

Africana Womanist Perspectives in the Selected Works of African Women Novelists/Writers

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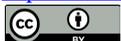
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Abstract

The issue of women subjugation in the social, cultural, political and economic space has been and still is a very active debate. Flora Nwapa in her novel *Efuru*, stresses on the dichotomies of marital subjugation. Ama Ata Aidoo, Buchi Emecheta and Ama Darko in their respective novels, *Changes*, *Second Class Citizen* and *Beyond the Horizon*, respectively, present these very challenges of women in marriages and the professional/work space. As such this paper takes a look at the subjugation of women in marriages and professional/work space, using the already mentioned writers and their respective novels. The discussion will be done against the backdrop of Clenora Hudson-Weems theory of Africana Womanism where she highlights the most salient tenets and attributes of Africana Womanism thus centering on, self-naming, motherhood and recognition and flexibility. Following from the study, it is conspicuous that the fight for women liberation (Hudson-Weems, 1993) in marriages and the professional work space are ancient challenges that continue to journey with the female gender. If given good education and the chance to own their world, the African woman can change the world together with her counterpart which is the call of all these women writers.

Keywords

Subjugation, Africana Womanism, Motherhood, Marriage, Women Liberation

1. Introduction

The notion of gender roles may serve to reinforce inequalities where such roles are viewed “natural” “as a set of expectation for behaving, thinking and feeling that is based on a person’s biological sex” (Kilmartin 2000: p. 20). Based on this from time immemorial, men have been perceived to be breadwinners of families while women have the place of the cooks, helpers of husbands, trainers of child-

ren among others. Seemingly, the kitchen has been deemed, the sole territory that women are voted to govern by divine ordination. This stereotyped attitude towards roles played by both men and women has sustained the discrimination against woman wherever she finds herself (Ayinne & Akolbire, 2004). From girlhood to womanhood the African woman has had to contend with many issues dictated by culture, marriage, childlessness, old age, stereotyping among other tenets of the African culture that militates against her “being” as she journeys through life’s winding cycles. By this, the writer agrees with Bamgbose (2014) to maintain the fact that, the female gender is always subjected to various inhuman treatment right from childhood to adulthood.

Women have for long been regarded by society as a frail extension of humanity, for that matter the potentials of women, has also not been adequately harnessed. It is for this reason that Mobolanle (2008) perceives as the reason why the Africa women’s movement has become effective in their fight against colonial rule and racist ideologies. The feminine standpoint in matters of concern has not been sufficiently considered worthwhile. Subjugations in the forms of brutalities, insults and single parenthood have characterized the life of the woman of today especially in her marriage. Within a marriage in the African traditional setting, a man is the head of the household, the woman is subjugated; she only obeys him and has no say. In this setup, women are deprived of their fundamental rights but this may be seen as a tool that a man uses to chastise his wife and to correct her mistakes or misdeeds. Crimes against women in their marriages and their workplaces are still perpetuated with only a few organized institutions doggedly fighting against the dehumanizing treatment meted out to them. These are some of the strong issues militating against the contemporary woman in her marriage and work place.

Mostly, African women are treated as subordinates, against men who are super-ordinate, disempowered against the empowered men and subjected to all kinds of discrimination and oppression by the society. This is so said because Gwendolyn (1985) in Osogbiye’s (2015) maintained that the African women and their role have been interrupted since colonial era. Women in this era are now agitating for a massive change even though it is very difficult to generalize about their lives since they come from different cultural, racial, economic and religious backgrounds. In the light of the foregoing, various women writers in their literary works have contested the culture of impunity where the woman is always made to be at the mercy of the man despite their capabilities in both marriage and work place. One of the main purposes of this paper is to look at the way the African woman who has over the years been subjugated in her marriage and the work springs out of the menace and how she empowers herself.

Available literature on the discussion of these novels places much emphasis on the discussion of themes, characterization and other related perspectives. Ekpong 2011 explores cultural contact and conflict in *Changes* and concludes that we should glean the positive aspect of our indigenous African culture concerning

women's plight and add the good aspects of western or foreign culture like women's emotional involvement in coitus, and try to formulate a more favorable condition for the post/neo colonial African woman contemporarily for the positive transformation of the entire society, Jones 2013 touches on cultural embodiment, Ngwaba looks at *Interrogating Objectivity* in Darko's book and also concludes that Women should, strive to rise above their challenges and limitations in order to liberate themselves from all forms of objectification. Mears 2009 touches on *Choice and discovery: An analysis of women and culture in Flora Nwapa's fiction*. From what has been said so far, it does seem that some other areas of discussions that are relevant and important have not been adequately explored in these novels. One of these gray areas is the womanist perspectives of these novels. It is in this direction that this paper focuses subjugation of the African woman more especially in marriage and at the work place paying more attention on the womanist perspectives thus self-naming, motherhood and recognition and flexibility as expressed by the four prominent African women authors. These women have distinguished themselves by using their novels as a tool in giving vivid descriptions of the challenges of the African woman in their respective societies and championing the course of these subjugated women. Their works have done significant investigation in a thematic sense regarding the womanist concerns in Ghana and Nigerian in particular and by far African by extension.

Most feminist writers like Buchi Emecheta, Nawal El Saadawi, Ama Ata Aidoo, Flora Nwapa, Akachi Ezeigbo, Amma Darko, Bessie Head, Mariama Ba and others who are engaged in fiction writing have used their literary works as a tool in giving vivid descriptions of the challenges of African women in their respective societies. The purpose of this work was to look at subjugation of the woman in the fields of marriage and the work place in the works of the four women novelists.

This study was guided by the objectives of comparing the subject of subjugation of the woman from the womanist perspective of the Ghanaian and Nigerian female novelist and to compare how the novelists handle the case of emancipation from marital and work place subjugation.

This paper was guided by *Africana Womanism* which is a theory put forward by Clenora Hudson-Weems; it emerged in the late 1980s. It is an ideology which is applicable to all women of African descent. It is grounded in African culture and Afrocentrism. It focuses on the experiences, struggles, needs, and desires of Africana women of the African diaspora. *Africana Womanism* boldly theorizes black women's existence across nations and cultures (Johnson & Kelly, 2008). *Africana Womanism* is situated in the middle of Africa, blackness and feminism.

Womanism as a theory, therefore, attacks patriarchal attitude that sees the female gender as weak and subservient, replacing it with women's strength, competence, courage, audaciousness, sense of responsibility, knowledge, and the list goes on (Igbo Studies Association, 2015).

The conclusion is that Africana Womanism and its agendum are unique and separate from both white feminism and black feminism; more over to the extent of naming, Africana Womanism differs from African feminism (Hudson-Weems, 2007). African Womanism includes women in the Diaspora. Its aim is to assert the unique identity of the African woman as well as those in the Diaspora, feeding from their holistic experiences. The theory seeks to revolutionize women literature, by proffering organized parameters for writing and analysis. In the words of Tendai Mangena, Hudson-Weems came up with the African-centered African-Womanist theory, to inform the writing and understanding of African American and African women literature.

Africana Womanism can also be defined as a concept that encourages total belief and respect for women and what they stand for without operating under any form of bias (Akorede, 2011; Hooks, 1998; Hudson-Weems, 1993; Kolawole, 1997). This theory is guided by a number of principles/tenets of which some were recovered in the discussion of this paper.

Through qualitative approach, the womanist aspect paying particular attention to some tenets of the theory was looked at with emphasis on the selected novels through comparative analysis to achieve the purpose of the paper.

2. Discussions: Subjugation in Marriage in Efuru, Changes, Second Class Citizen and Beyond the Horizon

Ayisi (1997: p. 7) defines marriage as the process whereby a man and a woman come together to form a union for the purpose of procreation. However, marriage can be seen as an intended temporary or permanent union between a man and a woman that is socially, culturally or legally recognized. Labels (2008) identifies three different types of marriage which are; traditional, court and white marriages. White marriage is done in the Churches and Mosques where clergies preside over the affairs. The Court marriage is done under the law of the state. The traditional marriage and our focus is the local form of marriage and common to see.

Objectification of Women as a Form of Subjugation

Nwapa, adequately presents her perception of how men in her novel treat women in their union with them. It is undeniable how the world is made to be believed as belonging to men. She indicates this by showing how Adizua can freely marry Efuru without any responsibility. After, wakes up one day and decides to divorce his wife by leaving home unceremoniously. The African culture portrays the woman as one who can be replaced and so Adizua leaves his wife Efuru but when the same concept of replacement in marriage is on the side of woman it is seen as a taboo. He shows no care when his only daughter of his wife Efuru dies. The man is unanswerable to no one in this marriage. The writer makes it clear the freedom men have in marriages and tradition that makes them consider the woman as a supposed “sacrificial lamp” made to pacify the gods at evil times. She makes it clear how powerless and objectified the woman has been

reduced to in the world that seems to be dominated and controlled by men.

Men can be polygamists, but same cannot be said of women. However, Efurū as a symbol of change not only replaced Adizua but also walked out of the life of Gilbert without the reprimand from the traditional custodians thereby making her a strong woman (Nwapa, 1966).

As one of the reoccurring subject matters in the life of women is the issue of forced and arranged marriage which is a form of subjugation identified in Emecheta's (1974) *Second Class Citizen*. Arranged marriage is when a parent/guardian bestowed a child to a person of no interest without his/her consent because of family interest or material issues like finance, property. Adah's mother, Ma and her uncles made arrangement of suitors to marry Adah so they can have money to give her brother a befitting formal education. Also, to have some form of monetary power for their selfish interest when her high bride price is paid. However, she disappoints them by not marrying any of her wealthy suitors but rather settles for a student, Francis. Because of this act of boldness, she is seen by her family as a self-centered woman driven into marriage because she wants to become successful alone. In short, Adah had to marry

.... Adah congratulated herself on her marriage.... To Adah the greatest advantage was that she could go on studying at her own pace.... That Francis was too poor to pay the five hundred pounds bride-price Ma and the other members of her family were asking (SCC 19).

As if that is not enough for Adah to stomach, Francis takes delight in hitting and slapping Adah most of the time. According to Katherne (1982), His lifestyle is now characterized by gross antisocial behavior, a feeling of inferiority, laziness, and utter irresponsibility. Adah tries at first to support the family and take care of the home but it also becomes clear to her that Francis's irresponsibility is in direct proportion to his desire to create more children. When Adah confronts him with this obvious domestic problem, Francis becomes defensive and starts brutalizing her. He has also threatened to lash his children with a belt if they dare communicate in the Yoruba language instead of English (SCC). It is now crystal clear that Francis Obi is a wife-beater. He beats Adah any time he chooses. Adah often goes out with bruises all over her face. The woman is objectified and the society looks on.

In Aidoo's book, the old woman, Nana who is Esi's grandmother asserts she is concerned, to her, nothing has changed between men and women, and whether in a polygamous or the monogamous marriage, women have always been sacrificial victims for the gods of the Universe, and they were devouring gods who, in order to fulfil themselves, needed to have women regularly sacrificed. Women, according to Nana, have had to deny their own potentials in order that men might accomplish their achievements. This is why the writer presents Fusena who accompanies her husband to the United Kingdom, where she is obliged to remain at home and look after their children while he studies for a master's degree in Economics and Business Administration. By the time they return home,

he is much more educated than she is and is soon earning enough money.

Darko presses home a distinction between the approach needed to meet economic needs and the economic structures. She explains that by focusing on the journey from Naka to Accra, and then from Accra to Germany, she demonstrates how these myths of individual liberal achievement prove dangerous for the African female subject. She by this puts the abuse of females in context. Akobi, Mara's husband had to sell all her possessions ranging from "jewelry, cloths presented to her as her dowry and other things" stripping her of economic sovereignty (Darko, 1995: p. 34) to travel abroad in search for greener pastures.

Women are often perceived and treated as objects of marriage and procreation, sex and recreation, drudgery among others. They are made to bear the spleen of the other gender despite the emotions and sentiments of the females. The writer acknowledges the ordeals of Mara in the hands of the husband, Akobi it typifies how men objectify women. To the extent that Akobi beats her up for venturing into a business of throwing her neighbors' rubbish away for a fee which he later asks her to use to take care of the house.

The issue of Akobi beating his wife for getting herself pregnant constitutes an abuse and an insult to womanhood. Considering the fact, it takes two to tango, it therefore beats human understanding for a man to blame his partner for getting herself pregnant as though it was the procreative order. He further had to dehumanize his wife by pushing and allowing her into prostitution and this is by no means an example of objectification.

Women Being Used as Sex Symbols as a Form of Subjugation

Women used as sex symbols as a form of subjugation and violence against women is explicitly displayed in *Second Class Citizen* (1974), it is still Francis who is the culprit. Francis makes love to Adah as if he is fighting her. Thus, Adah has hardly derived any pleasure from sleeping with her husband. She actually prays for Francis to go out and satisfy his unstoppable sexual urge with other women. All she yearns for is an escape from the "attacks" Francis calls love-making.

Sexual assault by a husband on his wife is not considered to be a crime: a wife is expected to submit. It is thus very difficult in practice for a woman to prove that sexual assault has occurred unless she can demonstrate serious injury. On this bases, Esi's accusation of her husband's assault does not hold and is considered as such because in the setup of marriage, it is the man's right.

From the angle of women used as sex symbol, the writer expresses the disregards most men have for women for which reason they feel the woman can be used as a sex tool anytime anywhere anyhow for their relaxation. Akobi expresses this behavior after Mara's arrival from Ghana to Germany. He had sex with poor Mara in the presence of his friends without shame. This act was to introduce Mara to the prostitution she was brought to Germany to engage in. He shamefully exposed the nakedness of his woman thus to give fore knowledge of his wicked thought. On one of the days, he drugged her, got many men to sleep with her while he took pictures. He used the pictures to blackmail her into be-

coming a prostitute. This sole act of Akobi the husband of Mara subjecting the wife to this torture exemplifies the subjugation of being a sex tool at the hand of Akobi.

Extra Marital Affairs as a Form of Subjugation

Another form of subjugation in the world of the African woman is extra marital affairs. Efuru the protagonist suffers this at the hands of her two husbands.

As days go by, Adizua's indifference to his wife begins to grow. Not quite long, it becomes obvious that Adizua has eloped with another woman of easy virtue. This pricks Efuru's heart immensely. Her mother-in-law's sister who breaks this sad news to her advises her to keep cool that her husband will soon get tired of the strange woman and will come back to her (*EFURU* 57)

From the extract above one can clearly point out that the issue of extra marital affairs is a thing of the African man. Efuru's husband abandoned her for no apparent reason and elopes with another woman, which is a dent on the woman in the house. Boldly she steps out to go get her husband back.

"She is a woman among women. I like the way she is carrying her burden. She still loves that imbecile husband of hers and she is going in search for him." (*EFURU* 87).

In her second marriage to Gilbert, before Efuru could get a second wife for her husband because she is not getting the fruits of the womb, which is traditionally required of her as the first wife, he jumps into another relationship. After suffering the humiliation, she steps out of the marriage and returns to her father's house.

Emecheta's Adah looks on helplessly as Francis goes about being an unfaithful husband in a foreign land and sleeps around with numerous women—mostly white. For instance, Francis's girlfriends are too many to count, Trudy is one of them and a nanny to his children. And he appears ready to go to bed with Sue, Mr. Noble's wife, too. It is obvious that both of them seem to like each other on their first meeting. This is when Francis and Adah go to look for accommodation at Pa Noble's place in Wiley Street.

Mrs. Noble had been so amused that she started to laugh to herself. Francis, who, like Pa Noble always had a certain tenderness toward any white woman, smiled at her. It seemed as if their friendship clicked in that smile. Adah felt betrayed, but she knew something. They were going to get the room they were asking for. Pa Noble was too old for Sue. (*SCC* 96).

Just a flirtatious smile from Mrs. Noble sparks a tune for Francis. By this act, Adah is disrespected by the man she calls a husband in a stranger's house.

Darko's Akobi expresses his dominion, his control over the wife by having extra marital affairs to suggest that men alone have the right and not women as some traditional customs prescribe. The writer shows how women are meant to

endure the accepted and normalized trends of this tendency which has by not been instituted through any universal adult suffrage but by the authority of men, that men have the right to extra marital affairs. He on the day of leaving the shores of Ghana for Germany, sneaks out of the house so as not to have Mara follow him to the airport to see him off. He deliberately did this to have his mistress Comfort, a girl who works in the ministries, see him off.

Motherhood as a Form of Subjugation

Despite her exploit materially, Efuru remains an unhappy woman, this is because she is not able to fulfil the requirement demanded of her by her culture and tradition (Nwapa, 1966).

She is childless. It is for this purpose in marriage that a woman is accorded respect in her matrimonial home which Efuru lacks. Efuru herself equates her worth as a woman with her ability to conceive a child; she feels validated after giving birth to Ogonim: "I am a woman after all" (*Efuru*, p. 32). She laments Ogonim's death just as sweepingly: "My only child has killed me" (*Efuru*, p. 89).

Women are sometimes abused for either deciding to mother a child or have safe intervals in the procreation of their children. Adah struggled because of the fact that she had birth control, and wanted to space the intervals of having children. She is beaten, abused and disgraced in front of her neighbors for this by her husband as having extra marital affair, her reason for the use of birth control. Adah goes through both psychological and physical torture by the husband who indulges in all kinds of extra marital affair. Even though it is the body of the woman that is to bear the brunt of the nine months journey, she has no right to decided when she wants to carry a child.

In Aiddo's book, she presents a woman (Fusena) who is denied the opportunity to further her education because she's to stay back home and take care of the children while her husband attained a degree. She travels with her husband to the States only for him to attain a masters degree while she takes care and nurtures the children at the expense of attaining a degree too. And this later is used against her as the husband takes on a second wife with a higher educational background while she only becomes a shop keeper.

Again, Opokuya had to blend motherhood and career, two difficult entities and to perfection. She returns from her work and quickly dashes into the kitchen to fix something for her children including her husband. Helps the children with their homework and prepares them for bed before she can retire herself. The husband only comes back and complains of how tired he has been at work and expects Opokuya who has done all the chores at home to sit and listen without offering a helping hand. Not taking into consideration what the woman has also gone through. Motherhood is the sole responsibility of the woman in the marriage and anything that comes with it like stress is mandatory by nature to be the responsibility of the woman. Opokuya just like most African women will have to put their interest away and focus on the children and that of the man of the house. Just like Ogundepi-Lesile once said in her book *One is Enough...*

Some women are abused by their spouse for trying to be a mother. Akobi in Darko's book beats Mara up for getting herself pregnant. Something that was done by the two adults that resulted in the pregnancy but the woman bears the consequence of the action for keeping it. She later decides to continue to wallow in the very profession which she fights to gain her freedom from not because she enjoys it but as she puts it "there's nothing left for her but for her children". She works so that she can get enough money to cater for her children who are back home in Africa (Ghana). Mara sacrifices her body and happiness to numerous men so that she can be a good mother by taking good care of her children back home.

3. Subjugation in the Workspace in *Efuru*, *Changes*, *Second Class Citizen* and *Beyond the Horizon*

The African woman is seen as the subordinate in every aspect of life in the African setting, because of this belief mostly women are subjugated even when it comes to the workplace. In Africa today, for example in Nigeria, women have gone into professions that have once be regarded as exclusively for men. For example, the literary scene which was dominated for decade by male writers like Amos Tutuola, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and others, until women like Florence Nwapa made a sudden break. This was the plight of *Efuru* the protagonist in the novel. As an industrious woman, she defies all odds in her work or profession and excels in all direction. Something her first husband could not achieve. *Efuru* resumes trading and enjoys great professional success, the society looked down on her even though she was making it in the field of commerce and farming which everybody in the village thought was the preserve of men. *Efuru* was a successful trader who traded in many things, "traveled to rural areas to buy merchandise (perhaps yams or dried fish) wholesale, then sold the goods at their village markets for a profit". As a farmer she cultivates and reaps bountifully when even her husband does not profit from his farming because they did not yield. He was a failure at that and as such looked down on *Efuru* in this field.

In Emecheta's novel, *Adah* was seen as the bread winner of both her nuclear and the extended family of her husband. Back in Nigeria, she is hailed by the family of Francis simply because she was earning so much and taking care of the sisters of Francis in school. She provided for his parents both materially and financially. Before this success she was not regarded by the family of Francis because she was only a "woman". She is looked down on by the man she married and he even contemplates if he should allow her to take up the new job which will fetch more than he earns. To Francis, he thought a woman should not earn more than the husband.

Again, in United Kingdom as a mother, *Adah* provided for Francis and her children. She had to look for a job that would not describe her as a second-class citizen but something to make her earn much to be able to give her children the deserving life she dreams of.

From start of the novel, the writer Aidoo gives us a glimpse into her view of how women are regarded in their work places in the Ghanaian society. Esi Sekyi, the central character, a Statistician at the Department of Urban Statistics, is angry because in the absence of the secretary, she is expected, just because she is a woman to drive to the travel agency to check on travel arrangements for a conference, she and two male colleagues are attending. This brings us to look at how the men counterparts at her workplace view her as a woman. Running errands should be the preserve of women while their male counterparts stay back in their offices. What is worse, when along the way, her old, unreliable car stalls, she is subjected to hostile jeering by taxi drivers, all male of course, shouting “the usual obscenities about women drivers”. Even with driving, one is clearly shown the hostilities the female is made to face out there by her other counterpart.

Aidoo creates her women characters to seek economic emancipation through various ways. Whereas, for instance Esi ventures into hitherto privileged occupations reserved for men such as a statistician, others like Opokuya are empowered economically such that they are able to make decisions that go to prove their independence. Even though she is a mother and a wife, she combines that with her work as a nurse, something her husband has no regard for as she is to come back home and do the chores by herself.

When Ali turns Fusena, educated, into a kiosk operator, he lends support to what Esi and Opokuya say about what men really want from the intelligent women they marry: “to make them quit their challenging jobs for something less demanding intellectually” (Aidoo, 1991).

Busia (1989) says “Aidoo challenges, deconstructs and subverts the traditional voicelessness of the black woman”. In the domestic situation, predominantly the relation with husbands normally causes an extent of unhappiness to women is clearly exhibited. One could say that, men do not understand that they cannot continue to cling to the same patriarchal privileges they enjoy in the past when their wives, owing to inadequate schooling could only play the role of housewives and mothers. Esi, the protagonist of the novel is shown as educated, financially autonomous, forceful and determined. She is a statistician with a master’s degree in Urban Statistics, has a dignified job, travels around the continent and loves her job, which has earned her a full apartment as official quarters where she lives with her husband. The writer presents Esi as intoxicated with power and some force of control over the husband. This is as a result of the higher education she has attained and the kind of work she does which is mostly seen dominated by men.

Mara arrives in Germany and suddenly Akobi changes from wife beater to wife exploiter. Akobi at once with his friend, Osey, and other peers, initiates Mara into prostitution and lives off her earnings, after blackmailing her into prostitution. First, he openly and publicly had sex with her in the presence of his friends and then turns her into a maid for his white wife. Mara is reduced to a virtual slave, trapped in an alien country and a vocation which is both designed

and run by unscrupulous men. After this, Mara had to sleep with many men not for the sake of pleasure but to make money for her husband and master. Having to use your body to serve for the pleasure of others constitutes sex slavery and shame to women of which Akobi subjected his woman to. Kaye the wife of the owner of the brothel and Vivian advised Mara to save some money for herself. She did and used some of the money to employ a detective to give her information about Akobi which she uses to gain her freedom but is locked up in the profession which she was introduced into by wickedness of an exploiter she had as a husband.

4. Conclusion

Floyd-Thomas (2006) in *“Deeper Shades of Purple: Womanism in Religion and Society”* pointed out that the womanist in everyday life strove to maintain her identity as a communal asset and not an individualistic entity (p. 331).

Although not explicitly stated, these women’s willingness to follow an Africana-womanist agenda in which they performed the duties of mothers and wives without contesting or undermining the authority of their masculine male counterpart’s authority until it became obvious that they were being subjugated by the very men they had chosen as partners in most cases.

In making reference to Hudson-Weems’ (2004) *Africana Womanism* and Hudson-Weems (1998a, 1998b), the tenets self-naming and Self-Definition, begins to describe realities that African women face, through a Pan-African lens. The Pan-African movement attempts to create a sense of brotherhood among all people of African descent, regardless of whether or not they live on the continent of Africa. It explores gender inequalities and stereotypes in the modern patriarchy. The term “nommo” is given to the idea of self-naming, which is important because in order for one to exist it has to be given a correct name. There is an increasing need for self-naming for Black people which helps to discover one’s identity through their own point of view of their world that goes against that of the dominant culture.

In the various novels by these women writers, it is established that the women characters in the novels, gave themselves “names” to be identified with.

The writer considers the oppressive nature and absolute dominance of the male in marriage explains how the females endure marriages instead of enjoying.

The pillar of Recognition refers to the acknowledgement of humanity, capability, and power of Black women. Recognition plays a large role in keeping communal peace and ensuring the Black women’s effectiveness in the struggle for equality.

The Nurturer and Motherer are both described a call for all community members to play an active role in the rearing of the community and propaganda of the race through care. It is an African woman’s duty to not only care and nourish her family, but to provide the care and nourishment for her race as a whole. By fostering and guiding fellow women, the Africana Movement is advanced.

The initiative taken to further the public's appreciation and education about the Africana Movement exemplifies the principle of Ambition.

Flora's Efuru is a woman of a sort who is empowered and unrestrained. She hardly depends on men both economically and emotionally. Efuru redefines herself after her two failed marriages as she is empowered and does not need the reliance on any man as advocated Hudson-Weems.

Her penchant for education was her main gateway to freedom. By this Adah became separated from the ordinary to challenge the status quo eventually because she became assertive and determined. Emecheta portrays her as a risk taker because Adah defies the consequences of her parents to seek admission in school, back in the United Kingdom take a bold step to step out of an abusive marriage with Francis and starts life all over with her children.

Aidoo's protagonist, Esi seeks the freedom and liberty she thinks to walk through life the way she deems it not relying on tradition and the patriarchal dictates of the society she finds herself.

Mara also emancipates herself through the help of other "sisters" who empower her to do so. Darko projects the woman empowerment through this angle.

In all, these women writers all point to giving voice to the African women on the continent and in the diaspora who fight out of their world of subjugation. Just like Hudson-Weems' projected in her theory Africana Womanism.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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