence of education as a way out of enhancing their condition and changing the society. Women's identity has in the last few decades assumed prominence round the world especially as they affect the developing world. Over the years, controversies have been going on over women and what they stand for, such as the place of the women in the society, education of the girl child, early and arranged marriage for female by parents. In spite of the abundant literature available, the question of women and the crisis identity have not been resolved. Sherry other believes that, it is not biology that assembles women to their various status whether every culture defines and evaluates female (140).

Before now, there were so many things women must do. They were made to observe so many barbaric customs and norms. Women were made to die in agony over a husband death. At time, the wife is suspected of killing her husband and is therefore subjected to the inhuman act of compelling her to drink the water used in bathing the corpse. Others have their hair shaved clean and are forced to wear black clothes as a sign

of morning. Some others cultures even go to the extent of mandating the woman to wail publicly for a specific number of days or weeks as can be seen at the time of Modou's Funeral in Mariama Ba's *So Long A Letter*.

RAMATOULAYE REVEALS:

This is the moment directed by every Senegalese women, the moment when she sacrifices her possession as gifts to the family in-law and worst still, beyond her possession, she gives up her personality, her dignity, becoming a thing on the service of the man who married her, his grand-father, his grandmother and every one related to him. Her behavior is conditioned, no sister-in-law will touch the head of any wife who has been stingy, unfaithful or inhospitable (12).

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE AUTHORS CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was born on 15th September, 1997 in the town of Enugu. She grew up in the University town of Nsuka in South Eastern Nigeria. Her father was a professor of statistics at the university of Nigeria, Nsuka, and her mother was the university registrar. Ngozi studied Medicine and pharmacy at the University of Nigeria, Nsuka for a year and a half. During this period, she edited the compass, a Magazine run by the university's catholic Medical students. Ngozi received a bachelor's degree from the Eastern where she graduated summa cum laude in 2001. In 2008, she received a master of arts in African studies from Yale University. That same years, she was awarded a mass Arthur fellowship by the Radcliffe institute for Advanced study, Harvard University.

Chimamanda Adichie's published a collection of poems in 1997 "Decision" and a play "for love of Biafra" in 1998. She was short listed in 2002 for the caline prizes for her short story, "you in America". In 2003, her story, "That Harmaltan Morning" was selected as joint winner of the BBC short story Awards, and she won the). Henry prize for "the American Embassy" Ner first novel *Purple Hibiscus* was published d in 2003. The book received wide critical acclaim, it was shortlisted for the orange prize for friction (2004) and was awarded the best first book (2005). Her second novel, *Half of a yellow sun* was named after the flag of the short lived nation of Biafra, which was set before and during the Biafra war. Her third novel, *The Thing Around Your Neck*,_is a collection of short stories published in 2004. Chimamanda Adichie is an Igbo Nigerian writer has been called the most prominent of a procession of critically acclaimed young Anglophone authors that is succeeding in attracting new generations of readers to African literature.

MARIAMA BÄ

Manama Ba (April 17, 1929-August 17, 1981) was a Senegalese author and feminist, who wrote in French. Born in Dakar, she was raised a muslim, but at an early age came to criticize what she perceived as inequalities between the sexes resulting from African traditions. Raised by her traditional grandparents, she had to struggle even to gain an education, because they did not believe that girls should be taught. Ba later married a Senegalese member of parliament, Obéye-Diop-Tall, but divorced him and was left to care for their nine children.

Her frustration with the fate of African women-as well as her intimate acceptance of it- is expressed in her first novel, *so long a letter*. In it she depicts the sorrow and resignation of a woman who must share the mourning for the late husband with the second, younger wife. Abiola Irele called it "the most deeply felt presentation of the female condition in African fiction". This short book has awarded the first Nana prize for publishing in Africa in 1980.

Ba died a year later after a protracted illness, before the publication of her second novel, *scarlet song*, which describes the hardships a woman faces when her husband abandons her for a younger woman he know as a youth.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Over the years researchers have worked on how to stop gender inequality, especially discrimination against the female folks. However, it is important we know that some culture affect women.

This study is therefore embarked on examining the position of discrimination against women, with reference to Chimamanda Adichie's Purple Hibiscus and Mariama Ba's So long a letter.

It is hoped that the proper analysis of this piece will motivate writers to the awareness that need to be done on the position of women in the society.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This work will serve as a resistance against injustice in the human narrative, there by challenging and changing the balance of power between women and men within the society. It will also intensify a change in the perception of women about themselves and the way in which the society sees them, and the position the society puts them. Giving them a sense of being as an individual who can have rights and entitlements which are alienable and there force cannot be compromised.

POSITION OF WOMEN IN MARIAMA BA'S SO LONG A LETTER

Mariama Ba's So Long A Letter is a sequence of reminiscences, recounted by Ramatoulaye, a Senegalese school teacher who has been recently widowed. Mariama Ba in the novel relates the experiences of an African female caught between the established order of the past and the exigencies of the present, while prognosticating the future Ba's frustration with the fates of the African women as well as her ultimate acceptance of it is expressed in her novel: so long a letter.

In this text, she depicts the sorrow and resignation of the woman, who must share the moaning of her late husband with his second younger wife. No doubt, most of the actions of the character in the text are traceable to Ba's experience as a divorce. At the center of the work, is a consideration of the position of women in a Muslim society. Two cases are used as examples-the marriage between modoufall and ramatoulaye and that between mawdo and Aissatou.

In this work, Ba embarks on the literature mission to show that women are plunged both psychologically and financially in a sensual indulgence and complete lack of regard for the consequences of men's action of families. In essence, women are the people who bear the direct effect of the actions of men or their own actions in the marriage institution. Ba shows that these effects can make a woman take actions that will depict her dissatisfaction with the actions of her man as can be seen in the cases of Ramatoulaye and Aissatou who are not pleased with the position they are condemned to, and the action of their husbands. As a result, aissatou writes to Mawdo Ba to terminate the Marriage relationship between them.

"...i cannot accept what you are offering me today in place of the happiness we once had. You want to draw a line between heartfelt love and physical love. A say that there can be no union of bodies without the heart acceptance, however little that may be... I am stripping myself of our love, your name, clothed in my dignity, the only worthy garment, I go my way
(31-32).

In the case of ramatoulaye, we see a woman, who despite her emotional struggle, resolves to remain with her husband even when he abandoned her and her children for Binetou. She believes that men are unfaithful to their wives just for the sake of variety. Though modou's action is factored by the Law of Islam, it is calculated betrayal of her trust and abrupt rejection of their marital lives. The act of polygamy and its aftermath are the dominant focus in the novel.

Aissatou for one, chooses to take a break, a one way journey with her four sons. Her reactions to this planned expression in her matrimonial home are feministic. She goes in search of a places where she will be a free woman not bonded by the demanded of tradition and culture of conformity and subjugation that pays no respect to the women as an individual. The place where Aissatou finds this freedom is North America where she becomes resourceful and self reliant. Aissation is appreciated because despite being quite unessential, she acts swiftly-unlike Jacqueline and Ramatoulaye who are sentimental and fanatically in love, Jacqueline on the other hand, seeing that she would destroy herself if she continues like that regains her will power and her tottering self esteem. Ramatoulaye on her own part is also highly sentimental. It takes virtually the whole

period of her life to overcome the betrayal and death of her husband. The women are able to break loose from their respective sorrow and forge ahead in life.

A careful look at these women shows that whatever may be their differences, they have common goals and fanatic faith in the potency and immortality of love. In Ramatoulaye's letter to Aissatou, she recounts how she gave ^{modou twenty-two years of her (to} ~~along with~~ ^{twelve children and} he decides all of a sudden that he wants something new and younger. Not only in his new wife younger, but a classmate of their older daughter, Daba, this being another stab in the heart. She writes of how his neglect of her feeling and the children's feelings almost destroys their rivers.

These women in Ba's so long a letter are women who are very faithful to their husbands and utterly believe in the power of love. They believe that love is all and conquers everything and here lies the root of their individual problems. These women are so in love that they pay deaf ears to all oppositions. And as it happened, Ramatoulaye disobeyed her mother's wise judgment on modou fall's personality and character; Aissatou on the other hand was strongly opposed by her mother-in-law who never wanted her son Mawdo Ba to marry a girl of low class. Also, Jacqueline had disobeyed her parents and married Samba Diack, who is a doctor like

Mawdo Ba. The story is a dramatization of their state of ignorance and delusion, which eventually gives way to that of knowledge, maturity and wisdom. It came to their awareness of how quickly man's desire burns itself out, and the fact that romantic love is a mere emotion which burns off as easily as it is lighted. They come to the realization that no man is indispensable and that every mistake they made was to trust men and love

them unconditionally. They rejecting allowing their husbands to manipulate their lives because they felt these men knew the best thing for them. These wives faced by this ugly realization and human condition, took bold steps in search of new ways to redeem themselves.

In the novel, ramatoulaye our protagonists displays great qualities as she is able to cope with the problems posed by the upbringing of her children single handedly after the death of her husband. She now undertakes activities which hitherto were meserved for them calling a plumber, paying electric and water bills etc. she praises women's ability to keep the house clean and tidy. According to her:

"The systematic management of the house is an art and she sees an untidy house as a result of a lazy house wife. Cleanliness is one of the essential qualities of a woman. Those women we call housewives deserve praises. The domestic work they carry out and which is not paid in hard cash is essential to the home (63). Ramatoulaye's activities and achievement, place a woman's great ability and resilience beyond doubt she deems that her tribute will contribute to the upliftment of African women. Through the lives Ramatoulaye and Aissatou, the novelist has succeeded in carrying out the need of not only the public obligation, but also a private or domestic duty. Aisstou is said to represent the new generation of women; she clearly challenges archaic customs that thrive on women's oppressive subjugation and prejudices. Jacqueline on the other hand is not as smart as Aissatou, she goes through hell, thick and thin. She loses faith in mankind and and cannot fathom why the husband should betray her, but she finally comes to her senses through the doctor's counseling words Ramatoulaye, as we see is a confused women and her pitiable situation is not made easy by her daughter, daba, who is intolerant of her father's behaviour. She makes an assessment of her father's betrayal and advises her mother to leave him:

"Break with him mother, and this man away. He has respected neither you nor me. Do what Aunt Aissatou did, break with him, you will break with him. I cannot see you fighting over a man with a girl of my age" (39)

But Ramatoulaye, as we observed is traditionally, long suffering, yet sentimental, and she is also said to be comparatively cowardly as Helen

Chukwuma rightly observes:

"The major defenses between the two friends is that Aissatou is ruled by the head Ramatoulaye by her heart. The latter stays with her problem, large and insoluble, delegating in help from her practical friend as where she sent her a car to alleviate her transportation problems (205).

And finally, after much persuasion and encouragement from Aissatou and Daba, Ramatoulaye takes a bold step and decides to move or but that does not mean she has accepted to love someone else because she believes that men are very cruel.

Ramatoulaye expresses her concern about the political role of women in the society. She reacts to the way in which women are being treated and relegated to the background. According to her, that it is high time women were allowed to take active position in politics. They should be given opportunities for decision making in the society. To this end,

Ramatoulaye solicits for equal rights for both men and women, she is dissatisfied with the assembly for being dominated by men:

“...nearly twenty years of independence, when will we have the first female minister involved in the decision concerning the development of our country. And yet the militancy and ability of our women; their disinterests-commitment have already been demonstrated.. Women have raised more than one man to power” (61).

In Dauda's argument with her, he points out to her that African women have not attained the stage of competing with men in political affairs. The ironical situation in the novel serves as a warning Ba, in her way also is warning women against relying on men. These women put their trust so much on these men that when finally the scales are removed from their eyes, it is difficult for them to stand the blows. It is also ironical to note that these men involved in this act of betrayal are all educated men who are supposed to have acquired vast knowledge on marriage and the fillings of women, but they are the same ones that betray the trust. Ba is actually against polygamy, which is a bane of marital bliss in the African culture.

Most of these men are mostly lured into this act by their mothers.

Finally, mariama Ba in her own way is making us understand the plight of the African women, their pains, anger and humiliation. These women used to think that they had it all, not until the carpet was drawn off their feet. These wives-Ramatoulaye Aissatou and Jacqueline are women who are fanatically in love with their husbands. The difference in these women's personalities account for the varying nature of their reactions to, and the resolution of their problems. Ramatoulaye seems completely consumed by her idealistic rotation for romantic love. She is a traditional woman in a romantic sense. Ramatoulaye later gets out of her age-long illusion of love. The story therefore ends on a happy note of her positive action. Aissatou, Ramatoulaye and Jacqueline all work out for themselves a new path of happiness, regardless of their husband's treacherous betrayal: Ba has succeeded in using her novel to portray the problems of polygamy and social equality faced by women in present day Africa and the problems posed by the young generation as a result of civilization. In conclusion, we see from this novel, that marriage should not be conditioned, rather, it should be unconditional, because if a marriage is conditional, one day, the condition that is set may not be there. Then, betrayal may arise. Furthermore, women in the African society suffer greatly in the hands of their husband as a result of problems caused both by civilization and tradition. The husband of Ramatoulaye on noticing that his wife is now too old for him, marries a young girl, his oldest daughter's mate. All these problems of men's unfaithfulness and remarrying arise from African patriarchal way of life. And these make the need for women to be held in an important position in the society very paramount.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN PURPLE HIBISCUS

Adichie in her prose work *Purple Hibiscus* identifies the issues surrounding the position of women. Women are condemned to an insignificant position in African societies. Female children are seen as inferior to male ones. Adichie demonstrate this unfairness through Chief Eugene Achibe who uses his religious beliefs to enslave his family. Some acts that shows the discrimination in the selected text are identified below.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Adichie in this text identifies violence against women. She identifies various violence acts done against women some of these are discussed below.

ENSLAVERY

Adichie in the text portrays Eugene enslaving his wife. She is not allowed to express her feeling because of the fear she has for her husband.

Eugene breaks his wife's most cherished glass without replacing or apologizing Kambili witnesses this.

"Papa looked around the room quickly as if searching for proof that something had fallen....he picked up the missal and flung it across the room, towards Jaja it missed Jaja completely, but it hit the glass etagere, which mama polished often" (19).

Kambili recognizes how important the glass is to her mother and she apologizes for her father's conduct. "I meant to say I am sorry papa broke your figurines, but the words that came out were. "I'm sorry your figures broke, mama" (p. 18) Eugene's disregard for his wife makes him to care less about his wife.

WIFE DESERTION

Adichie portrays Eugene as one who abandons his wife to care for the children, when he causes atrocities. Eugene beats his daughter till she faints, then abandons her with his wife Be-articles. Kambili recounts an episode. When I Opened my eyes, I know at once that I was not in my bed. The mattress was firmer than mine. I made to get up, but pain shot through my whole body in exquisite little packets. I collapsed back Nne, Kambili.

Thank God, mama stood up and pressed her hand to my forehead, then her face to mine (217).

PREFERENCE OF MALE CHILD TO FEMALE

In the African society, especially, Nigeria, male children are PREFERRED to female one. Parents discriminate against the female children. The children are not treated equally and not allowed the same human rights in the home. Adichie portrays this through Kambili's family. The kind of tolerance given to Jaja. Kambili's elder brother, is not given to Kambili by their father. In an unpronounced form. Jaja is preferred and well cared for. Eugene beats his daughter Kambili at any slight mistake but when it comes to Jaja, he keeps his voice very low, Kambili says: "And the priest keeps touching my mouth and it nauseates me Jaja said: he knew I was looking at him that my shocked eyes begged him to seal his mouth, but he did not look at me. It is the body of our lord. papa's voice was low, very low. (14).

Kambili expects her father to beat Jaja for not going to church with them, but Eugene does not beat Jaja, He keeps respect the decision of his son Jaja, while his daughter and even those of

wife are not considered. Adichie that he is afraid of what Jaja can do. Eugene says:

"Have you nothing again, Mba, there are replied what? There eyes, on shadow. That had been in Jaja's eyes fear,

It had left Jaja's eyes and entered papa's" (21

Kambili may have been a little girl but she that have prevented women from attaining certain clear from outset that she plays second not as highly valued by her father as interested in what Jaja utters and feels proved of Jaja.

"He was voted neatest junior boy had hugged him so tight that had snapped... papa had revised his schedule but

not mine, and I could not want to have lunch with him" (30-31).

Kambili Cherished the kind of love and respect Eugene her father, has for Jaja. Kambili wants to experience such love for but she is not shown when her father, Eugene is to be proud of her, he tells her to work hard. She says:

"My former mistress, sister Clara had written "Kambili is intelligent beyond her years, quite and responsible". The principle, mother Lucy wrote, "A brilliant obedient student and a daughter to be proud of". But I know papa would not be proud (46-47).

MALTREATMENT OF WOMEN BY MEN

Men maltreat their wives without care, because they are known to be the head of the family. To them, they are in control of every situation in the family putting their wives below them.

Adichie describes this through the character of Eugene, Kambili's father. He does bad things and refuses to apologize. Kambili confirms this: "I meant to say I am sorry papa broke your figurines, but the words that came out were, I'm sorry you figurines broke mama" (18). Eugene is a

serious Christian who does not care about anybody, when it comes to church matters, yet he discriminates inmates among his children. On one occasion, Beatrice, the wife of Eugene, offers to stay in the car, But Eugene forces her to leave the car by instituting fear into her, Kambili witnesses and reports this episode.

"Let me stay in the car and wait biko mama said, leaning against the Mercedes. I feel Nromit in my throat. Papa turned to stare at her. I held my breath. It seemed a long movement, but it might have been only seconds. Are you sure you want to stay in the car? Papa asked... I'll come with you" (37-38).

INTERFERENCE IN FAMILY MATTERS

Members of the society interfere in family issues, they take side against the women in issues that are supposed to be private. For instance, Eugene is expected to marry another wife in orders to have more children. Beatrice almost loses her husband because of interference. With people interfering, Eugene realized he needs more children Beatrice says:

"The members of the Umunna even sent people to your father to urge him to have children with someone else. So many people had willing daughters, and many of them were university graduates. They might have borne many sons and taken over home and driven us out like Mr. Esendu's second wife did. But your father stayed with me, with us... (28).

Beatrice recognizes that the coming of another woman into her house could derive her family and her husband's love, care and attention will be shifted to someone else. Beatrice says... "yes I said pap deserved praise for not choosing to have more sons with other women- of course for not choosing to take a second wife" (28). The society should not interfere into people's family problems. The best way to solve family problems is not by bringing another woman into the home. However, Eugene realizes that having a second wife is against his religious doctrines and it will complicate his marital problem instead of solving them.

CHILD UPBRINGING

Child upbringing is a critical issue in a family. Women have more influence on the children than men. Mothers bring up their children in love, which men can't comprehend. Adichie in her text, *Purple Hibiscus* portrays a man's parentage and a woman's parentage. Adichie uses the characters of Eugene, Kambili's father and aunty Ifeoma, Amaka's mother. They both bring up their children in different ways but one is better than the other.

The child in Kambili questions the unnecessary prohibitions from her father which deprive them of the love and knowledge they would have acquired from the sage. Aunty Ifeoma's children on the other hand, enjoy so much love and freedom that Kambili and Jaja are deprived. They live in the atmosphere of freedom. Freedom of speech, association, decision and religion. Eugene allows religion to becloud his sense of fellowship with his culture and society. His children must comply with the tenets of Catholicism. Adichie parents Aunty Ifeoma as one of whose home provides the needed environment to experience love. Kambili feels the love of a sister, Amaka, who teaches her how to cook, care fo others and accommodate people around her. She also falls in love with father Amadi.

Jaja falls in love with flowers and visits scenes and places to exchange gifts and experience. He also shows love to his grandfather who tells him stories.

Ifeoma's home is contrasted with that of Eugene in the novel. Eugene house, where Kambili and Jaja have grown up, there are no such opportunities as those that they find in Ifeoma's home. In their home, their father, Eugene restricts them by a very rigid control. their life is so regimented. This is shown by the fact that Eugene sets a timetable for the schedules of his children. They must comply with his timetable, which almost looks like a ritual of daily living.

EFFECTS OF PARENTING ON CHILDREN

Parents have a lot of effects on their children, Adichie points out some of these effects on children through Kambili and Amaka. Kambili is affected by her father's way of bringing up children, she is not free to express herself because of the fear her father instills in her. Kambili wishes, she could express herself freely without fear like Amaka. She says: "I wondered how Amaka did it, how she opened her mouth and had words flow easily out" (107) Kambili accepts whatever she is told to accept and rejects whatever is not acceptable by her father, until she changes

environment and falls in love with father Amadi. Kambili plays, talks and thinks affection because she sees a new ray of hope that breaks the silence in her rigid and fragile home at Enugu. She expresses her love for father Amadi.

"It was one of those songs "Abumonyen'uwa, onyekambuNuwa" that eased the dryness in my throat as we got into his car, and I said, "I love you" he turned to me with an expression that I had never seen, his eyes almost sad (280).

Amaka like her mother is a strong, bold and intelligent girl. She seems to be one of the strongest female voices in the contemporary fiction.

Amaka without fear expresses herself to her uncle, Eugene"

"Does your factory make this, Uncle Eugene? Amaka asked squinting to see what was written on the bottles "yes" papa answered. It's a little too sweet. It would be nicer if you reduced the sugar in it" (106). Amaka is influenced by her mother's parentage as she involves herself in the protest against unpleasant things in Nigeria. Even when she leaves the country with her mother, the protest does not stop. We know this through Kambili.

"Amaka used to write the office of the head of state, even the Nigeria Ambassador in America, to complain about the poor state of Nigerian justice system, she said nobody acknowledged the letters but still it was important to her she does something (304).

Amaka is creative, honest, outspoken and dogged fighter. She is affected by her mother who was sacked because of her, she says "they have given me notice of termination" (265). Kambili is influenced by the fear her father instills in her.

EFFECTS OF DISCRIMINATION ON WOMEN

Discrimination affects most women psychologically. They go through emotional pain and trauma because of what they are made to pass through Adichie portrays this through Beatrice who goes through psychological problem because of what her husband Eugene does to her. Kambili describes her looks "her eyes were vacant, like the eye of those mad people who wondered around the roadside garbage" (12). Eugene makes Beatrice go through psychological problems that Beatrice no longer care about her dressing.

She travels all the way from Enugu to Nsukka wearing slippers. Kambili questions herself: "what could have happened? Why was

she wearing her runner slippers all the way from Enugu? (252) Beatrice also loses her baby-because of the way her husband beats her. She says, to her children: there was an accident, the baby is gone, she said" (43). Beatrice cries so hard for the loss of her baby:

"She cried for a long time, she cried until my hand, clasped in hers, felt stiff she cried until Auntie Ifeoma finished cooking the rotten meat in a spicy stew. She cried until she fell asleep, her head against the seat of the chair" (254).

The pains become so much for Beatrice that she kills her husband with poison. She says: "I started putting the poison in his tea before I came to Nsukka" (294). The fact that Jaja is locked up, adds to her agony and she runs mad. Kambili confirms his "she had been different ever since Jaja was locked up, since she went about telling people that she killed papa, that she put poison in his tea (300). Beatrice's new driver pities her condition. Kambili confirms this "I was sure what Celestine meant by these things. If he was suggesting that mama was mad, but I thanked him and told him it was well. I have seen the way he looks at mama sometimes:

the way he helps her, gest out of hand I know he wishes he could make her whole" (300). Beatrice is so psychologically down that she hardly speaks. Kambili notices, I torn to see if mama minds, but she is looking straight ahead at the front seat: I doubt that she can hear anything most times, her answers are nods and shakes of the head, and I wonder if she really hears" (301302). Women are affected emotionally and psychologically, because of maltreatment done to them, they should not be maltreated by men, they deserve the same human rights.

SURVIVAL OF WOMEN WITHOUT MEN

Seeing that women are maltreated by men, how do they survive with all this maltreatment in Purple Hibiscus? Adichie does not only bring out the effects of discrimination on women, she uses the character of Aunty

Ifeoma to show that some women are able to survive without men.

In every inch, Aunty Ifeoma is a mother to the core. She manages her home in her little way, never depending on the wealth of her elder brother, Eugene, as other widows would have done. She is contented with her little salary. Her children are always happy and contented with whatever she gives them. Aunty Ifeoma takes care of her father, papa Nnukwu, with the little she has papa Nnukwu comments, "Ifeoma could not afford to buy new electronics" since the father of her children died, she has seen hard times.

But she will bring them this year" (73). even though Beatrice tells her to

depend on her rich brother, she refuses. Beatrice tells her: "why don't you tell Eugene? There are gas glinder in the factory... .. Aunty Ifeoma only laughs at this suggestion and pats mama's shoulder foundly, saying, "Nwunyi m, things are tough, but we are not dying yet". (83)

In contrast to Ifeoma, Beatrice feels she will not survive without her husband, she says "where would I go if I leave Eugene's house? tell me, where would I go?" (255). eventually, when her husband dies she survives with her children.

Aunty Ifeoma without a job is ready to move on with her life. She announces the loss of her job without any show of despondency. They have given me notice of termination" (205). Aunty Ifeoma stives hard to get visa for herself and her children to travel. Amaka says: "mum, how did it go? Did you get it? "I got it" Aunty Ifeoma said, coming intotheverandah you got the visa" (281) Aunty Ifeoma writes Kambili's family when she gets to America. Kambili expresses. Aunty Ifeoma writes to mama and me, though she writes about her two jobs, one at a commodity college and one at a pharmacy, or drug store, as they call it" (304).

CONCLUSION

This chapter identifies and discusses the position of women. It has also discussed bow women are being maltreated by men, and how all these affects women psychologically and above all how women should be treated. Also, it discusses how women survive these hardships in Purple Hibiscus the next chapter concludes the whole research works, presenting findings emanating from the research.

Feminists in the past and even in present times have tried to create report between the males and females. In the society, they have been supporting and motivating other female not to be in discord, disrespect and ignorant as people have interpreted. But to some extent, their goal have been achieved. And in their work, we have attempted to bring out the subjugations as opposed to the position which they ought to be acknowledged.

SUMMARY

In the course of the research work, an attempt was made to identify the position of women. The first chapter is the general introduction, which features: scope and limitation, research problem and research methodology the second chapter which is the literature review focuses on the biographies of the two feminist minds. The third chapter discusses one of the two African novels: Mariama Ba's so long a letter. The research identifies through this text various dehumanizing position, the female gender has been subjected to like polygamy practices, maltreatment of wives by husbands.

Chapter four in the manner discusses the other Africa selected novel Chimamanda Adichie's Purple Hibiscus, identifying discrimination and marginalization against women, preference of male to female children,

maltreatment of wives by husbands. The last chapter which is chapter five presents the research summary, findings and concludes the whole work.

FINDINGS

A number of findings were made in the course this, research. It has been deserved by the researcher in the two selected texts that the issues identifies not only women society. For instance, some cultures encourage the belief that a male child is of more importance than a female child. This affects the African society because parents try to limit their female children and thereby prevent them from benefiting from good opportunities. Another example, is male children. There is no doubt about the fact that female children will one day get married and take up another man's name. this is one of the fears parents have about female children, but it has been discovered that the female children who are suppose to forget their fathers name, are the one's that remember them. This shows that the belief that it is only males that will one day become the bread winner of their family is unfounded.

The maltreatment of women by men identified in the two selected novels also have bad effect on female folks. A man who is suppose to care for his wife and protect are now decide to make her suffer for nothing in particular but because he feels he has the power to do whatever he pleases. Eugene in Adichie's text beats his wife mercilessly that she loses her baby. If a man cannot take care of a woman, the union between them should be null and void. This belief was shown by Aissatou in Mariama Ba' so long a letter, she resolved the relationship she had with her husband because she was no longer comfortable and safe.

Religious extremism is another factor that indirectly affect the women in the African society. Ngozi Adichie's work explores the dynamics of a family ruled by an extremist catholic fundamentalist patriarch whose word is law. Eugene Achibe practices Catholicism according to his colonialist or white priests dictates and not in accordance with biblical injunctions which prescribes honor and respect for parent and elders. Eugene is not only hypocritical, but is also a chauvinist who was religion as ploy for domination of his wife and entire family. He refused his wife many things, including freedom of association and even procreation as he severally beats her to the point of miscarriages. He is therefore a fanatic, so observed with his religion that he takes notice of no one including his own sister Ifeoma who inodentally is more realistic and possesses a stronger personality than him. We are first introduced to a family disintegrating in the face of high handedness of a man who sticks to old ways even when he is wrong. He refuses to understand why Jaja did not go for communion. To him, communion must be taken irrespective of their state of preparedness which is in fact, against the catholic doctrine. He accepts the singing of the "credo" in latin instead of Igbo as normal; accepts praises from the reverend father in the pupil as higher, he occupies a conspicuous front seat in the church and sees all of these as normal. However, when a young African priest introduces an innovation at mass which could enhance total participation, he is the first to criticize the priest when he observes:

"That young priest, singing in the sermon like a Godless leader of one of these Pentecostal churches that spring up everywhere like mushrooms. People like him bring trouble to the church. We must remember to pray for him"

(29).

In the second work under consideration, the situation are similar, in so long a letter the islam religion allows for a male dominated society that subjugates its female counterparts. Here the two institutions of religion seem to connive against the wishes and aspirations of the female protagonists. In a very subtle but evearing narrative, Mariama Ba articulates the consequences of such institutionalization not only on the woman but also on the man who unwillingly saps his energy through multiple marriage and gradually ginger his resources to an end. This extremism render those under them, particularly the women folk incapable of developing their potentials to contribute to the growth of the society. In so long a letter, the frustration brought upon Ramatoulaye and her friend by their husband's inability to live above religion, frustrate both. It is found that women can survive without men. Women maltreated scared to leave their husbands because, they are afraid they will not

•ve without them. It shows that men are dispensable and that etimes women are better off without men.

CONCLUSION

Judging from the analysis of the two selected novels, it could be included that the position women occupy in African society is rather significant and that they deserve a better treatment and care. Mariama Ba and Chimamanda Adichie despise the discrimination and maltreatment in patriarchy society. These novels so long as Letter and Chimamanda Adichie's Purple Hibiscus show that women should wake up from their sleep and defend their rights, identity and dignity. They should believe in themselves and now that they are the salt of the earth-the prime mover of the world. It is expected therefore that women should Endeavour to protect their God given powers to be able to claim what is truthfully claim what is their in African society and the world entirely.

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