



# On the Contribution of Nigerian Female Dramatists to Indigenous Theatre Development

**Kyantirimam Riken Ukwen**

Department of Theatre Arts, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria

Email: [kukwen@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kukwen@yahoo.co.uk)

Received 21 February 2015; accepted 9 March 2015; published 13 March 2015

Copyright © 2015 by author and OALib.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

---

## Abstract

**Nigeria's performance theatre consists of variety of creative works reflecting the cultural diversity of its people. Many of the written texts and stage performances are slices from everyday lives of the people, captured by these playwrights and shown to the audience through live theatre. The paper examines the contribution of Nigerian female dramatists in the development of theatre in Nigeria. The paper advances that this group of theatre practitioners contributed to the overall development of the art of theatre by telling the stories of the women folk through plays. The works of these playwrights threw light on the experiences as well as concerns of Nigerian women. Particular attention is given to the conscious call by female dramatists for increased inclusiveness and consideration in the social, cultural and political relations with the male folk. The study adopted an analytical approach of the themes of selected play texts by Nigerian female dramatists to identify the ways that were explored.**

## Keywords

**Nigerian Theatre, Female Playwrights, Development**

**Subject Areas:** Art, Literature

---

## 1. Introduction

Nigerian female dramatists have contributed to the development of indigenous theatre in Nigeria through their volumes of academic work that has added to knowledge and broadened perspectives of the art of the theatre. In so doing, they have as well reinforced the place of women in Nigeria's socio-political platform, using the advantage of their experiences as women. No other group could have been more qualified to speak on some of the issues they treated the way they did.

The works of playwrights are products of their ideologies shaped by their environment and experiences. The sources of the play creator's ideas are his/her memory bank as well as the current issues that he/she finds to be topical in the society. Sam Smiley notes that the major source for most writers is direct experience which includes the people, situations, joys and sorrows that the writer personally experiences. They benefit from looking inside and outside themselves as consciously as possible so that they observe and store any emotion they experience for future use [1]. The creative ability of a play creator is complemented largely by his/her experiences to create a well rounded play. It is in this regard that Tse-Tung advances that all culture, art and literature derive their roots from particular classes and are for particular purposes [2]. This explains the uniqueness of art that originate from various societies, each reflecting distinct sense of history and ideology of that society.

The nature of given societies therefore explains the reason(s) behind the themes of the plays that originate from them. The works of Nigerian female dramatists like Zulu Sofola, Tess Onwueme and Irene Salami demonstrate their desires to give voice to issues concerning women. According to Salami, "...Nigerian women dramatists have resolved to rewrite and subvert" the negative portrayal of women in texts written by men [3]. In their different ways, these female dramatists have expressed the position of the women in relation to the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society. Ezenwabebe asserts that there are few playwrights who have shown great interest in the female question in the contemporary Nigerian society. However, their portrayal of women in drama hardly reflects the actual views of African women and the message they would want to communicate. They have thus contributed to the development of theatre in Nigeria.

## 2. Breaking Patriarchal Barriers in Multiple Ways

Certain factors like the patriarchal nature of the political system (as in the case of Nigeria), low political awareness among women and differing interest among them has had its toll on them. Patriarchal syndrome flourishes in the culture and politics of Nigeria and increases the pressure of the tide on women to keep their boat moving despite the odds. In the academia, it was not different as many women were disadvantaged from acquisition of formal education in favor of their male counterparts. The early education of Nigerian men has been cited as a reason for the head-start over women [4]. The male dominance in writing is as a result of the advantage they had of education because of the preference given to male children in our society. The females who had access to Western education were few as they were given out in marriage sometimes at an early age. Women have been in this disadvantaged position from an early time and this is responsible for their delayed appearance on the writing scene in Nigeria. Even upon successful completion, the male game played itself in several ways.

Thus, women were not recognized early in the African literary arena as the men were privileged to have their voices and practically had the monopoly of writing. The men spoke for themselves alone thus contributing to the obscurity of the women in the society. According to Brown,

African literature has to be understood as a literature by African men, for interest in African literature has with very rare exceptions, excluded women writers. The women writers in Africa are the other voices, the unheard voices, rarely discussed and seldom accorded space... The ignoring of women writers on the continent has become a tradition, implicit rather than formally stated, but a tradition nonetheless—and a rather unfortunate one at that [5].

This is true considering the time and consistent effort it took for works of female writers to gain the attention and appreciation of readers and reviewers. Ogunyemi argues that the notion of patriarchy which has permeated the Nigerian cultural milieu is reflected in Nigerian literature [6]. Their current effort is a reaction to these realities.

The resolve by the women to raise themselves upon a pedestal to advocate their own cause is therefore to be expected. Bryce writes that female writers need to rise to the challenge of male writers who have dominated the women. According to her:

A project of major importance at this stage is the formulation and adoption of new, women oriented critical values which will enable us both to confront mediocrity and applaud aesthetic and technical achievement, while challenging the "phallic dominance" of male writers and male critics who deal almost exclusively with male characters and male concerns, naturally aimed at a predominantly male audience [7].

This a dynamic approach of speaking the voice of women by women in an atmosphere where only male voices were dominant.

This view recognizes the fact that the best way to express the views of the women correctly and as desired is for

the women to do so themselves. Obafemi advances that it took courageous effort on the part of female playwrights in Nigeria to rise up to the challenge of speaking for women in a male-dominated arena [8].

Their active participation in writing is significant to their struggle because their works will reflect experiences and sentiments which no one else can adequately convey. If the women do not speak for themselves, others will and might not speak their minds. Adamu records her observation on her visit to some libraries in the United Kingdom:

I was saddened with some literature and research materials about my society which interpretations were done out of context. It was then that I realized the naivety in distancing oneself from the discourse on feminism. If you do not speak for yourself, others will speak for you... Thus, the dismissal of feminism as Western amounts to complacency not to challenge Western dominance and control over knowledge and information on women issues, and the failure on our part to produce knowledge about ourselves, for ourselves and more importantly, play a role in the construction of feminist scholarship and struggle [9].

Such challenges are motivations to rise up and act for the benefit of womenfolk, not only for the present but generations yet unborn.

Educated women of Nigerian origin have utilized their privileged status to achieve their goals. Their works have served as springboards that threw to light the issues of women in writing, thus drawing attention to the social status of women. This is what is reflected in the works of Nigerian female writers like Buchi Emecheta, Flora Nwapa, Zulu Sofola, Tess Onwueme, Irene Salami-Agun, Catherine Acholonu, Molar Ogundipe-Leslie, among others. They have demonstrated their capabilities as novelists, playwrights and poets though their writings about women do not necessarily link them to feminism. A play may be by a woman, or includes women characters, or has an all-female cast but may not be feminist inclined [10] [11].

Adamu observes that despite the active participation of women scholars in issues of women rights and gender advocacy, there has been low impact in terms of the Nigerian patriarchal political space and connection to the ordinary Nigerian women. She further observes that there exist in the Nigerian political system various forms of women exclusion and gender discrimination. Her argument draws primarily from statistics of women representation in various national issues (particular reference was made to the National Political Reform Conference of 2005), as well as federal appointments into offices. There was an immediate mobilization of women to demonstrate and take court actions in this regard.

Traditional status quo in the area of writing, culture and politics has been altered by Nigerian female writers and dramatists and it is a major contribution to the development of the theatre. Lewu opines that despite their late entry into the Nigerian literary scene, female creative writers have made positive contributions to Nigerian literature especially in repositioning Nigerian Women with regard to negative portrayal by the early male writers [12].

### 3. Female Dramatists Speaking the Voice of Women

Female dramatists have used their experiences as women to contribute knowledge to the art of the theatre. They have written and published about women thus telling “the other side” of the story without which balance will be lacking. Even if the issues are not gender related, their part of the experience cannot be learnt without their own voice. The theatre thus develops as a full rounded entity with multiple inputs.

The plays of Zulu Sofola that deal with women issues explore the position of women in relation to the traditional society. Her play, *Wedlock of the Gods* (1972), beyond the focal issue of what Dunton describes as “the conflict between communal interest and private will”, portrays the woman as being voiceless in the face of the demands of tradition. Ogwoma in the play is more of a commodity that is sold at a more attractive price so as to save the life of her sick brother. Little consideration is given for her feelings in the choice of Adigwu as husband even though she was in love with Uloko. Ogwoma is accused of being responsible for her husband’s death as women in some societies are often victimized in such circumstances. Although she later treads the rebellious path against traditional expectation and gets together with Uloko, she ends up a victim of the ploy of a fellow woman.

Here, the place of the woman within the society is explored and definite facts established. Parents in such societies consider female children as sources of wealth when bride price is paid on them. The injustices suffered by women by accusations of being responsible for the death of their husbands is to be seen as a major issue in the struggle by women in this part of the world. Advocacy on such issues represents immediate concerns of the women rather than abstract generalizations that suffice in the universal demands of feminist movement.

Another of Zulu Sofola’s plays, *The Sweet Trap* (1977), dwells on the traditionally accepted supremacy of the

male especially over his wife or wives. The male chauvinist authority was demonstrated in the play by Femi Sotubo who denies Clara, his wife permission to celebrate her birthday. In a manner typical of a submissive housewife, she initially agrees but later disregards her husband's orders on the advice of a friend who is a victim of a failed marriage. The party goes on but is eventually disrupted. Clara later tenders an apology to her husband based on the advice of her uncle. In his review of the play, Obafemi opines that the apology shows complete submission and regret as she does so with her knees firmly on the ground [13]. The manner of wielding authority by the man in some societies suggests the idea that the man is always right and does not need to consult with his wife to take decisions that concern even her. In his review of the play, Dunton writes that:

For much of the play, the main thematic development has to do with women's rights, as the University wives rebel against their husbands' authoritarianism. In the end, however, Sofola's projection of women's rebellion shifts from apparent approval to outright rejection [14].

The play dwells much on the wives' rebellion that is seen as seeking for freedom to engage in pleasure activities. The play is adjudged as portraying the women's action as one that is a failure and a strategy to dissuade such attempts.

This is seen in the issue generated with so much strength but which later boomerangs, chastising rather than commending their actions. The effect this will have is a suppression of any further attempt at speaking up for the womenfolk in relation to their male counterparts.

Sofola's response to the criticisms of the play with regards to her rejection of the women's revolt is found in an interview with Ossie Enekwe to which Dunton refers. She says that women's movement generally stands in opposition to the realities of the African societies because African women have always had a voice in the affairs of the state, but however does not agree that the play is in support of the status quo.

In *Memories in the Moonlight* (1986), Zulu Sofola again takes up the theme of the social status of women. According to Dunton, it surveys issues that border on the structure of marriage relationships like the community response to breakdown of marriage, the chauvinistic treatment of women by husbands who are tired of their wives and the obstacles of arranged marriage. Sixteen year old Abiona is being forced to marry Otakpo, an eighty-year-old man although she loves a younger man. In protest against the plan of her parents, she leaves home when she perceives no sign of change in their decision and later marries Ugo, her dream man. The action of Abiona in this case shows that the right of a woman to take decisions for her interest is often trampled upon and she sometimes needs to take drastic action to realize her goals. A radical approach to issues of women rights is expressed in this play and points to action as the best compliment of verbal agitation. Over and above this, Ajayi notes that "the women see themselves as independent human beings and not as fettered projections of male ego" [15]. The treatment in this later play seems to be more definitive in terms of statements on the need for action by women.

The plays of Tess Onwueme, like other female dramatists is not centered around women issues alone but covering topical issues in the contemporary society. Amuta subscribes to this view, advancing that "her thematic fixation has not merely been conditioned by the fashionable stance of 'presenting the female angle'..." [16]. *The Broken Calabash* (1984), for example, in portraying the conflict of African tradition and Western values shows a woman as being caught in a web of the demands of tradition. Ona, a University graduate and the only child of her parents is expected to marry within the family. She would love to marry a man of her choice, but tradition demands that she marry and procreate within the family in order to maintain the purity of her family's blood. The situation is made more complicated by Diaku being an *Osu*—a member of a group considered as outcasts in that society. Ona, in line with the idea of freedom derived from Western orientation insists on having it her way but is frustrated by her father's insistence. The peak of her frustration is expressed in her accusation of her father being responsible for her pregnancy after he compelled Diaku to marry one of Ona's friends. Unable to stand the shame, her father commits suicide. Although his death celebrates the victory of modernity over the traditional, Ona ends up a victim rather than a victor.

The exposure of Ona to Western education and influence in the play does not aid in liberating her from traditional demands that impedes on her free will. Many women who are educated and aware of the problems associated with some customs in the society are often limited by various factors. It is difficult to effect practical change even though they may express their disapproval. Women desire to be seen and felt rather than only being heard, yet the forces working against their efforts are numerous. Staunch advocates for the preservation of culture in most cases are not ready to relax the rules a little in order to accommodate demands of a changing world that recognizes the rights of individuals irrespective of gender status.

In *The Reign of Wazobia*, Onwueme deals more closely with issues of the position of women within the Nigerian society. The play focuses on the exclusion of women from political power and explores their effort to make themselves relevant in the power arena. Wazobia, the heroine in the play, comes into power as a regent to fill in the position of the king following his death. Contrary to the expectation of the men for her to remain temporarily, it becomes apparent that Wazobia does not intend to be only on an interim term. This is made clear in her speech at a public meeting when she declares the need for the community to reconsider the issue of political power. In most of her speeches (which takes up a significant part of the play) she expresses the need for women to gain authority. She demonstrates this desire in practical terms when she insists that women and youths remain and take part in the discussion that is ideally meant for the chiefs who are exclusively males. Onwueme demonstrates the turning of tables in terms of political power in what Dunton describes as, “the climactic moment when the wife beating husband who has been tried by the women bares his anus to divorce his wife and the women celebrate the subsequent walkout by the men as a sign of the power of their new order”. This signified that women were at last free of domination by the men.

The opposition of Wazobia to male hierarchy is thus clearly demonstrated in her attempts to empower the women politically. Onwueme’s approach in this play calls for action by the women to rise up to the realities of fundamental socio-political issues that affect them.

A different approach is however seen in her play, *Tell it to Women* (1995), where the issue of Western feminism is severely criticized. The play instead favors appreciation of the African status of women in relation to their men. The play is centered on the preparation and launching of the Better Life Program for the Rural Woman. The perception of the African woman’s idea of rights is brought to the fore, thus establishing a difference in the pattern of the struggle for women rights. In the play, Daisy and Ruth are urban female elites engaged in sensitizing rural women and mobilizing them to rise and free themselves from male oppression. Yemoja, a rural woman who was brought to the city by Daisy to train as leader for rural women realizes from Daisy’s words and treatment the remote intentions of the urban women. In her disappointment, she cries herself to sleep and dreams about the launching of the programme at Idu village. It turns out to be a meeting to empower the women but which will alter the existing structure of family and societal relationship being enjoyed by the women. The women express their appreciation for their present situation, showing the urban women that they are not complaining. In fact they show the pride of their place as women and reject in totality the ideas of the two women. Idu women were opposed to the ideology of feminism which sacrifices their cherished family ties—a crucial component of communal African way of life.

This play perhaps proves to advance some form of restraint to the radical ideas of liberation that women must have imbibed and this could be seen in the contrast in her earlier play, *The Reign of Wazobia*. However, *Tell it to Women* seems to send across some idea of caution to the approach of women liberation and political struggle.

The plays of Irene Salami reflect a drive towards giving voice to women in a society that men seem to be the only people that are considered important. In the preface of her play *Emotan* (2001), she notes that women were not considered important in the history of Benin kingdom despite their contributions. Her reason for writing the play is to contribute to the effort to celebrate women’s achievement in history [17]. In the play therefore, Emotan, a Benin Heroine is portrayed as a brave woman who stands up for truth and justice and even lays down her life for the cause.

Another of her plays, *Sweet Revenge* (2004), brings to the fore the ill treatment a woman suffers in the hands of her husband. The play brings out the issues of subjugation in a society where women are not considered or seen as capable of taking decisions but taking orders from the man who is considered the boss of the house. The play captures the experiences of women who are victims of desertion by their husbands who leave them with the responsibility of catering for the children. Aisosa did not however resign to self pity. Her determination to succeed despite her condition necessitated by Sota’s ill treatment was rewarded by a reversal of fortune.

From the foregoing, it becomes evident that issues of women struggle in Nigeria exist in levels. One is the issue of traditional cultural practices that infringe on the fundamental human rights of women as well as affects their well being, while the other deals with the participation of women in national political issues. While the former directly affects women in rural areas, the latter is the concern of the educated class. The issues of early marriage, widowhood practices, female genital mutilation, semantic derogation of women, among others seem to constitute the bulk of issues affecting the rural Nigerian women. The treating of these issues by playwrights, in the opinion of Salami-Agunloye, should be such that intervention should be introduced which will bring about radical changes and improve the life of the Nigerian woman [18]. The voice women will reflect their real thoughts.



It is worth noting that the experiences of women that are privileged in terms of education and social class differ from that of women in the rural areas. The grip of tradition is not so tight on certain issues that involve women basically because of the influence of the environment as the case will be in urban areas. These women are able to speak out and be heard because the orientation of the male folk has been altered to accept with more objectivity issues of fundamental human rights for women.

In contrast with radical Western approach, women in Nigeria are not contesting for the place of the men. There is however a demand for the right to voice their opinion and for such to be esteemed and given due consideration. This will allay the feelings of relegation as they are involved in the process of policy making at all levels. Despite criticisms by people who consider women as insignificant in issues of nation building, women have proven otherwise by various ways in which they stood out in efficient handling of responsibilities. Perhaps the demands of women in Nigeria could be surmised to basically revolve around issues of equity and fairness especially as it affects womanhood.

#### 4. The Balancing Approach by Nigerian Female Dramatists

Female writers in Nigeria have been engaged in evolving an alternative to western feminism that will reflect African ideologies which are not uniform with any other. The concepts of “Stiwanism”, “Motherism”, “Womanism” as the alternative to feminism have received attention in the current struggles by women in Nigeria. This approach has its merits in view of the reactions generated by feminism as a Western concept in a society that holds traditional values and norms in high esteem. The desired messages are able to pass through as the society receives them with an open mind, as these models of African feminism are not in opposition to men neither do they advocate for neglect of biological roles by women. This heightens the likelihood of negotiation as the results have proved over time. With regards to this alternative approaches, Obafemi notes that:

More recent perception of gender politics tend to be more balanced—in fact accomodationist, believing, quiet perceptively, that “not every woman” is a feminist and all men are not oppressors of women, Mabel Evwierhoma who is being quoted here, further asserts, following her skepticism about feminism’s inability to address the problems of the development of the Nigerian woman, that “since no one can be what she is not, the black woman needs to affirm herself and evolve an ideology that suits her aspirations and is relevant to her situation” [19].

Obafemi thus advances that owing to this developments, other types of alternatives to feminism have continued to evolve besides Womanism such as Black Feminism, African Womanism, Motherism.

The marked differences in the Western and African perspectives on the issue of feminist ideas are brought to the fore by women writers. Such differentiation is expressed in Tess Onwueme’s *Tell it to Women* (1995), which portrays the approach to women issues in contrasting light. Some women are seen to fall out with their fellow women folk because of their approach to the idea of liberation thus making the movement a failure because it seeks to empower the women at the expense of jeopardizing the existing family structures of the African society. The rural women begin to question the ideas of the urban women in suggesting a radical independence from male authority. The rural women indicate the pride of their place as mothers and custodians of the kitchen and stomach—the cause of man’s life-long labour. This echoes Chinwezu’s argument that women, by virtue of the womb, the kitchen and cradle have more political power than men [20]. The women of Idu consider themselves jewels and salt of the land thus powerful enough, not desiring to seek freedom nor compete for equality. To show the difference in perception and buttress how comfortable the rural women were with the status-quo, Sheriffat, one of the rural women says:

We see the world in circles: the male is male, and the female, female. No one can take the place of another; nor is one greater than the other. Their value is not measured in terms of greater or lesser value. Each one is priceless in the order of things. Each one is a part of the other; male and female. It is not a matter of male or female [21].

It means the relationship between men and women was more complimentary than competitive.

The thrust of Western feminism as a Western ideology, notes Dadirep in her review of the play, is alien to the rural woman and so is the radical approach to the issue. She opines that:

The negative reactions of the rural women in this play testify that women “oppression” may not be a uni-

versal phenomenon because it is a relative term. In this wise, women oppression is determined by several factors other than biological characteristics which are universal. Based on biological factors women are all sisters but different when ideological, sociological and other factors are considered [22].

This fact thus already makes the concept of feminism to adopt a multiple-pronged approach. There is no singular position that represents the aspiration of all women neither is there a single feminist perspective and approach. According to De Gay, Some feminist of Asian, Afro-Caribbean and Afro-American dissents have developed feminist issues which have their sources in their ethnic origins. In Islamic countries, the desire to stop discrimination against women, outlaw practices like polygyny, the husband's privileged right of divorce and seclusion in the home (*Purdah*) has led to the development of a secular, liberal feminism [23].

Nigerian female dramatists have taken upon themselves the task of fusing together the necessary requirements for understanding the subject of women in relation to men. In the words of Ezenwanebe, "Nigerian novelists are already reconstructing the image of African women that can usher in changes in traditional African family living as a force to withstand the demands of modern society" [24].

## 5. Conclusions

From the foregoing overview of the works of these Nigerian female dramatists, a case was established for the womenfolk in the various plays. The dramatists have added their voices to the call for women in Nigeria to be given due recognition within the society. Women have been in positions of disadvantage despite their contributions to the building and welfare of the family—the nucleus of the society. These female dramatists are wielding a powerful tool in this struggle because drama has remained an effective tool in sensitizing the society on various social issues. A careful exploitation of this genre of literature in addition to the other avenues is an effective way to re-orientate the society on issues that relate to women.

Nigerian female dramatists have particularly strived to strike a balance in their advocacy, realizing their place as stabilizing agents in the society. Their voice is apt in reflecting what concerns them much more than others could do. This is a major contribution to the development of theatre as a mirror of the society.

## References

- [1] Smiley, S. (2005) *Playwriting*. Yale University Press, New Haven.
- [2] Tse-Tung, M. (1967) *On Literature and Art*. Foreign Language Press, Perking.
- [3] Salami, I. (2006) *Nigerian Women Playwrights: Beyond the Nobel Prize*. In: Adeoti, G. and Ewrierhoma, M., Eds., *After the Nobel Prize: Reflections on African Literature, Governance and Development*, ANA, Lagos, 126.
- [4] Okereke, G.E. (1995) *The Politics of Intellectual Production and the Constraints Confronting the Africa-Based Female Scholar*. Paper presented at North-Western University, Evanston-Illinois, Chicago, 15.
- [5] Brown, L. (1981) *Women Writers in Black Africa*. Greenwood Press, West Post, Connecticut.
- [6] Ogunyemi, C.O. (1988) *Women and Nigerian Literature*. In: Ogunyemi, Y., Ed., *Perspectives on Nigerian Literature: 1700 to the Present*, Guardian Books Nigeria Limited, Lagos, Vol. 1, 60-67.
- [7] Bryce, J. (1988) *Some Perspectives on Women and Literature in Nigeria*. In: *Proceedings of the Canadian-Nigeria Workshop*, CIDA, Gatineau, 53.
- [8] Obafemi, O. (2006) *Women Writing and the Landscape of Social Advocacy: Women Literature since Wole Soyinka's Nobel Prize*. In: Adeoti, G. and Ewrierhoma, M., Eds., *After the Nobel Prize: Reflections on African Literature, Governance and Development*, ANA, Lagos, 155-165.
- [9] Adamu, F. (2007) *Women Struggles and the Politics of Difference in Nigeria*. African Gender Institute. [http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/gpo/tagungen/tagungfeministperspectives/fatima\\_1\\_adamu.pdf?1361540682](http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/gpo/tagungen/tagungfeministperspectives/fatima_1_adamu.pdf?1361540682)
- [10] Olaniyan, T. (1988) *Zulu Sofola and Her Sisters: The Example of The Sweet Trap*. *Proceedings of the 13th African Literature Association (ALA) Conference*, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.
- [11] Wandor, M. (1998) *Political Dynamics: The Feminisms*. In: Brandt, G., Ed., *Modern Theories of Drama*, A Selection of Writings on Drama and Theatre 1850-1990, Clarindon, Oxford, 261-268.
- [12] Lewu, M. (2005) *Female Creative Writers and Social Challenges in Nigeria, 1960-1985: A Historical Survey*. *Majass*, 3, 1-12.
- [13] Obafemi, O. (1989) *Zulu Sofola's Theatre*. In: Henrietta, O. and Obiagheli, N., Eds., *Nigerian Female Writers: A Critical Perspective*, Malthouse Press, Lagos, 60-67.

- [14] Dunton, C. (1992) *Make Man Talk True: Nigerian Drama in English since 1970*. Hans Zell Publishers, London.
- [15] Ajayi, F. (1983) Women in Transition: Zulu Sofola's Plays. *Nigerian Theatre Journal*, **1**, 23.
- [16] Amuta, C. (1989) The Nigeria Woman as a Dramatist: The Instance of Tess Onwueme. In: Henrietta, O. and Obiagheli, N. Eds., *Nigerian Female Writers: A Critical Perspective*, Malthouse Press, Lagos, 53-59.
- [17] Salami, I. (2001) Emotan. Mazlink, Jos.
- [18] Salami, I. (2006) Cultural Practices and the African Woman as Portrayed in Some Selected Dramatic Texts. In: Salami, I., Ed., *Women, Theatre and Politics: Contemporary Perspectives*, Saniez, Ibadan, 17-48.
- [19] Obafemi, O. (2006) Women Writing and the Landscape of Social Advocacy: Women Literature since Wole Soyinka's Nobel Prize. In: Adeoti, G. and Ewrierhoma, M., Eds., *After the Nobel Prize: Reflections on African Literature, Governance and Development*, ANA, Lagos, 155-165.
- [20] Chinwezu (1990) *Anatomy of Female Power: A Masculinist Dissection of Matriarchy*. Pero Press, Lagos.
- [21] Onwueme, T. (1995) *Tell It to Women*. Heinemann Educational Books (Nig) in Association with Africa Legacy Press, Ibadan.
- [22] Dadirep, M. (1999) Liberating the Rural Nigerian Woman from Patriarchal Cultural Oppression: The Case of Tess Onwueme's *Tell It to Women...* In: Illah, J.S., Ed., *Theacom Journal*, **1**, 19-33.
- [23] De Gay, J. (2005) Feminism. Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, CD ROM.
- [24] Ezenwanebe, O. (2009) The Empowered Women in Ahmed Yerima's Drama. [www.ajol.info/index.php/cajtm/article/download/76634/67083](http://www.ajol.info/index.php/cajtm/article/download/76634/67083)