

**A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN
AMMA DARKO'S "FACELESS"**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project report written under the supervision of Dr. Anana is a product of my research work. Information derived from various sources has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. This research project has not been previously presented anywhere for the award of any degree or certificate.

.....

CHINWUKO, Ikenna C.

.....

Date

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research project work titled “**A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN AMMA DARKO’S “FACELESS”**” was carried out by CHINWUKO IKENNA CHRISTIAN, with the matriculation number 16020401004. This project report meets the requirements concerning the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Degree in English Language, Department of Languages of the Mountain Top University, Ogun State, Nigeria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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Dr. M. E. Anana
(Project Supervisor)

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Date

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Prof. E. A ADEDUN
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.....

Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I give all glory to God for enabling me to write this project. I would also like to appreciate myself, for the fortitude I showed in the writing of this project. I would also like to thank my family for their support and assistance.

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CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Research has shown that women are victims of discrimination, injustices, inequality, and unnatural subjugation in virtually all parts of the world. In modern times, the evils perpetrated against women and girls take the forms of not being allowed to partake in developmental programs, denial of access to better jobs, political offices, military positions, and participation in the electoral process. In essence, women are regarded as second-class citizens.

The issue of Women empowerment discussed in this project has been garnering more voice over the decades. With over 3000 yearly publications and articles on the issue in up to 250 languages, it is safe to say that the women's empowerment movement has a very loud voice in contemporary society. It is only a matter of time before the tide begins to turn in favour of gender equality for all. Women empowerment is now a reoccurring theme in numerous literature, art, campaigns, and movies. They have massive followership, especially in this modern era. This is due to the mass media, print media, and digital devices. In most societies of the world especially in Africa and the Middle East, patriarchy is the order of the day. Women are treated as weaker and lower beings; unequal to the man. They are oppressed, exploited, refused education, maltreated, and denied their basic human rights, and all of these are considered "appropriate" because they emanate from aspects of the people's culture. In these societies, women are only to be "seen" and not "heard". They are condemned to live in the shadow of men for the entirety of their lives; treated as sex slaves and turned into baby factories.

In virtually every part of the world especially in third world countries and Islamic nations, women are ruled over by men based on sex and gender views. "Sex" according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th edition is "the state of being male or a female". In other words, it is a biological indicator distinguishing the male from the female species, for example, a female is capable of pregnancy while a male cannot get pregnant. This is natural however, "Gender" according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th edition is "the fact of being male or female, especially when considered regarding social and cultural differences, not differences in biology". In other words, the way "sex" is construed by the society, this includes role- relationship such as women being nurses and men, doctors.

These concepts lend credence to the postulation that the gender-based roles found virtually in every society are manmade - created and nurtured over the years by culture, society, and religion influencing views and giving interpretations to the biological qualities of men and women. Thus, while the childbearing ability of a woman stems from her sex, the relegation of many women to household tasks in many societies is due to her gender. Most times, this notion of gender is used to justify the injustices against women as they are oftentimes regarded as the weaker sex, therefore not suitable for a lot of manly jobs and also they are regarded as very emotional, therefore are not considered for or are the underdogs in leadership and political posts.

In these modern times, the majority of women who are victims of these gender roles are in Africa. Now, this is mostly due to either poverty or patriarchy. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th edition defines patriarchy as a "society, system or country that is ruled or controlled by men." In layman's terms, patriarchy simply means the rule of the father. Patriarchy is male domination. It also refers to a system where women are required or forced to be under men. Women are constrained in all facets of life whereas the structure of patriarchy allows men in general more mobility, opportunities, authority, and control.

With these gender roles in place, women, especially in Africa, suffer a lot but in reality, these do not affect just the women but also the communities, societies, and countries in which they live in. Unable to contribute their quota to the economy of the country as their manpower is not utilized, the economies of many African countries are nothing to be proud of. This has led to a growing realization all over the world that women's empowerment is essential for human, national, and global development. Nobel Laureate Dr. Amartya Sen (2009) sees 'development as freedom' which in turn empowers. He emphasizes, "Indeed, the empowerment of women is one of the central issues in the process of development for many countries in the world today."

Faceless by Amma Darko is one of the numerous writings that deal with the concept of women's empowerment expressed in African American literature and even European cultures. Though the book is situated in the African context, it is noteworthy that the problem treated in the novel is a global phenomenon. The major focus of the book is the fact that from birth to girlhood to womanhood, a female in many societies is faced with a lot of barbaric and condescending treatments that are levied against her by culture, norms, and men. The premise here is that fictional narratives are often generated from the real-life experiences of the writer. Women writers

especially in Africa usually focus on the women's condition in their works of fiction because the issue of women's oppression is prevalent in every African society and one cannot simply turn a blind eye to it.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The problem of women maltreatment is universal but based on the text to be used for this project, Africa will be given the major focus. Until recent times, very little was known about the plight of the females in Africa except for obscure depictions in negritude literature. Her ivory skin and supple body were revered by myopic writers who skimmed over the cultural experiences that shrouded her everyday life. Not until the 90s was her plight given the necessary attention by women who took it upon themselves to expose the inhuman treatment that women are subjected to in African societies. One of such female writers, Ghanaian born Amma Darko, provides us with the novel *Faceless* that depict some of the experiences of the present-day Ghanaian female.

1.2 Research Questions

- i. What are the factors that are responsible for women's empowerment?
- ii. Why is women's empowerment important?
- iii. What role does sociolinguistics play in women's empowerment?

1.3 Objective of the Study

- i. To investigate factors responsible or necessary for women's empowerment
- ii. To discuss the importance of women's empowerment
- iii. To analyse the role that sociolinguistics play in women's empowerment.\

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to a growing body of research that explores the challenges facing women in this contemporary society and the possible measures, campaigns, and laws that can be put in place to ensure that women in every society are given the same rights as men and treated equally.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This project covers and provides insight into the problem of women's oppression. All textual references are drawn from *Faceless* by Amma Darko.

1.6 Definition of Terms

The following conceptual terms are defined. Women's empowerment, Sociolinguistics, and Faceless

i. **Women Empowerment:** Women's empowerment according to Wikipedia (2015), the free encyclopedia "is the process of empowering women." In other words, it simply means giving women the right tools and environment to enable them to participate actively in the political environment, economic sphere and also the decision making process of the society.

According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2015), there are two forms of women's empowerment. They are economic empowerment and political empowerment.

Economic Empowerment

Empowering women economically basically means allowing girls formal education, the participation of women in economic decision making, economic independence, and allowing women to get any type of job they want while getting rid of the clichés that would hinder the women from obtaining those jobs.

Political Empowerment

Political empowerment involves creating laws, guidelines, and policies that support gender equality, fairness, and respect. This includes permitting women to vote, hold political offices and posts, and voice their opinions on political matters.

ii. **Socio Linguistics:** This is the study of the language used in a social environment. It is also the study of the way language is affected by differences in social class, religion, sex, and so on.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Empowerment

Describing ‘Empowerment’ is not an easy task due to the diversity of opinions of different scholars.

According to the Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (1995.p.503), “The empowerment of a person or group of people is the process of giving them power and status in a particular situation.”

According to the Merriam Webster New World College Dictionary,

‘To empower’ means.

- a. To give power or authority to;
- b. To give ability,
- c. To enable.

Oxfam (1999.p.3) (It is an international organization working on poverty and suffering)

“Empowerment involves challenging the forms of oppression which compel millions of people to play a part in their society on terms which are inequitable, or in ways which deny their human rights.”

Ackerley (1995) opines that: “Empowerment can be considered as a change in the context of a woman or man’s life that enables her/ him increased capacity to lead a fulfilling human life, characterized by external qualities such as health, mobility, education and awareness, status in the family, participation in decision making and level of material security, as well as internal qualities such as self-awareness and self-confidence.”

Williams et al (1997). posits that:

The idea of ‘empower’ is at the root of the term empowerment. Power can be understood as operating in several different ways -

- Power over: This power involves an either/ or relationship of domination/ subordination. Ultimately, it is based on socially sanctioned threats of violence and intimidation; it requires constant vigilance to maintain, and it invites active and passive resistance,

- Power to: This power relates to having decision making authority, the power to solve problems and can be creative and enabling,
- Power with: This power involves people organizing with a common purpose or common understanding to achieve collective goals,
- Power within: This power refers to self-confidence, self-awareness, and assertiveness. It relates to how can individuals recognize through analyzing their experience how power operates in their lives and gain the confidence to act to influence and change this.

Empowerment can be defined as a “multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important” (Page and Czuba, 1999).

Rappoport (1984) states that it is easy to define empowerment by its absence but difficult to define in action as it takes on different forms in different people and contexts. Even defining the concept is subject to debate.

Zimmerman (1984) opines that asserting a single definition of empowerment may make attempts to achieve it formulaic or prescription-like, contradicting the very concept of empowerment.

Bailey (1992) also states that how we precisely define empowerment within our projects and programs will depend upon the specific people and context involved.

Empowerment is the process that enables individuals to control their lives in communities and society. Empowerment, as it concerns this project, limits itself to raising the status of women through education, awareness, literacy, and training.

2.1 Women Empowerment

Women empowerment has been described by many scholars over the years each presenting his or her unique view of the subject

Srilata Batliwala(2000,p.35) A well-known women activist has defined women’s empowerment as, “the process by which women gain greater control over material and intellectual resources, and challenge the ideology of patriarchy and gender-based discrimination against women in all institutions and structures of society.”

The Human Development Report (1995), stressed that “Empowerment is about participation: investing in women’s capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable in itself but is also the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development.”

According to Nelly Stromquist - “Women’s empowerment must include four components: 1. Cognitive, 2. Psychological, 3. Economic and 4. Political. The cognitive component refers to women’s understanding and causes of such conditions at both micro and macro levels of society

2.2 Historical Background of Women Empowerment

The term ‘empowerment’ is frequently heard today all over the world. It is connected to the word ‘Power’. The term ‘power’ in turn connotes control. In the context of human society, it means control over resources. The resources could be material such as natural resources, financial resources, and human resources such as skills, labour, or intellectual resources including information, ideas and knowledge, etc. Power is a relational dynamic between individuals or between groups of people and is often unequally distributed. The inequality results in control or domination. Many a time the domination is accompanied by exploitation.

According to the New Oxford Dictionary, the term ‘Empowerment’ is derived from the word ‘empower’ which means give (someone) the authority or power to do something; or make (someone) stronger and more confident, especially in controlling in their life and claiming their rights.

According to the World English Dictionary, ENCARTA, the term ‘Empower’ means, inspire (someone) with confidence; to give (someone) a sense of confidence or self-esteem.

The word ‘empower’ arisen in the mid-17th century with the legalistic meaning “to invest with authority, authorize”, is not new. Shortly thereafter, it began to be used with an infinitive in a more general way, having the meaning “to enable or permit.” Both of these uses survive today but have been overpowered by the word’s use in politics and pop psychology. Its modern use originated in the civil rights movements, which sought political empowerment for its followers. The word was then taken up by the women’s movement. In the feminist and development literature related to women issues, this term began to be used in the 1980s. Little by little the idea of empowering

women-mostly poor women in the third world- has been gaining importance in the agenda of NGOs, national governments, and donor agencies like World Bank.

An idea of empowerment may be invoked virtually in any context in speaking about human rights, human basic needs, economic security, capacity building, or existence. Empowerment is a process of acquiring rights, developing oneself independently (self-decision-making process). It is that way of conscience, which paves the way for playing greater active role in all spheres of life and simultaneously empowering the persons to control and change the major works. In other words, it is a process that is directly related to power and to change of power, i.e. the power to control the resources and concepts.

2.3 About the Author

Amma Darko (born 1956) is a Ghanaian novelist. She was born in Koforidua, Ghana, and grew up in Accra. She studied in Kumasi, where she received her diploma in 1980. Then she went on to work for the Science and Technology Center in Kumasi. During the 1980s, she lived and worked for some time in Germany. She has since returned to Accra.

Her novels illustrate everyday life in Ghana. Her first novel, *Beyond the Horizon*, was originally published in German. Her most recent novels, *Faceless* and *Not without flowers*, were published in Ghana.

Her work has been discussed in Vincent O. Odamtten's book *Broadening the Horizon: Critical Introductions to Amma Darko*, in the 2001 doctoral thesis by Louise Allen Zak "Writing her way: a study of Ghanaian novelist Amma Darko", and in several academic journals.

A list of all her recognized works is as follows;

Beyond the Horizon

This is Amma Darko's first novel published in German in 1991 and translated to English in 1995. It is influenced by her impressions of Germany, mostly by observing the interaction between Germans and Ghanaian immigrants. The book is about a young woman, Mara, who follows her husband to Germany. Unknown to her, he had already married a German woman. Though the book deals with serious topics such as illegal immigration, illegitimate marriage, and prostitution, there is never any bitter morality in it.

Spinnweben (translated to "Cobwebs" in English)

Her second novel was published in 1996. There is no English edition. The book is a reflection about roots. There are dialogues between a Ghanaian woman living in Germany and the German friends around her. This Novel is probably based on her true-life experiences in Germany.

Verirrtes Herz (translated to "Stray heart" in English)

This is her first book that is completely set in Ghana. It was published in the year 2000. This novel also has no English edition. It tells the story of a young protagonist, Kesewa, who is illiterate. She has to work hard for her parents and brothers and is unable to attend school regularly. In her adult life, she becomes distrustful and envious and causes a lot of trouble.

Faceless

This is Amma Darko's fourth novel and also the Novel to be used for this project. It is a novel about a middle-class woman coming into contact with street children who are living in a part of Accra known as "Sodom and Gomorrah".

Not Without Flowers

This novel was published in 2005. In this book, the reader encounters some figures and institutions from the preceding novel. One of the central characters, Aggie, works for the NGO MUTE, which aims to create an archive and an alternative library. Aggie's mother has a mental disorder and is kept in a prayer camp. Idan, Aggie's husband, starts an affair with the very young Randa.

Between Two Worlds

This novel was published in 2015. In this novel, very similar to her first novel, *Beyond the horizon*, two worlds converge: A Ghanaian man and a German woman fall in love in Germany, in the 1960s. Years later, their grown-up twin daughters are confronted with information about the collapse of their parents' marriage. The reader sees the situation from both angles. He gets to know how the man grows up in the British colony Gold Coast and the woman in post-war Germany. The novel also has a spiritual dimension. The topic of twins is very important as well as the natural religion of the Akan people in Ghana with their fetish and clan priests, libations, and drumming. As in her previous novels, Darko's humour shines through the serious topic.

2.4 Sociolinguistics

In order to properly understand sociolinguistics, Language, society, and Literature will be looked into under a single heading.

Language, Society, and Literature

Language is a unifying factor that connects members of a particular society in their relationships and interactions. It is a useful tool and instrument of social integration and cohesion. Besides, it is an important necessity for information dissemination. Without language, human interactions would be an impossible task. Little wonder that Adeyanju (2002) argues that: “Man cannot... part with language and remain himself in terms of creative ingenuity, intellectual capacity and social upliftment above all other creatures”.

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and society. It studies language and how it is being used by human beings in social situations. This social situation is commonly known as context. It exerts tremendous influence on the form of language to be used as well as the meaning to be read to utterances (Stockwell, 2002).

Language and society are closely related. Without language, members of any society or community cannot relate meaningfully with one another. A society's language is a vessel and transmitter of the culture, values, norms, and habits as well as the vision of that society (Dare, 2000). For Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2007), a society's culture will be understood better and promoted through its language because language serves to mirror society and its cultural practices. Dare points out further that the total of society is evident in its literature which is often a profound manifestation of language.

African literature, especially its novels, at one point or the other, embarks on the social mission of cultural nationalism. A novel of cultural nationalism is a novel of self-assertion. In *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, for example, the famous Nigerian writer, Chinua Achebe vividly portrayed, glorified, and celebrated the Igbo cultural tradition. Besides, through social realism, African novelists in general and Ghanaian writers, in particular, have given and are still giving readers the true picture of the prevailing social realities in their respective home countries. This is achieved effectively through the use of language. This implies a symbiotic kind of relationship between language, society, and literature.

Given the above information, it could be safely argued that African literature, especially the novel, is a profound portrayal of social events. In *Faceless*, the selected text in this study, Amma Darko, focuses on the themes of parental neglect, street life, and derelict social values with their accompanying effect on Ghanaian society. While commenting on the social function of literature, Bach and Harnish (1979) have noted that: “literature is a social discourse in which the writer operates on the linguistic and communicative presuppositions in the social context.”

In the same vein, Kehinde (2005) states that “art is never created in a vacuum” but that it is “a mirror of the social milieu in which it is created”. He states further that “for any literary work to merit meaningful consideration, it is necessary that it bears relevance, explicitly or implicitly, to the social milieu in which it is set.” African writers can in no way divorce themselves from the society in which they operate. Every society is embedded with the raw materials for the production and articulation of literary work. According to Hassan (1988), “no author lives alone with the language”. She notes further that “she (the author) is surrounded by the taken-for-granted realities of her community. The assumptions that inexplicably flow into the writing speak of the culture”. Despite the presence of some forms of formalism and structuralism which try to prove the autonomy of literature independent of historical and social realities, the agreement among literary critics is that every work of art must have been influenced by the historical and social realities in which the author finds himself. No wonder readers of contemporary literary works would simply find their daily experiences enacted and interpreted for them in literature (Babatunde, 2003).

The foregoing has extensively examined the relationship between language, society, and literature. Literature has been described as a mirror of the socio-cultural context in which it is produced. It is, however, the position of this paper that no matter how perfect a mirror may be, it cannot be a complete reflection of reality. In literature, writers would often embellish their stories by blending and mixing fiction with fact, thus projecting their characters and events in mediated contexts.

With the above explications, sociolinguistics will now be looked into.

Milroy and Milroy have defined sociolinguistics as “the study of language as it is used by real speakers in social and situational context of use”. The social context in which language is used by human beings determines the interpretation of the speech or utterance used. Besides, to effectively study human speech behaviour, knowledge of the social environment of the speaker and hearer involved is very important. This view is corroborated by Hudson’s argument that “to study speech

without reference to the society which uses it is to exclude the possibility of finding social explanations for the structures that are used". Apart from studying the language structures used by the speaker(s), sociolinguistics also studies the speakers themselves, their relationship with each other, why they have used language in the ways they did, the topic of discourse, the place, and manner in which the discourse takes place.

In a bid to examine the use of language by speakers in social and situational contexts of use, renowned sociolinguists have propounded several theories namely; the deficit hypothesis, the variability concept, the speech act theory, and the ethnography of communication. This paper will be limited to only the ethnography of communication because it is the pivot of the present study.

2.5 The Ethnography of Communication

The Ethnography of Communication likewise known as Hymes's "SPEAKING" (Hymes, 1992) was introduced into sociolinguistic studies when the need for the analysis of language in its social context became imperative among linguists. The indispensable role of the social context in the meaningful and effective interpretation of speech events has been emphasized in various literature. The introduction of this theory into sociolinguistic studies marked a departure from Chomsky's (1966) emphasis on linguistic competence and performance, a theory that deals with ideal situations that do not exist (Mbisike, 2005: 187). For Chomsky, "linguistic competence was a matter of the mastery of grammatical rules". The components of the ethnography of communication have, however, established that there is more than this to linguistic competence. For Hymes (1972), "the competency of users of language entails abilities and judgments relative to, and interdependent with socio-cultural features". Therefore, scholars in sociolinguistics have argued for the expansion of the object of linguistic inquiry from linguistic competence to communicative competence.

In communicative competence, as proposed by Hymes (1972), a child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical but also as appropriate. He also notes that "the child acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. Eventually, a child can accomplish a repertoire of speech acts and take an active part in speech events.

Therefore, communicative competence is the complete mastery of grammatical rules and also the ability to infer (generally) what an interaction is about, what is expected of us, and general

knowledge of the social norms of the society or social context in which the communicative event takes place. For Adebite, (2000) “communicative competence implies the ability of participants in an interaction to relate linguistic forms with the social norms and situational features in order to interpret utterance correctly”. In his view, Adeyanju (1998) points out that “speaking goes beyond adherence to certain grammatical rules. It is a culturally patterned activity...”

For communication to be effective between interlocutors in a speech event, both have to possess not only the knowledge of all of the grammatical sentences of the language of communication. They should also share cultural norms stipulated by the culture of the society in which they find themselves. Every society’s culture has a convention or socio-cultural rule of behaviour that participants must share before they can communicate successfully and meaningfully with each other. Some of these conventional rules may be universal in application while some are culture-specific. He also notes further that a lot of times, different societies may have different orientations towards universally-formulated conventional rules.

Every language event takes place at a particular place with some people in attendance. This, according to Malinowski (1923), is called “context of situation”. Context of situation is based on the idea that the meaning of an utterance, word, or expression is provided only in the context in which it is uttered. Therefore, analysis of language within the social context in which it is used was first described by Hymes (1964) as “ethnography of speaking” and later called ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1972). This theory highlights the role of social context in the interpretation of utterances or speech events. In fact, for effective and meaningful interpretation of an utterance or speech event to be realized, the language user’s knowledge of the social context of such a speech event is important. Our utterances or expressions are more meaningful and effective when they are uttered in the appropriate social contexts.

Other factors that also influence language variation include the subject matter or topic being discussed; the medium of communication, the setting and the occasion of the language activity, the ‘context’ of the person spoken to, and in particular, the role relationships of the participants in a discourse or speech event. All these have been recognized as features of social context.

Hymes (1972: 1992) has identified several features which he calls components or features of social context. For mnemonic ease, Hymes therefore, suggested the acronym, SPEAKING to encapsulate all the features. Hymes’ components of SPEAKING are presented as follows:

Situation: This is made up of both the setting and scene. These refer to the general physical environment or setting or context in which the communicative event takes place, including the time, period, place, weather conditions, and cultural view of the setting.

Participants: This describes the status, roles, and relationship between the sender or addresser, on one hand, and hearer, receiver, or addressee, on the other hand. The speaker–hearer denotes participants in a speech event; sender–receiver denotes participants in both speech and non-fictional writing for example author and reader; addresser– addressee denotes the implied author and implied reader of a fictional text.

Ends: This refers to outcomes of a speech act, which can be classified into results that could be intended or unintended, and goals that could be individual or general.

Act Sequence: This refers to the form and content of the message: how and what is said, the words used, and the topic.

Key: This describes the manner in which a message is conveyed.

Instrumentalities: These are the channels used in communication and the forms of speech, e.g. telephone, telegram, face to face, E-mail, etc.

Norms: This refers to conventions or rules of social and speech behavior which are linguistic, paralinguistic, and non-linguistic. Conventions may be universal or may be specific to cultures of participants.

Genres: Genres are categories that can be identified through the linguistic forms they typically employ, e.g. poem, letter, story, etc.

All these issues are treated in relation to various socio-linguistic concepts including;

Social Context

Llamas and Stockwell (2002) noted that there is a social and contextual dimension to every naturally occurring use of language and that these social factors determine the choice and form of what is written, said, or understood.

Gender and power

It should be noted that the notion of gender accounts for some of the apparent differences in the way men and women use language.

Age

Old and young people use language differently. Features can reveal evidence of changes in language use over time. For example, in Nigeria, older people use proverbs more than the younger ones. The young have all sorts of slang and contemporary usage of language that are not familiar to the older ones.

Audience

Conversations are usually designed with a recipient in mind. It makes speakers adjust their tone, accent, and style at times.

Identity

People are usually aware of their personal, ethnic, political, and family identities and this is often a factor in their language use. People voluntarily or involuntarily express their family or membership of a particular social group in their speech.

2.6 Important Features of Sociolinguistic Analysis

Analysts of sociolinguistic texts, in general, have grouped the social situations into three defining characteristics: place, role-relationship, and topic. Together, these make up a set of typical domain. One common domain is home. Domains are named usually for a place or an activity in it. Home, then is the place. The role-relationship associated with home includes family members (mother, father, son's daughters, etc.) There are a suitable set of topics such as activities of the family, news about family members, the meal, the household, etc. A particular variety of language is appropriate to the domain. Another common domain is work. The place might be a factory or an office or a school or a store. The role-relationship includes boss, workers, students, colleagues, customers, etc. The topics are work-related. It is worth mentioning that the sociolinguistic complexity occurs when two people who have one role-relationship at home (such as father and son) have another at work (boss and worker, for instance). When they speak, they can choose a register or language variety to show which relationship is dominant at that time. So, sociolinguists have to specify the

roles of speakers and hearers and their relationship, whether they were friends, strangers, young, old of equal or unequal, and many other factors.

Speech Community

The concept of speech community is very important for the analyst of sociolinguistic texts. A speech community is a group of people who share a set of norms and expectations regarding the use of language. A very special feature of a speech community is that it shows a specific usage of language as a result of a group of people frequently interacting or living together. It can also be used to refer to a group of people that share the same skill, education, ideology, and norms. Such groups can be villages, countries, political or professional and communities with common interests, hobbies, or lifestyle, or even just a group of friends

Speech Community from Different Points of Views

John Gumperz (1968:381) defined the speech community as any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of shared body of verbal signs that set off similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage. Gumperz (1968:381) identifies two important components of the speech community: its members share both a set of linguistics forms and a set of social norms that govern the use of those forms.

He introduced the concept of linguistic range, which is the degree to which the linguistic systems of the community differ so that speech communities can be multilingual, diglossic, multidialectal, and heterogeneous - depending on the degree of difference among the different language systems used in the community. Secondly, the notion of compartmentalization described the degree to which the use of different varieties were either set off from each other as discrete systems in interaction.

Noam Chomsky (1965:3) concentrates primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogenous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance. Where Gumperz formulation was designed to incorporate heterogeneity, by focusing on shared norms of language use rather than a shared linguistic system, Chomsky's definition explicitly rejected it.

Chomsky argued that linguistic competence was logically prior to linguistic performance, and that competence was necessarily homogeneously distributed among all speakers of a linguistic community.

Another influential conceptualization of the linguistic community was that of William Labov, (1972:120-1) which can be seen as a hybrid of the Chomskyan structural homogeneity and Gumperz' focus on shared norms informing variable practices. Like that of Gumperz, Labov's,(1972:120-1) formulation stressed that a speech community was defined more by shared norms rather than by shared linguistic forms. But like Chomsky, Labov (1972:120-1) also saw each of the formally distinguished linguistic varieties within a speech community as homogeneous, invariant, and uniform. Labov's, model was designed to see speech varieties as associated with social strata within a single speech community, and it assumed each stratum to use a single variety.

Labov's, model was designed to explain variation between social groups within a single speech community, and for this reason, it assumed that each social group within the speech community form a neatly bounded unit definable in terms of discrete and co-relatable variables, such as ethnicity, education, race, class, gender, age, ideology, and specific formal variables of linguistic usage.

To substantiate the views and conclusions of the sociolinguists cited above, the researcher has found that Labov's model was designed to explain variation between social groups within a single speech community and it is closer to three defining features of the social situation: *place, role-relationship, and topic*, which is our model for text analysis. The researcher has chosen selected literary texts from the novel: *Faceless* and subjected them to close sociolinguistic analysis.

The study aims to demonstrate from texts selected that variation is found within a single speech community since we will find in our analysis of the texts different types of characters with different relationships. The researcher is going to find these types of relationships whether they are power-relationship or solidarity and intimacy according to the characters involved. In *Hard Times*, for example, the role-relationship includes boss, workers, students, customers, etc. The topics are work-related, while in *Pride and prejudice*, for example, the role-relationship associated with homes includes family members (mother, father, sons, daughters, etc.). The topics are associated with family members.

2.7 Overview of Amma Darko's *Faceless*

Faceless centres on the life of a 14-year-old girl who is forced to take up life in the streets following the failure of her parents to live up to their responsibilities. Her name is Fofu. Fofu's street life, together with that of her sister, Baby T, constitutes the main thread with which Darko weaves her story about the street child phenomenon in *Faceless*. The story begins with Fofu's narrow escape from an attempted rape by one of the notorious pimps and street lords in Sodom and Gomorrah, a section of Accra's inner-city populated by criminals, delinquents, and the dregs of the society. Fofu is asleep in front of one of the provision stores at the Agboghloshie market, a Sodom and Gomorrah neighborhood in Accra when, around 2 am, she wakes up to find Poison, a street lord, trying to sexually violate her. She struggles with him and manages to escape the assault. After the escape, she seeks out her friends, Odarley, to share the experience. Since she is aware of a connection between her mother and Poison, she later goes home to intimate her mother, Maa Tsuru, of the experience. The mother advises her to steer clear of poison by going away, leaving Accra if possible. Because her mother gives no specific reason, Fofu is more confused.

However, realizing that her mother's advice may be worthwhile after all, she breaks off with her friend, Odarley, and plans to get out of Poison's reach by leaving Sodom and Gomorrah's neighborhood. To get money to make this possible, she decides to steal. It is this criminal venture which brings her into contact with Kabria who ultimately becomes instrumental in liberating her from the bondage that is street life. Kabria works with a non-governmental organization (NGO) called MUTE, which is primarily interested in documentation and information building. Kabria saves Fofu from jungle justice in the hands of the crowd which apprehends her after picking Kabria's purse. While sharing the theft experience and discoveries about the girl with colleagues in the office, they all develop an interest in Fofu's story and plight. The result is a resolve by MUTE to enlist the partnership of a radio station, Harvest FM, to investigate the phenomenon of the street child in Accra.

With the producer and the presenter of Harvest FM's 'Good Morning, Ghana' (GMG) show's support, members of MUTE, with the active involvement of Sylv Po, the show presenter, embark on investigative journalism and social research work to unravel the cause of street life for children and, more importantly, to unravel the mystery surrounding the death of Fofu's sister, Baby T, who was also a street child.

In their efforts to achieve the set goals, they interview Fofu, Naa Yomo, Ms. Kamame, Poison, Onko's juju man, and, very importantly, Maa Tsuru. It is in Maa Tsuru's life and its intersections with those of her husbands, Kwei and Kpakpo, that the cause of street life by her children is found. From their investigations and through authorial comments, how Maa Tsuru unwittingly sends Baby T into the streets in an attempt to protect her from continued sexual abuse by Onko, a relative, is revealed. The mystery about the death of the girl is also revealed, as poison is eventually implicated. While doing these, MUTE initially undertakes an informal rehabilitation of Fofu and later proposes a formal one.

To be complete, the plot account must not gloss over the goings-on in Kabria's family. The events in Kabria's family constitute the subplot of the novel. Though with its challenges, the family is presented as a model family whereby children are responsibly cared for by their parents. The experience of family life by Kabria's children and husband provides a sharp contrast to what obtains in Maa Tsuru's family. The children are well-fed, decently dressed, and properly educated. Both parents also work and plan their family (size). The experience of family life by Kabria's children and husband provides a sharp contrast to what obtains in Maa Tsuru's family where hunger, lack of education, an absentee father, and other forms of deprivations force children into streets.

CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This study is descriptive and analytical. The main source of data for this study is the book *Faceless* by Amma Darko. Internet archives, other books treating the issue of feminism, internet articles and posts, textbooks, dictionaries, and journals will also be cited in the course of this project.

The main activity carried out here is the sieving of the novel selected for this project meticulously to extract thoughts and hidden metaphors and ideologies sewn into the fabric of the Novel by the author. These ideas are then developed from infancy and points are brought out with facts to corroborate such. These, together with expert's analysis and studies form the framework and body of this study.

3.1 Research Design

This study makes use of qualitative research design. Descriptive analysis is adopted in analysing the Novel, *Faceless*.

3.2 Population of the Study

The sample of this work is restricted to women in *Faceless*

3.3 Method of Data Collection

The method of data collection employed in this research is documentation where information is gotten from already existing documents. This will rely on both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data source used in this study is the Novel, *Faceless* by Amma Darko while the secondary sources are surveys, books, articles, and journals on the Internet.

3.4 Method of Data Analysis

Data is collected from the Novel, *Faceless*

CHAPTER FOUR – DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

Data is extracted from the text “*Faceless*.”

4.1 Extracts from *Faceless*

1. **“Poison successfully captured her legs between his kneeling thighs.**

“You want to live?” he hissed.

Fofo moaned and nodded under the gravity of his hands.

“Then no noise!” he warned.” (Pg. 4)

Analysis

Place: Agboglobhie market

Role-relationship: rapist and victim

Topic: rape

In this text, we have two different characters, Fofo, and poison. Fofo is the second daughter of maa Tsuru who due to parental neglect has been sentenced to life on the street. Poison on the other hand is a long-time street lord who has risen very high in the underworld community. The ensuing encounter is a rape scene.

It has been statistically proven that rape is the most common crime committed against women .while sometimes this could be because of sexual provocation or lewd behavior, most of the time, it is attributed simply to women objectification.

Amma Darko presents this serious case in a light-hearted manner. One of the first points one would note in this case scenario is the absence of proper security and isolation. It should be noted that rape can never be committed in public. Fofo the victim is portrayed to be communing with the angels and enjoying the good things of life when a very harsh reality creeps upon her. The use of contrast in this passage is very iconic. The lexicons employed when describing Fofo are those of peace and sheepish tranquility while poison is made to look like a predator. This is usually the case

for all raped women. They do not know what is happening until it hits them at their most unguarded moment.

A very short conversation then ensues between the two. Poison has issued a death threat as the aggressor to force his victim to comply to which she responds in the affirmative. Death threats or promise of violence is very always present in rape situations. The aggressor issues a warning to scare the victim into submission. Due to the nature of the crime a rapist is about to commit, these threats are to be taken very seriously. Fofu with her street sense knows this and therefore pretends to comply with the demand of poison. This is probably the best option at a time like this, it tricks the aggressor into thinking the victim is compliant and they can easily have their way so they lower their guard.

This is a crucial point. Women physically are weaker and smaller compared to a man, and since men are almost all the times, the aggressor in a rape case, a woman should be prepared at all times to physically match a man in any case of rape or any other form of aggression towards the woman like battery and domestic abuse. Women are making waves now in the world of martial arts with names like Ronda Rousey, Becky Lynch, and Amanda Nunes. These women are pioneering women involvement in martial arts and it is very doubtful that any man would want to take the risk of abusing them physically. However, in Africa, which is the setting of the book, women's involvement in martial arts is seen as taboo, African societies would rather like to see women as damsels in distress that could be manhandled at any time being at the discretion of their owners the men.

However, with a lot of pioneer women on the frontlines fighting for equality of gender in their quest for women empowerment, those dark era is already getting behind us. Women are now encouraged to participate or learn one form of martial arts ranging from judo, karate, boxing, and Kung Fu. This would greatly increase their chances if not even the odds in any case of rape or even battery and domestic abuse.

Fofu, though with no knowledge of martial arts made a very smart decision. Her wild flailing and striking though she may not have intended struck a soft spot in her aggressor's body. This immediately incapacitated him and gave Fofu the chance to escape.

2. **“you see, my friend’s grandmother said that had my friend not come as a boy, she, being my friend’s father’s mother, would have insisted and ensured that my friend’s mother continued to bear more and more children till she bore a son. (Pg. 13)**

Analysis

Place: Home

Role-relationship: Mother and son

Topic: gender

A sociolinguistic analysis of this text would reveal the attempt to communicate the issue of gender inequality. In most societies, especially African societies, the emphasis is placed on the male gender. This is so as they are expected to either carry on the family name or inherit the family’s property. Women are dealt with as tools which can only be fit for childbearing or domestic labour. This could reach heights whereby a woman is forced to continuing bearing children even more than the economic capacity of the family and if she still fails to bear a male child may be sent packing or attain the role of first wife.

3. **“You saw poverty?” Odarley asked, suppressing a chuckle.**

“Yes.”

“Head to toe?”

“Head to toe. It’s face; it’s ugly square head; its big fat toes. I know its shape like ...”

Analysis

Place: Street

Role-relationship: Friend

Topic: Poverty

Poverty is the biggest problem of women's empowerment. More than fifty percent of women live below the poverty line and this has been the major cause of many women-related inhuman

treatments such as polygamy, rape, wife battery, underage marriage, domestic violence, and marital unfaithfulness.

It has been proven that poverty is the reason for polygamy more than 80% of the time apart from religion and tradition. In rural communities, in order to take care of a bloated family and because of the less value placed on female children, they are married to rich chiefs and traditional rulers who convert his chosen few to sex slaves, totally ignoring the sex needs of the rest while they all become household slaves who may or may not be taken care of based on the whim of the husband.

In the above passage, poverty had become so real to Fofu that it took on a physical form in her imagination. Perhaps due to her experience on the streets and problems experienced at home, her vivid description of poverty took on a rather masculine form with a square head and big feet. While women cannot generally blame men for their predicament, they have surely taken up a position as the custodian of their problems. Men nowadays do not want to see women in control or any position of power, even the damsel in distress in need of a knight in shining armour. However, women have begun to push against this position, and women empowerment would be moved to the next stage if other women would do the same.

4. **“...you see,” she went on, “there is a lot of pain and hopelessness out there on the streets which many seek to deal with through drugs, sex and alcohol. During a recent survey we conducted for a programme, all the girls we talked to out there were already very sexually active. And we also established that, for many of them, rape was their first sexual experience. And I am talking about girls as young as seven. Many were child prostitutes. They had no idea at all about the extent of self-damage. Sex, to them, was just a convenient means of survival. Many were roaming about, oblivious to whether or not they were HIV positive, so...” (Pg.32)**

Analysis

In the above passage, Amma Darko portrays one of the major problems of women empowerment which is sex. Sex does not hold the prestige it once did in the days of old. Nowadays, it has been commercialized. A lot of girls mostly underage are becoming victims of rape forced to be sexually active even before they attained puberty. This experience would eventually haunt them for the rest

of their lives and without help, could also gravely affect their physical, social, and emotional wellbeing. Most of them grow up, get married and are unable to maintain a stable family and sometimes unknowingly abuse or neglect their children due to their former experience thereby passing on their baton of abuse and neglect to their children

It is also a thing of concern however to note that rape is always a prelude to something sometimes worse. After the first experience of rape, if not reported, the abuse is bound to continue and in cases of girls with no guardians or homes, this experience will eventually always lead to prostitution. Teen and underage girls are the hottest prospects in the world of prostitution today just as teenage pornography tops the list as the most requested category of pornography worldwide. Males do not sell in the prostitution and pornography business therefore girls and women are the primary targets. They can either be persuaded into the business or forced either way their rights will eventually be abused, they would end up being stigmatized and as they would barely get the returns for their endeavours are impoverished and are unable to take a stand for themselves or sometimes even leave to find more profitable work for themselves.

Sexually transmitted diseases are also a major factor to consider in the struggle for women's empowerment. Diseases like HIV, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and other sexually transmitted diseases have been a major problem not only to women but to the general human population. A lot of people especially women are walking around oblivious to whether they have been infected with a disease especially a terminal one like HIV. Especially in third world countries, information on these diseases, their symptoms and effects have not been properly disseminated to the population especially those in the rural communities which goes a long way to show the need for proper enlightenment of those at the grassroots of the plague of sexually transmitted diseases as those at the grassroots who constitute the poorest twenty percent of the population are the ones most affected by the plague of STDs. Women with STDs would have limited productivity in society, will have limited employment ventures due to the stigma towards people living with HIV and when the diseases eventually take its toll, treatment would be very expensive and since most of the women involved live below the poverty line, will suffer until they eventually succumb to the diseases.

In conclusion, rape, prostitution, and STDs should be looked into and given priority especially for third world countries and rural communities where this is prevalent in order to protect the integrity,

physical, social and emotional wellbeing of women. This will be a pivotal step in the quest for women's empowerment.

5. **“... Don’t come and make somebody’s palaver my palaver by force. Not one cedi do I get from the man who fathered my little girl. The only thing that man ever gave her was his last name. It cost him not a pesewa. Yet he made sure that somehow, I paid for it. He came and quaffed six free bottles of beer at my expense. Six! Bought solely from my sweat and toil. After which he did the disappearing act from our live, never to return again. So please, don’t come and add to my woes. If a street girl’s body was found behind my salon, so what? As for me, what should I do? Do I look to you like the one who killed her?” (Pg. 61)**

Analysis

Place: Agbogloboshie market

Role-relationship: interviewer and interviewee

Topic: crime

Lack of empathy is a major factor that militates against the attainment of women's empowerment. It is the mentality of most people not even women in this context to completely ignore the problems and issues of other people even when the issue has grave and far-reaching consequences until they eventually find the same problem lurking at their doorstep.

This is the surface analysis of the passage above. A girl had been brutally murdered and her body abandoned behind the kiosk of the hairdresser but she is not even slightly bothered. She does not care about her fellow human being who like her had a life, a father, mother, siblings, loved ones, dreams, and aspirations but was cut short by the evil men of this world. The truth is actually that nobody cares. A corpse whether showing signs of a brutal murder or not should have been a storied case with the news carried about by journalists and media houses with investigations being carried out but this is not the case especially in third world countries. There is so much lawlessness and bad governance in many African countries that it has been referred to in many quarters as a zoo.

Below the surface, the woman begins to bring in her personal problems which like most of the problems we face in Africa are self-imposed. She gave birth to a child for an irresponsible man out of wedlock and even went on to give the child his name and took care of him till the man disappeared from their lives completely. Though the blame is to be shared jointly between the man and the woman, it falls heavily on the woman. Apart from the fact that she spread her legs for a man out of wedlock, she should have taken certain precautions like using birth pills or contraceptives and making the man wear a condom. She should have also looked at the behaviour of the man and his economic standing to consider if he is capable of being a father to her child before engaging in unprotected sex with him. She did not do all this as it is obvious from her oral account that the man was an alcoholic and not even economically buoyant as she even had to buy him his alcoholic drinks.

Now, when both issues are put together, I don't care attitude and self-inflicted problems, it forms a good atmosphere for evil men to perpetuate their wicked acts in broad daylight and everyone is too scared to do something or speak up because it is not them and therefore not their problem.

6. **“The police station stood in a very busy area and was, simply put, a sorry sight. Broken windows, leaking drains, cracked walls and peeling paint greeted Vickie and Kabria. The officer behind the outdated front desk, who seemed very bored with his world, his job and his very own self too, responded to their loud and clear greeting with a sullen nod.” (Pg. 80)**

Analysis

To explore the issues hindering women's empowerment especially in African countries, Amma Darko takes us in-depth into all the major institutions of the state that are meant to protect their citizens. The police station is the first to be addressed. With dilapidated buildings, lack of amenities and motivated manpower, the police that is meant to protect the life of citizens has become a mockery of itself.

This is the situation in which the African society finds itself. Women are not safe in society. They are not free to express and showcase themselves and also are not even assured of any form of protection from the government. They are victimized and ostracized if they speak up about

feminine issues, they are repressed and to round it up, they are not even assured of justice if their rights are violated.

To further explain his point, the police officer took the women and gave them a tour of the police station. A broken file cabinet had not been changed for the past ten years, the wood of the table where he sat is chipped and termite-infested, his seat is torn and tattered, his salary is poor and to crown it, he took them to the yard and the mobility problem would have not even been an issue here as there was not even a police van or vehicle in sight. When all this had been revealed to them, the policeman then led them back in and asked them that is both satirical and sarcastic. He said, “And now, if I may ask again, what was it you said I should do for you?” Given our newfound insight into the mockery that is the police force, there is only one answer they could have given, “Nothing”.

- 7. “It was the second time he had beaten her like that into near coma,” she spat. “The first time, he went begging her family that it was the devil that had made him to do it. This time, her sisters didn’t wait for him to come and tell them who made him to do it. They cornered him, beat him into a pulp, went to him the following morning, and said: sorry! It was the devil that made us do it.” Isn’t that nice?” she roared into laughter. (Pg. 85)**

Analysis

Place: *kenky* house

Role-relationship: Gossipers

Topic: wife battery

This conversation is rather comic and very insightful. A group of women discussing a neighbour. We can tell from the conversation that she has been a two-time victim of wife battery. But the second time the husband did it, her sisters took matters into their own hands and went over to give the man a beating then apologized the way he had done previously.

It is very important to note that these events occurred on the African continent where women are seen as property. It is not an offense to beat a woman in an African setting- sometimes it is even encouraged- and even though it is not lawful or constitutional, the law against it is not a strong one and many cases have been overlooked. Also, in this context, a religious reference is used. Whenever the husband beats up his wife, he always blames the devil. This is done not once but twice and would have been sure to be repeated if any other instances had occurred. Now, Africans are very religious people, and most occurrences, behaviours, and circumstances are often attributed to some spirit being whether malevolent or gracious. In most cases, this done to reduce the weight and burden of a man's actions on his conscience and also help society to see him as more human.

Now we see both factors earlier mentioned at play in this discourse. A man beats up his wife not even once but twice even to the point of coma and then comes back to her family to beg blaming the devil and everything is alright. This is the situation women find themselves in the African community. Their rights and humanity are not respected because of barbaric traditional beliefs and religion. Like the family of the woman, people in Africa do not see anything wrong with a man manhandling his wife and are therefore not going to take any action if he does but just settle for blaming it on the devil.

This is where unity among the oppressed women folks comes in. since there is no law against some certain forms of treatment of women, then there should also be no repercussions if places are reversed. Women should not settle for or play victim to settle the whims of a man. There should be a form of togetherness among women to defend their rights in a primitive society that is yet to recognize them. In the above discourse, the sisters of the battered woman responded by beating up the erring man. Though this is not an advisable way of going about things, it shows the spirit in the women to have their contemporaries treated with respect.

8. "hm," the one in brown went on, "as I sit here with you now, my sister, I don't even know if I am pregnant again or not. He is dead against condoms and won't let me use anything either.

"Ho! How? In this day and age? Why?"

"Oh, ask me again, my sister. He says it is wrong. That it is against the will of God."

"Who told him that? Is he Catholic?"

“Do I even know? Whenever he goes to church on a Sunday, it is to a different Church. I wanted three children. His stubbornness has brought us six. And he still won’t...”

Analysis

Place: *kenky* house

Role-relationship: Gossipers

Topic: birth control

The above discourse is an extension of the previous one. The same factors of religion and imposition of the man’s will over the woman rear its ugly head again but take another form this time. One of the prevailing situations affecting the middle-class society and those below the poverty line not only in African countries but also all over the world is the absence of birth control whether out of ignorance or religious beliefs. It is a very big irony that the rich and extremely wealthy in our society barely raise more than three or four children but the poor who can barely afford a three square meal are the ones raising football teams.

In the above discuss the man is presented as the problem again as in the entirety of the novel. Religious beliefs are also introduced again as a shield for the man to do whatever pleases him at the expense of the woman and get away with it. A deeper analysis of the text would reveal that although the man claims he does not want to use protection based on religious grounds, he is not a religious man himself as he does not even happen to have a permanent church. When we have finally considered all these factors, it may be safe to say that the man’s actions may have hidden motives. It has been proven that the use of condoms, though ensuring safe sex and preventing unwanted pregnancies, also reduces the sensitivity of the male organ making sex less enjoyable.

This may have been the reason for the man’s absurd actions but whatever the reason the woman should not have yielded. One thing women should understand in situations like this is that they are on the receiving end. The man from the above passage does not even seem to be interested in the marriage just the sex and at any point in time, he can easily walk out of the marriage or call it off like the salon owner in the previous passage. Also, financially, they are probably not able to take care of a lot of children or the woman would not even be complaining. Their poor financial

standing is obvious with the woman being a street seller, her husband cannot be better off. Also, the health risk of putting to bed too many times takes its toll on the health of the woman.

With all the above factors in mind, a woman should take a firm stand at all times when it comes to her physical, social, and financial wellbeing. In a situation like this, the woman should call her husband to order no matter the consequences. Therapy and counseling from health professionals should be sought and thorough religious education should be given to him to cure his obnoxious beliefs. If this persists, the woman can implore elders or respected members of the extended family to chide him.

In conclusion, the woman should know that in this context, she is on the losing side and should stand her ground as she would eventually be the one to carry the burden later on.

9. **“Odarley? She is still there in Sodom and Gomorrah.”**

“Do you know why she also left home?” Dina asked.

“She didn’t leave home. She was sacked. By her own mother. She sacked her like a fowl. She said Odarley was troublesome. That Odarley was stealing her money. She is a bad mother. She just didn’t want Odarley around after Odarley’s father left her for another woman and she too found another man.” (Pg. 103)

Analysis

Place: Dina’s house

Role-relationship: friends

Topic: History

This passage and discourse present a very unique scenario from the rest of Amma Darko's previous narratives. For the first time in the novel, Amma Darko's blame pointer rests on the woman. In other words, sometimes the woman is the cause of her problems. This trend of viewing women as one of the causes of the hindrance of their empowerment would then go on and run its course throughout the rest of the novel.

Here, Fofa is asked to give information about her best friend, who is also a street child and she responds that her friend had been chased out of the house by her mother. While her mother gave

lazy excuses for her decision, it is very obvious to the reader and Fofu that the real reason for her sending her child into the streets was so she could be with another man.

One of the strongest bonds of a woman is to her child. A woman that has broken this bond just to be with another man is inhuman. Her daughter who has now been sent to the streets would be exposed to a lot of vices like rape, child prostitution, drugs, and alcohol coupled with the fact that she had not finished her education. She would most likely become a nuisance to society and meet a bitter end.

This is one of the hindrances to women's empowerment. Irresponsible parenthood is one of the leading causes of the problem of women in the world. Couples that are not yet ready for parenthood should practice safe sex and not bring into the world children that they are unable to take care of. Also, a parent should learn to manage and control their bitterness towards one another and if this cannot be done, such emotion should not be vented on their children.

In conclusion, raising a child as a single parent is very stressful but also very rewarding. They should direct and channel positive energy towards their children and treat them properly to avoid preventable cases like that of Odarley.

- 9. “It was shown on television one Sunday afternoon: a film about the discovery of a young girl’s body dumped in the woods of an American county town. The girl turned out to be one of a famous and perceived loose duo of sisters of the town. Interest in who killed her was lackadaisical. Attitudes were like, well, considering her character, “didn’t she get what she deserved”? So investigations into her death stalled after initial efforts yielded nothing. But one girl, a one-time friend of the sisters, refused to let go. Her persistence eventually gained her the attention and the help of the media. Through their combined efforts, the culprits were nabbed. They were the very two police officers that were tasked to investigate her death.” (Pg. 107)**

Analysis

Place: Dina’s house

Role-relationship: friends

Topic: crime

In the above passage, Amma Darko shows us that the problem that hinders women's empowerment is not only limited to the African society, it is a global one. In numerous countries around the world, victimized women are denied justice or any serious attention especially if they had chosen to step out of the norms the global society prescribes for women which is they should be seen and not heard. This is very common in mid-eastern countries like Syria and Israel. Any woman that steps out of this restricting and confining behaviour expected of them will immediately be ostracized, ignored, victimized, criticized, and just overlooked. Some people may even take advantage of this general ill will towards them to do them some harm knowing fully well that they would have the backing of the general population and would invariably get away with their crime. Some of these behaviours that are considered to be out of place for a woman include, scanty dressing, lavish lifestyle, flamboyant dressing, holding powerful positions, dominating males, outspokenness, having multiple sexual partners, drinking, smoking, and using drugs. Note, that all these qualities mentioned would immediately be used to shame a woman but is considered appropriate and even envied behaviour in men.

Women should be given the same rights as men not only constitutionally but also morally and socially. They should not be ostracized in society for speaking up for themselves or coming out of their shells. They should be allowed to express themselves like the men in society.

Also, Amma Darko brings up another important factor in the quest for women's empowerment, persistence. There is no great movement or protest that achieved its goals in a single day, month, or even year. Some movements take years, decades and some even extend into hundreds of years without any appreciable results. Some examples include black movements for the abolition of slavery, movements for the attainment of independence especially on the African and North American continent, and the universal women suffrage movement. The women's universal suffrage should be used as an example of persistence to those struggling for the attainment of women's empowerment. The earliest known mention of the movement was in 1881 when women who owned property on the Isle of Man were given the right to vote and finally, the movement of many years became an enthralling success with the United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in 1979 which identifies women's suffrage as its basic right with 189 countries currently being parties to this convention.

The women's suffrage movement is used as an example here because it is a part of the women empowerment movement. It represents a huge milestone in the progress the movement has had over the years with a lot of determination and persistence. These qualities should also be imbibed by women. They should not let issues affecting them to be swept under the carpet or allow their voice to be relegated to the background.

10. "... but the question of attitude also has to do with one of the most distorted beliefs and perceptions: the equating of the essence of womanhood to reproduction. Let's have a little litmus test here. Who is frowned upon more in this society? The single unmarried mother or the childless married woman?"

"The latter," Sylv Po replied.

"See? Girls are pressurized to prove their womanhood whether they can adequately care " for a child or not. You know the popular saying, don't you? "You give birth. God will take care of the child."

Sylv Po laughed.

Ms. Kamame went on. "In one of the villages we covered, it was common practice for a girl of sixteen and above who had no child to be taunted and called names like "man- woman" by friends and family members. Children have been reduced to trademarks.

Analysis

Place: News house

Role-relationship: host-hostess

Topic: women empowerment

In this conversation between Sylv Po and Ms. Kamame, Amma Darko draws the curtain on the issue of women empowerment in the novel. The rest of the novel from this point onwards will concentrate instead on the theme the of street children phenomenon and basically on just the basic storyline focused on unraveling the numerous issues presented in the novel. This is the first part of the interview to be analysed.

This interview with Sylv Po may also be seen as the writer using one of her characters to voice her thoughts in one final effort to address the issue of women empowerment. In the interview one of the core aspects of feminism is analyse. The glory of a woman has always lied in her ability to bring forth children.

Amma Darko indirectly calls this perception distorted as this should not be. Women should not be measured or accorded respect by the size of their wombs or the number of children they can dole out without having the capacity to take care of, but they should be measured by their character and ability to impact society.

Amma Darko also makes another good point here when she cited an instance where girls above the age of sixteen were picked on and nicked named “man-woman”. She was careful to mention that this was a belief of those in the rural setting and thereby indirectly proposing the solution of education. Only proper education of the female child would give her the common sense to see that there is more to life than proving yourself by your ability to dish out babies. What can also be conveniently noted about the situation is that though been able to give birth to a lot of children is seen as the glory of a woman to a man, the men do not necessarily see it that way. A woman who has nothing to contribute to the household except the ability to bear children will eventually be looked upon as a burden to the household. What was once a blessing would now be seen as a curse. A lot of examples abound of men who beat up their wife’s for being too fertile, marry another wife or just abandon the wife to take care of her numerous children on her own but ignorance or just pure stupidity can be cited as the main reason why these women especially those living in the rural areas do not learn their lesson.

Also, this looming problem of womanhood associated with the ability to bear children is brought to our contemporary society. A question is asked, “...who is frowned upon more in this society, the single unmarried mother or the childless married woman?” The answer is very obvious. Although this may not apply in every corner of the world, it is a major problem in most. Marriage should be based on love and companionship and not about bearing children.

In conclusion, women should be looked at and viewed as partners, companions, wavemakers, leaders, contributors, friends, and family, their worth should not be ascertained based on the number of children they can bring forth but how much they can contribute to the society.

12. **“Our vision is to direct our awareness campaign at those women and girls of our society who are more likely to neglect their children and make street children out of them.”**

“What about the men?”

“We are not shutting them out completely. But we recognize the urgent need to concentrate on the girls because it is they who get pregnant and who bear the brunt of that joint carelessness. It is the females who end up saddled with the child after the male has decided he no longer wishes to stick around and play father after all. So it is the girls who should be sensitized to this reality and urged to take the responsibility of their lives into their own hands.”

Analysis

Place: News house

Role-relationship: host-hostess

Topic: women empowerment

The above passage is Amma Darko's final touch on the issue of women's empowerment in the novel. In this passage, she clearly states the vision and mission of women empowerment. She also brings to a definite conclusion the issues presented in the previous parts of the novel.

In her last touch on the issue, she claims that it will be the women who will eventually get saddled with the responsibility of taking care of the children after the man decides not to play father anymore. Therefore, she believes that the bulk of all forms of empowerment and awareness campaigns should be directed towards females. As she had demonstrated throughout the entirety of the novel, she believes that Men should not be given as much attention probably because they are already the favoured gender in society. She believes that they should be “shut out but not completely.”

In her last and final statement on the matter, Amma Darko believes that the females in society should open their eyes to the reality of the world around them. They should not wait to be gifted

what is already theirs. They should stand together, push for equality of both genders, for equal treatment and respect in society. They should not neglect their fellow sisters who due to cohesion, tradition, ignorance or society are already caught up in the inhuman and barbaric treatments levied against women. They should also raise awareness and speak out against any form of maltreatment. This and many other efforts around the world to achieve women's empowerment would only be possible if women take responsibility for their lives into their own hands.

CHAPTER FIVE – FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Findings

The findings of this project are:

- i. Rape is the most common crime committed against women in the Novel.
- ii. Gender inequality is a major factor hindering women's empowerment in the Novel.
- iii. Poverty is the biggest problem of women's empowerment in the Novel.
- iv. Indiscriminate sex also hinders women's empowerment in the Novel.
- v. Irresponsible parenthood is a major hindrance to women's empowerment in the Novel.
- vi. Lack of empathy also militates against the actualization of women empowerment in the Novel.
- vii. Lack of family planning is a major hindrance to the actualization of women empowerment in the Novel.
- viii. Divorce, separation, and rift between spouses are major hindrances to the actualization of women empowerment in the Novel.
- ix. Vigilance and persistence are keys to actualizing women's empowerment in the Novel.
- x. Sensitization and awareness campaigns are crucial to the actualization of women empowerment in the Novel.
- xi. Societal beliefs and misconceptions are major hindrances to the actualization of women's empowerment.
- xii. Bad government and poor funding of government agencies established to protect human rights, i.e. the police, severely limit the actualization of women empowerment in the Novel.

5.1 Conclusion

A lot of effort is already being put into women's empowerment, encouraging women to break free of traditional roles and do away with gender stereotypes. There are numerous ways of achieving

women empowerment and the aforementioned recommendations are only to name a few. For women to keep up with the changing global trends and fulfill their quota to society, they need to break barriers and push limits thereby making themselves useful contributors to society.

5.2 Recommendations

i. Fair representation in leadership and decision-making roles

Although many women are now making waves as powerful contributors in the political and economic sphere of some countries, gender equality is still a myth in most parts of the world. It is commendable that women are now participating actively in various sectors of the economy, most women still do not have access to good job opportunities and the proper education to get better-paid jobs.

As the focus shifts towards inclusive economic structures, providing women with leadership opportunities and making them a part of the active decision-making process will go a long way in achieving women's empowerment.

ii. More job opportunities for women

The contributions of most women to the economy are virtually insignificant as the bulk of their labour is household-based. Those women who want to earn a living outside domestic labour do not have access to equal job opportunities. Elimination of discrimination in the job sector will help in promoting growth and development.

iii. Women in entrepreneurship

An effective way of tackling gender inequality is giving women entrepreneurial opportunities. States are now taking the initiative to train and equip women with business skills to enable them to stand on their own. Globally, many developing countries are spending a percentage of their annual revenue on developing their women. This will benefit the economies of those countries as the women are encouraged to increase their participation in profitable business.

iv. Elimination of unpaid labour

This is one of the biggest concerns of gender inequality. Many rural women do not see their economic contributions represented on the GDP of their respective countries because their

contribution is domestic and within a household and therefore goes unnoticed. However, with empowerment policies striving to raise the incomes of women, resources are directed to appropriately manage and eradicate the issue.

By controlling the driving factors and protecting women from violence and social abuses, women can be encouraged to explore and utilize their potential

v. Mentorship

Implementation of policies and programmes regarding women empowerment is not enough. To eliminate the problem from the grass- root levels, women should be coached by professionals. The issues affecting both their personal and professional lives should be addressed as without these, it will not be possible for government policies and programmes to be implemented properly.

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