

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Language is an inseparable part of the human society (Kofoworola, 2014). It is a complex phenomenon that deals with words and gestures for communication. It can also be considered as a means through which our thoughts, ideas, feelings and opinions about life is presented. Understanding a language involves knowing words of that language and how it is related to specific meanings.

Linguistics is the scientific and systematic study of language. It can also be defined as the systematic study of the structure of human languages. In Linguistics we have scopes or branches which are:

Phonology is the branch of linguistics that studies the speech sounds of a language.

Morphology is the branch of linguistics that studies the formation of words.

Syntax is a branch of linguistics that studies the construction and organization of sentences.

Pragmatics deals with the study of words outside the dictionary context of meaning. Semantics which is my focus in this project deals with the study of the meaning of words and expressions either isolated or used in sentences.

Semantics is the branch of linguistics that studies meaning in a language. The word semantics was first used by a French Philosopher Breal Michel in 1897. It can also be defined as the study of the meaning of linguistic expressions. It involves the interpretation, meaning of words, sentence structure, symbols etc. Lexico-semantics is the branch of semantics that deals with the meaning of words.

Feminism can be regarded as a movement that agitates for the social, political and economic rights of women. It is a term that can also be referred to as the “women liberation movement”. This movement is established to liberate the women society from patriarchy. “...women have traditionally been dehumanized by a male dominated society which they call patriarchy....” (Lara Huda, 2015). Patriarchy is seen as a world where men dominate every institution of power and influence both structurally and culturally. Most of the popular positions of power and prestige are occupied by men. Feminist

movements have protested and will continue to protest and fight against male violence against children, domestic abuse, rape, prostitution etc. It is one of the oldest social justice movements that the world has ever known.

The male counterparts always have this ideology that both sexes are not the same in strength. The fact that men are physically strong and should rule made sense in a thousand years ago but not now. This is because those days, human beings lived in a world in which physical strength was one of the criteria for ruling. The physically stronger person was more likely to lead and men in general were regarded as physically strong because they fought battles and did most of the hard works like tilling the soil, hunting, fishing, becoming the guards of kings and chiefs etc. (Chimamanda Adichie, 2013).

Here, in our present time, things are no longer the same. The person that leads is not based on physical strength. The person that leads is someone that is intellectually sound, creative, innovative and has great goals and visions for the followers. All these attributes above cannot be traced to the male sex alone because the female sex also have the ability to exhibit these attributes and rule effectively. If we believe this, then we have to understand that something else have been relegating women to the background. These things are the society (gender) and structural inequalities.

The society has been set up to make women economically vulnerable when it chooses. The society works with the term of gender instead of sex. Here, it allocates roles for both sexes. The society explains that the women should do the house chores, take care of the children, respect the wishes of the men, cook for the men etc (Fonchingong, 2011). All these role allocations given to the women will shrink their abilities and make the wings of their eagles to break. It relegates the women to the background. It still tells women things like “you can have ambition but not too much”, “you can aim to be successful but not too successful”, “a woman that is too successful will be seen as threat to a man and end up dying single”.

When the females finally get married, they are taught to accept compromise because it is a key that can keep them in the marriage. Some go through a lot of abuses and still stay in the marriage because the society will blame them for not being women that are able to

keep their homes. This explains why Ada's mother would rather die in a loveless marriage of much domestic abuse despite the advice from her siblings to leave. (*Shadows from the Past* pg.141). Gender as it relates to our society is a grievous injustice especially to the female sex.

Another is structural inequality. It deals with the unequal distribution of functions, rights, decisions and opportunities in a given economy. Men and women should be paid equally for the same job. But this is not so, men are paid more than women in an economy. In the education system, some courses are regarded as masculine and some feminine. This can be illustrated using the Arts and Science courses.

Most females are seen studying Art courses and more males are found in the science field. This could explain why men claim they have a white-collar job and women have a pink collar job. When feminists ask for equality, they do not mean equality with men that are not successful because the males usually get this wrong. By equality, they mean equality with successful men in the society. If men are C.E.O's women as well should be C.E.O's , women should be Governors, Vice president and other top positions occupied by the men including the position of Presidency. This is because women need to be part of building something better for the nation.

With all these ill-treatments in place, made some women to come together, equip themselves and fight the fight of freedom from their male counterparts. These women protested and fought against dehumanization, political enslavement, social oppression, rejection, dejection etc. These few women were called feminist and gave birth to feminism. Feminism simply is the struggle for equal rights of both sexes.

Feminism is not just concerned with a group of people it wants to benefit but it is concerned with a kind of injustice it wants to abolish which is beneficial to women. It is a movement that is against injustice. Many of them became writers and wrote on the woes and suffering of these women to buttress their points. Others wrote stories portraying women as a valuable entity in the society, portraying women as independent and does not require the support of men to succeed. Most of these writers are: Ama Ata Aidoo, Chigozie Anuli Mbadugha, Chimamanda Adichie etc.

Above all these mentioned, my main focus on this project is on the writer Chigozie Anuli Mbadugha using her book *Beyond the Trial*. In her book, she did not only outline the woes and sufferings of women but she also portrayed them to be independent and not see their male counterparts as a pre-requisite for their success.

## **1.2 Statement Of The Problem**

The issue of inequality in the aspect of sex especially to the females is a problem in Nigeria. Marriage is seen as torture. The man sees himself as a lord. It is a thing of ownership not partnership. This is because respect is only given by the wife to the husband and not from the husband to the wife. Giving birth to the female is seen as an abomination. Just the male children are celebrated to be actually useful children. The widows are treated badly and some were even accused for killing their husbands. Inheritance of women were based on marriage. A successful woman of a certain age that is not married is seen as a failure by the society while a successful man that is not married is seen as a man that has not found the right woman.

For these reasons, the research is carried out to address the problems of women marginalization and oppression by men through their use of language and actions using the text *Beyond the Trial* by Chigozie Anuli Mbadugha.

## **1.3 Aim And Objectives Of The Research**

The aim of this study is to investigate the Lexico-Semantic analysis of Feminism in Chigozie Anuli Mbadugha's *Beyond the Trial*.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. Identify problems faced by women in *Beyond the Trial*.
- ii. Analyse the Lexis and their interpretations on feminism.
- iii. Examine characters that portray feminism.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. What are the problems faced by women in the text?
- ii. What are the lexis and their interpretations on feminism?
- iii. How do the characters in the novel portray feminism?

#### **1.5 Significance Of The Study**

This research work on A Lexico-Semantic Analysis of Feminism in Chigozie Anuli Mbadugha's *Beyond the Trial* is of great importance to many especially to the females that go through one or more oppressions in the hands of men. Using the stories by this writer, women will be inspired on how these females were able to overcome their trials by providing a solution to it.

It will contribute to the growing discourse of feminism and it will add its own quota to scholarship.

This work will serve as a secondary material for those researchers who would want to research on a related topic to Feminism. It would be of a great assistance to them.

#### **1.6 Scope And Delimitation Of Study**

The scope of the study is limited to the novel *Beyond the Trial* by Chigozie Anuli Mgbadugha and not to her other works. The research specifically covers feminism and not materialism, socialism, economic degradation etc.

#### **1.7 Operational Definition Of Terms**

- Feminism: a social justice movement that fights for women that are marginalized and oppressed in the hands of men.
- Gender: deals with the various roles allocated to the both sexes by the society due to the high-level of exaggeration of the differences in both sexes.
- Patriarchy: describes a society that all the power and influence of prestigious positions are controlled by men.
- Sex: pertaining to a person's biological composition either male or female.
- Society: involves a group of people living in a locality that shares the same language, culture, rules and norms in common.
- Feminist: is a person either male or female that agitates for women that are marginalized and oppressed in the hands of men.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

Defining the terms feminism and feminist is not an easy task because different people have their different perspectives and perceptions about the both terms. This is why various key words such as: freedom, women, human, liberation etc are used by scholars and authors to define the terms.

Alice Jardine says ‘who and what, then do we mean by ‘feminist’? That word...poses some serious problems... that we would want to end up demanding a definition of what feminism is....’ Jardine further says’’ feminism is generally understood as a movement from the point of view of, by and for women’’.

The following are definitions of feminism and feminist given by scholars and authors:

- ❖ Feminism is a mode of existence in which the woman is free of the dependence syndrome (Chaman Nahal, 1991)
- ❖ Feminist is a man or a woman who says yes, there is a problem with gender as it is today and we must fix it, we must do better (Chimamanda Adichie, 2013)
- ❖ Feminism is a political discourse, movement, theory and philosophy working towards equity (Kay and Ward 2016).
- ❖ Feminist is an individual who pursues equity (Kay and Ward 2016).
- ❖ Feminism is women refusing to be victims (Gloria Steinem 2001).
- ❖ Feminist is someone who believe in equal rights (Hillary Clinton, 2015).
- ❖ Feminism is a cultural, political or economic movement aiming for equal rights for both women and men (Martina, 2016).
- ❖ Feminist is any woman who cares to think about her own affairs as men do not think she oughter (Alice Duller Miller,1915).
- ❖ Feminism is a belief in freedom and human development (J.S Mill 1993).
- ❖ Feminist is a woman that believe in equality and stands for equality (Emma Watson 2015).
- ❖ Feminism is the freedom of expression, right to do whatever feels right and live independently (Maya Koparkar 2017)

- ❖ Feminist is a woman who feels free enough to do whatever (Lana Del Ray,2014)
- ❖ Feminism is a struggle to correct laws and practices that prevent women from achieving full equality with men in aspects of domestic and public life (Murphy,1995)
- ❖ Feminism is a political theory and practice to free all women (Barbara Smith 1979).
- ❖ Feminism involves women being respected as human beings, who can solve problems and participate in everything (Domitila Barrios de la Chungara 1975).
- ❖ Feminism is that part of democratic freedom which applies to women (Beatrice Forbes and Robertson Hale 1914).
- ❖ Feminism is the opportunity of becoming the best that her natural faculties make her capable of (Millicent Garret Fawcett 1878)

Above all these definitions, feminism is a political, economic and social justice movement that fights for women that are marginalized and oppressed in the hands of men.

Feminist is a person either male or female that fights for women that are marginalized and oppressed in the hands of men.

## **2.1 History Of Feminism**

The history of feminism can be traced to a debate raised at Seneca Falls in America in 1848. This debate raised by Elizabeth Stanton (1815-1902) and her friend Lucretia Mott (1820-1906) on the issue of women's freedom and equality. They said that the American constitution should be amended to read: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal". Their primary aim was on the rights of women to be able to vote in elections.

Mary Wollstonecraft known as the mother of feminism because she is rightly regarded as the first major feminist. She is famous for her book "Vindication of the Rights of Women" in 1792. She argues for the economic independence of women. In her book, she explained that one of the reasons the men do not regard the worth of the women is because the women lack education.

The women were not allowed to go to school and develop their intellectual skills. She supports this argument with the claim that human beings either men or women has the ability to reason and one of the things that make the men feel the women were not as smart as them



is because the women were not given the same education as the men. At the end of the book she said a future with educated women will be more bright than a future with educated men.

John Stuart Mill was also a strong feminist. It is believed that he was greatly influenced by his wife. He wrote a book titled "The Subjection of Women" in 1993. In his book, he talked about the subjection of women in terms of marriage. It was very popular at that time in the Victorian society for women to depend solely on their husbands for survival. He likened the situation of the women to that of slaves who get their food, clothes and everything they need for their survival from their masters. Because of these privileges gotten from their masters, they would not have the boldness to disobey their masters.

This is also applicable to the wife because she gets her clothes, feeding, shelter and everything from her husband. Because of this, she will not want to think that they are equal and should have some elements of freedom to do things in the way she pleases. He said "The wife entire dependence is on the husband, every privilege or pleasure she has, has being either his gifts or depending entirely on his will". (John Stuart,1993). He claims that marriages would be healthy if the women were not only educated but also empowered socially.

From here, feminism began to grow and spread to different countries in the world. Women authors began to write on the sufferings and oppressions of women because they believed their voices would be heard. Movements concerning feminism were made and slogans were also coined "a woman's body, a woman's right". In the United States, organization such as "The National Organization for Women" (NOW) was created. In Nigeria, it is known as "Women in Nigeria"(WIN).

## **2.2 Meaning And Theories Of Semantics**

Semantics is from the greek word 'semantikos' which means "significant". The term was first coined and used by Michel Breal in 1897. He is a French Philologist and a Linguist. The term was used to describe how meaning was attached to various words and expressions. Another important figure that contributed to the growth of semantics is Alfred Korzybski. He is known as the first person to study semantics as a different discipline from the discipline of philosophy. He also introduced the scientific

approach to study semantics. The following are the definitions of semantics by scholars such as Crystal, Lyons and Antonio Gragera.

- “The study of meaning of linguistic forms” (Crystal,1974).
- “The study of meaning” (Lyons,1981).
- “The study of the relationship between signifiers-words, phrases, signs and symbols” (Antonio Gragera, 2016).

The branch of Linguistics that involves how meaning is realised and generated is known as semantics. There are many theories of semantics but for the purpose of this study only a few will be studied. Therefore, the theories of semantics are:

2.2.1 Referential Semantic theory: the referential theory of semantics state that the meaning of an expression is what it refers to, or stands for (Lyons, 1981). Russell posits that: the meaning of an expression is whatever that expression applies to. This means that if a person learns the meaning of the word ‘apple’, the meaning applies to apple and nothing else. The fact that the meaning of an expression is what it refers to is not always applicable in all cases that a referent can be identified for a word or phrase in the real world.

According to Frege, he said that two expressions may have the same referent without having the same meaning. For example, Muhammadu Buhari and the Commander in Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Here, the both expressions have the same referent but different meaning. There is a relationship between reference and symbol as well as reference and referent (Richard and Ogdeen, 1923). Here, it implies that words have meaning in the sense that they are symbols and refer to some external realities.

2.2.2 Ideational Semantic theory: The theory of Ideational Semantics was developed by a British empiricist philosopher known as John Locke. This theory tries to claim that the meaning attached to words can be separated from the words themselves. Here, meaning is generated in the mind in the form of ideas. Thus, the meaning of a word is the idea of the word or expression generated in the mind of the speaker and hearer.

Successful communication occurs when the hearer or listener can correctly decode the speaker's words into their appropriate or associative ideas. According to John Locke the meaning of an expression is the idea associated with it in the mind of anyone who knows and understands the expression. Therefore, the different range of possible meanings attached or ascribed to words are a set of available feelings, images, ideas, concepts, thoughts and inferences that can be produced as soon as those words are heard.

2.2.3 The Use Theory: According to Wittgenstein (1953) he explains the use theory of semantics. He said ‘‘ for a large class of words... the meaning of a word is its use in the language’’. This simply means that one can know the meaning of a word or words when they are used in a sentence. The theory views the meaning of an expression when it is used in a speech community.

2.2.4 Contextual Theory: Firth (1957) introduces the term ‘‘context of situation’’. He said that the meaning of a sentence can be generated in terms of the situation or context that the expression is used or it can be generated from the levels of language such as: Phonetics, Grammar and Semantics.

According to Crystal (2008) he describes context of situation as the whole external-world features considered to be relevant in the analysis of an utterance at the levels of language. The contextual theory involves the meanings of words and sentences not as isolated entities but as in relation to the situation of occurrence and use.

This is mostly applicable to ambiguous words or expressions. For example, the word ‘‘bank’’. If used in a sentence like: ‘‘ I went to the bank’’. This expression does not convey a complete meaning. But when the sentence is: ‘‘I went to the bank of the river’’. This conveys a complete meaning because of its usage in the right context.

For the purpose of this study the use theory of semantics will be used to analyse the text *Beyond the Trial*.

### 2.3 Feminism Waves

The first wave occurred during the 19th and 20th centuries. It involves some of the foremothers of liberal feminism such as Elizabeth Stanton and Matilda Joslyn Gage who advocated for divorce laws to protect the rights of women. The first wave feminism can also be traced to the World War I, when American women were carrying banners to protest against the undemocratic practices done by the government of America against women. They wanted to make the government know that they were living in very bad conditions. Through this protest, women institutions and organizations all over the world started to speak about the rights of women to vote and express their thoughts over issues that were not favourable to them.

During the Civil World War II, women were not allowed to do anything without the control of men especially in public places. This made women's right activists agitate for women to immediately gain the right to vote and work. These women activists developed concepts such as: "equal-opportunities feminism" or "equity feminism". This was characterized by the distinction of sex and gender.

They believed that there were no much biological differences between men and women but gender roles exaggerated the differences. Writers like Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf who wrote "*A Vindication of the Rights of a Woman*" (1792) and "*A Room of One's Own*" (1929) made the women to understand that education is one of the ways that their protest for equality can be approved. They believed that if the women were as educated as the men they would have the opportunity to work just like the men.

The second wave occurred during the 1960's and the 1990's. it unravelled in the time of the civil rights movement and other marginalized group movements around the world. The second wave movement came as a result of the weakness of the first wave movement. The second wave movement brought about the women of color, solidarity, sisterhood and the claim "women's struggle as class struggle" (Rampton, 2008).

One of the noticeable event during this period is the formation of the National Organization for women (NOW) in 1972. The Radical feminists were the propounders of this wave of feminism. It is believed that it arose as a result of the Miss America

Pageants competition in 1968 and 1969. Here, women had the notion that they were presented as cattles to emphasize that the way a woman looks, what she wears and how she speaks is more important than the way she thinks, believes and acts.

The notion about the Miss America Pageants competition made women activists especially feminists to become angry and they threw their bras, girdles, false eyelashes, high heels and makeup into the trashcan in front of the reporters. They did this, because they wanted the world to understand that women were equal creatures as men and the men should stop degrading them as puppets in their hands.

They had several banners and posters that reads: ‘Cattle Parades Are Degrading and Humiliating’, ‘Women’s Liberation’, ‘Freedom for women’, ‘No more Miss America’ etc. After these protests, the idea of a woman’s right and equality started to become the world interest and the media (i.e television, radio, newspaper etc) started to speak about it.

The third wave is considered as the time frame from 1990’s to present day. The wave breaks constraining boundaries of gender set by the previous waves. Rebecca Walker is a prominent feminist in the wave. The third wave feminists are seen as powerful and effective. The third wave arose as a result of the weakness of the second wave feminists.

They also tried to develop new strategies and methods for agitating for the rights of women. They made use of the expression ‘Do it yourself’ in order to make the women to be independent and not always depending solely on men. Some of the ways they agitated for the liberation of women in the third wave was through magazines, newspapers, technology i.e television, radio, social media etc.

#### **2.4 Women’s Disposition On Feminism**

Although, feminism is celebrated for fighting and protecting the rights of women in the likes of Chimamanda Adichie who claims that she is ‘a happy feminist’ and wrote a book titled *We Should All Be Feminist*. Also, Ama Ata Aidoo who is the author of *Everything Good Will Come* also said in an interview that ‘I am a feminist...I insist that every woman and every man should be a feminist’.

With all these good recommendations of feminism, it is also criticized by both men and women. This is because people see feminists as men haters, biased for protecting only the oppressed women and not the oppressed men, delusional, hypocritical etc. Most women also had the notion that feminism is only for the Westerners. It fought and protected the rights of the white women. This made some women authors to come up with several African movements for black women.

According to Bell hooks she said "Every black person concerned about our collective survival must acknowledge that sexism is a destructive force in black life that cannot be effectively addressed without an organized political movement...what we need is a feminist revolution in black life...We are in need of more feminist scholarship which addresses a wide variety of issues in black life (mothering, gender, poverty, the crisis of black womanhood...)" Some of these black women movements are: Womanism, Motherism, Snail-sense feminism, Stiwanism, Nego-feminism etc.

Alice Walker prefers to use the term womanism instead of feminism. She coined the term in one of her works titled "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens". It was published in 1983. She describes womanist as a black feminist or feminist of colour from womanish i.e from the black folk's expression of mothers to female children "you acting womanish" which means outrageous, audacious, courageous or wilful behaviour (Alice Walker,1983).

Womanism is black centred. Ogunyemi defines a womanist as "the Nigerian woman writer who is constantly aware of the negative connotations of feminist; the fear of being accused by the Nigerian males of allying with the white outsider has turned most Nigerian women writers towards womanism; a black outgrowth from feminism". (Ogunyemi, 1996).

Catherine Obianuju Acholonu says "Africa's alternative to feminism is MOTHERISM and motherism denotes motherhood, nature and nurture". (Acholonu,1995). She prefers to be called a motherist and called her movement motherism. She believes that "a motherist is a humanist and environmentalist".

The motherists believe that women should see mothering or motherhood as an experience not as suffering or oppression like the patriarchal institution made them to believe. They also believe that mothering involves feeding, serving, mediating conflict and caring for the natal in their care (Eliza, 2013). Most feminists see motherism as a movement that limits the role of women in the public, banishing them to the home and to domestic matters (Nadar, 2013).

Snail-sense feminism is the feminism that Akachi Ezeigbo would use instead of feminism. She said that snail-sense feminism does not promote aggression in women in their relationship with men. She says ‘I call mine snail-sense feminism...it is a variant of the womanist principle that does not promote aggression in women and in their relationship with men. But at the same time, demand that women have an independent mind and do what they want to do but not to the detriment of the other people around them’’. (Ezeigbo, 2012).

Ogundipe-Leslie disconnects herself from the term feminism. She prefers to call it ‘STIWANISM’ from the word ‘STIWA’ which means ‘Social Transformation Including Women In Africa’’. She explains that the movement involves addressing issues related to the African woman. She said ‘it is the inclusion of the African women in the contemporary social and political transformation in Africa’’. (Ogundipe, 2007).

Obioma Nnaemeka associates herself with Nego-feminism. Obioma Nnaemeka creates her own movement which she calls Nego-feminism. She describes it to be a feminism of negotiation. The term is Nego-feminism which means no-ego feminism. She describes Nego-feminism as ‘...the feminism of negotiation; ...nego-feminism stands for no-ego feminism...African cultures are the principles of negotiation, give and take, compromise and balance...it knows when, where and how to detonate patriarchal landmines’’. (Nnaemeka,2004).

According to Monica Pham (2014) she divided the dispositions of women on feminism on the Tumblr social media platform into four (4) which are:

- a. Equality for all.
- b. Enjoy being a mother and a wife.
- c. Feminism is only for women and hates men.

d. Enjoy being feminine.

The first group believe that there should be equality among the both sexes. They claim that feminists fight for equality but they put themselves above men. One of the comments read ‘we need to advocate for the rights of all people regardless of gender’ (Post-2 and Post-3). They claim that feminism does not mean equality of both sexes rather it should be called humanism or people-ism.

The second group ‘enjoy being a mother and a wife’. Some women claim that they enjoy being a mother and a wife ‘I love my husband and daughter’ (Post-4) and ‘Being a stay at home wife is MY CHOICE’(Post-9). Their thoughts about a feminist is a woman who rejects the idea of being happily married with children. Marriage and producing children is still the most common life choice across cultures and for women to equate feminism with the rejection of having a husband and children can only lead to a large portion of women given up on feminism because they will not identify with single women who does not want a family.

The third group is ‘feminism is only for women and hates men’. According to Mike Adams he said ‘feminists are the most hateful creatures on the planet’. There is a believe that feminism is all about men hating and feminists hate men (misandry). Most people feel is a group that is against men. Just like a lady who said ‘I don’t need to vilify men to get what I want’ (Post-5). Some people do believe that since feminists are men haters then they are angry lesbians.

The forth group ‘enjoy being feminine’. This group have the claim that they enjoy being and having the feminine distinct characteristics allocated to them as females. They claim that they benefit a lot being feminine and would not want to change it. According to her, a woman commented that ‘I reject feminism because I enjoy being feminine’ (Post-7). Another woman made it clear she said ‘I still like a man to pay the cab, hold the door...whilst I make muffins in an apron and pearls’ (post-13). These women feel feminism or being a feminist means giving up or not partaking in womanly or ladylike things.



From the above, some women feel that feminism has helped them in various areas by becoming the voice they never had. Some feel that feminism is not about equality but superiority by women over men. Others feel that being a feminist means that one will be a man-hater, become a lesbian and give up all her feminine and ladylike characters. Feminists usually debunks these claims.

For those that said feminism is only about women or centrally for women. The feminists claim that the word feminism originates from the Latin ‘‘femina’’ which means ‘‘woman’’. This explains why it is a movement that protests for oppressed women. But if the men feel they should form their own movement that will protect the rights of men.

The women in post-4 and post-7 that claim that they enjoy being a mother and wife and feminine. Feminists debunks this by saying that they are not against women being mothers or wives. Rather, they are just a women’s liberation movement that has an active desire to change the position of women in the society. This is because they believe that women have been relegated to the background by the society pertaining to the position given to them in a patriarchal society to be housewives.

This position occupied by women does not allow them to achieve more for themselves. This is the major reason these women are marginalized an oppressed. If these women are made to see the outside world and allowed to work, the society will see that these women would be valued the same way the men are.

Feminism is a women’s liberation movement that fights for women who are being marginalized and oppressed by men. But if some women feel they are comfortable in their state just like the post of the woman who said being a stay at home wife is MY CHOICE’’(post-9). These women should come together and help the other women that feel and know they are being oppressed and marginalized in the hands of men until all women are free from these oppressions.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

The feminist theory is a theoretical extension of feminism that focuses on analysing gender inequality in terms of discrimination, oppression, patriarchy, subjection etc. According to Rosemaire Tong ‘‘feminist theory attempts to describe women’s oppression, explain its causes and consequences and to prescribe strategies for women’s liberation’’.

The main aim of the feminist theory is to develop a comprehensive account of the subjection and oppression of women which involves the origin of this subordination by identifying the causes of the maltreatment of these women and developing effective strategies to help liberate them from these sufferings.

Flax posits three purposes of the feminist theory:

- A. To understand the power differential between men and women.
- B. To understand women’s oppression, how it evolved and how it changes over time.
- C. To understand how to overcome these oppressions.

The feminist theory is subdivided into various parts. This is because all women wanted to protect their rights and have freedom to do what they want. It is believed that oppressions are not equal and do not have equal effects (Anderson,2005). For instance, you cannot compare the oppression encountered by a wealthy woman to be equal to the same oppression faced by a woman living in poverty. For this reason, the feminist theory was divided into parts in order to cater for the diversity of problems faced by these women. The feminist theory was divided into:

2.5.1 Liberal Feminism: it was developed in the 19th century. It was propounded by Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill. Liberal feminism campaigned for gender equality. They wanted a just society that allows individuals (women)to exercise their freedom and fulfil themselves. Liberal feminist Tong, thought that ‘‘ the society has a false belief that women are by nature less intellectually and physically capable than men’’ (Tong, 2009).

Tong believes that the women should have the same educational opportunities and civil rights as men in order to develop their capabilities. In the book ‘‘Subjection of the Rights of Women’’, J.S Mill said ‘‘ women should enjoy equal rights with men including the right to vote’’.

He also said that women are not inferior to men. Liberal feminists led to advances in the economic sphere and in equal opportunities of civil rights. The weakness of Liberal feminism was that it did not include the analysis of class or sexuality and did not challenge the ideology behind women oppression.

2.5.2 Radical Feminism: it was propounded by Simone de Beauvoir and Shula Smith Firestone. It is the second kind of feminism. It arose as a result of the weakness of the Liberal feminism. Its focus was on gender and sexuality. Radical feminists felt that liberal feminism was not drastic enough to address the individual, institutional and systemic oppression encountered by women in the past centuries.

Radical feminists posit that sexuality is the root cause of women oppression i.e women's biology is closely related to their oppression, as well as all the manifestation of the sexual violence they suffer. Through their analysis of gender system, they were able to disclose the elaboration known as patriarchy. Their main focus is on the subordination of women by revealing how male power is exercise and reinforced through practices such as: sexual harassment, rape, pornography, prostitution as well as marriage. Radical feminism can be divided in two:

- a. Libeterian Radical Feminism: this type of radical feminism focus in personal freedom of expression.
- b. Cultural Radical Feminism: it is a type of radical feminism which argues that the root cause of women oppression is not because of feminity but the low value that patriarchy assigns to feminine qualities. If the society placed a high value on feminine qualities, then there would be less of women oppression, subjection and subordination.

2.5.3 Existentialist Feminism: it is an extension of the Radical Feminism. It was propounded by the French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir. Her major work

the ‘‘The Second Sex’ in 1949 addresses the issue better. She said that ‘man puts himself as the subject and woman as the object as the other’’. Here, a woman is oppressed by the ‘other’’. She is seen as an object without value.

Prior to this, is the controversial idea that women were empowered financially in the society through prostitution. She tried to encourage the women that although, one is not born a woman but becomes a woman, they must try to transcend their natural position of being the second sex, object and other that the society has used to label them (Simone,1949). They must transcend from such position to being a subject and choose economic, personal and political freedom.

- 2.5.4 Post- Modern Feminism: the post-modern feminism was propounded by Tori Moi who linked feminism to post-modernism. It can also be said to have originated from the third wave feminist. This kind of feminism deals with women difference and diversity i.e race and class.

According to Olson (1996) he said ‘‘ post-modern feminists, see females as having been cast into the role of other. They criticize the structure of the society and the dominant order, especially in its patriarchal aspects’’. The post- modern feminists reject the essential notion of one-way-to be a woman.

According to James Susan she said ‘‘...under the umbrella of this general characterization there are however, many interpretations of women and their oppression, so that it is a mistake to think of feminism as a single philosophical doctrine, or implying an agreed political program’’.

Elizabeth Spelman explains this better: ‘‘...no woman is subject to any form of oppression simply because she is a woman; which forms of oppression she is subject to depend on what ‘kind’ of woman she is. In a world in which a woman might be subject to racism, classism, homophobia, anti-semitism...So it can never be the case that the treatment of a woman has only to do with her gender and nothing to do with her class or race’’.

2.5.5 Multi-cultural and Global Feminism: multi-cultural and global feminism was influenced by civil right movement and multiculturalism. It examines how class, race, gender and sexuality operate as a system of subordination of women. Multicultural feminists suggest that in a nation every woman has different identity, ethnicity and culture which makes them different from any other woman. This helps them to look at oppression of women from many perspectives.

Global feminists help to address the unfavourable social forces that divides women in terms of cultural diversities of these women. They also examine the role of women in the global society. Okin (1999) observes that ‘‘minority cultures are patriarchal and most cultural customs aim to control women but women are also discriminated against in Western democracies. She argues that women who come from more patriarchal cultures than the United States should not be less protected from male violence than other women are (Okin, 1999).

2.5.6 Social/Marxist Feminism: Socialist or Marxist feminism arose as a result of the oppression of women in the patriarchal society using the capitalism system in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Its focus is on social justice and socio-economic equality. For many centuries women were not allowed to own properties, they were considered as the property of men. Those that were allowed to own properties could not because they did not have the purchasing power for it.

Marxist feminists posit that the only path to gender equality is the destruction of the capitalist society. They believe that capitalism contributed to the subordination of women by forcing them to depend on men for their economic survival. Socialist feminists support that women can only achieve true freedom when they are not paid less than men for the same work.

## 2.5 An Overview of Chigozie Anuli's *Beyond the Trial*

*Beyond the Trial* is written by Chigozie Anuli Mgbadugha. It is her first published work. It was published in 2015. The book is a collection of three fictional short stories. The titles are: *Erased Reproach*, *Rude Awakening* and *Shadows from the Past*.

*Erased Reproach* is all about a girl Funke Ojo who is seventeen years but goes through the trial of unwanted pregnancy. She was rejected by her father and sent to live with her grandmother Mrs. Akanji at Akure in Ondo State. There, her grandmother who becomes her mentor taught her how to stand on her own and overcome her challenges. She did this by forgetting about her past, being focused on the future and working hard to achieve her goals in life.

*Rude Awakening* focuses on Nkechi Emecheta who goes through the trial of early widowhood. She is maltreated by her late husband's family and accused for killing her husband. Chidi the younger brother of her late husband Afam did not get satisfied until he took everything Afam has left for his family. All these oppressions suffered by Nkechi did not hinder her from becoming useful to herself, her children and the society. Through the help of her best Uzoma, she is able to stand for herself, pick the shattered pieces of her life, take good care of her children financially and overcome her challenges.

*Shadows from the Past* is the third story in the book. Its theme is on domestic violence and abuse. It pictures a family that is physically abused by their father even the mother is being beaten by her husband on countless occasions for little or no reason. Ada who is portrayed as the main character tells the story of her past. She explains how her father beats them with his cane *Onyedumekwu* (the one who helps me to speak) and lock them in the "guardroom" when they offend him.

The guardroom is a large wardrobe in her father's study. In the guardroom they are not allowed to eat, drink water or make use of the convenience. This act of violence makes the children to be affected psychologically as they are unable to show love to their spouses even after the death of their father. This is because they feel the weakness of their mother is the great love she has for her husband. Ada is able to overcome her challenges through the help of her mother and her husband Richard.

She also tries to help her siblings overcome their psychological problems. She told them to not allow the past hinder them from seeing a brighter future.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design:**

This study adopts the qualitative research design. The research will be carried out on the basis of access to past, current published and unpublished materials. To enable the researcher, examine and analyse related documents, descriptive analysis method is employed extensively.

#### **3.2 Population Of The Study**

Population refers to the sum total of people or things from whom or which the research is based on. The population of the study consists of all the women in the novel that have portrayed feminism. It will also include some male characters in the novel that do one or more oppressions to these women in the text.

#### **3.3 Sample And Sampling Technique**

The population selected to be investigated or studied is known as the sample. The number of women used in the analysis are 9 and the number of men are 6. The research adopts a simple random sampling technique.

### **3.4 Method Of Data Collection**

This study relies on both primary and secondary sources of data collection. In doing this, documentary instrument for data generation is utilized. Documentary instrument refers to the method of gathering information or data from existing records. Based on this choice of data collection, the study relies on information generated from the text *Beyond the Trial*, reports, reviews, textbooks, academic journals, articles, dictionaries and on the World Wide Web (WWW).

### **3.5 Method Of Data Analysis**

Descriptive method is used to explore feminism in the selected stories of the text such as: *Erased Reproach, Rude Awakening and Shadows from the Past in Beyond the Trial*. Also, the Use theory of semantics and the Feminist theoretical framework is used for the analysis of the text.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretations

Data from the text *Beyond the Trial*, are first presented using Arabic numerals before they are analysed. Excerpts of data are presented and analysed below:

#### Excerpts from *Rude Awakening*

1. **“When Nkechi saw that Afam was not likely to change his mind about letting her work, she reluctantly agreed to be a house wife....” (Pg.90)**

#### Analysis

From the above, Nkechi being unempoloyed is the origin of her problem. Liberal feminists usually emphasize on the need for women to have something doing no matter how little. This will enable them earn a decent income for themselves. They will not have to rely on their husbands for all of their expenses. If only Afam knows the need for Nkechi to work as an ophthalmic nurse, she will not have suffered the plight of widowhood as much as she did.

For the fact Nkechi was not working, all her expenses are got and supplied by her husband. This is why when her husband dies, she could not bear the loss at first. The author explains this better: ‘Her world was built around him and today, one phone call with horrible news had brought that world crashing’ (Pg.94). Indeed, her world crashes to pieces.

- 2. ‘Let the witch that calls herself his wife tell us. I can’t understand why my brother would operate a joint account with a woman who was not even working’. (Pg.102)**

#### **Analysis**

The excerpt above is said by Afam’s younger brother Chidi, to Nkechi. When Nkechi is asked by the Emecheta’s family to inform them of her late husband’s financial status. She tells them that she and Afam operated a joint account with about two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000) naira. Her information is claimed to be false because she did not have something doing for herself. Nkechi is not only accused for giving a false report but was also insulted a witch. Liberal feminists are not in support of women being idle because this can lead to insults by their male counterparts.

- 3. ‘The removal men swung into action under Chidi’s direction. It was a cruel sight to behold. The only things they did not remove were personal items belonging to Nkechi....’ (Pg.105).**

#### **Analysis**

Here, the writer tries to explain the plight of widows using the case of Nkechi. After the burial of her husband, Afam’s younger brother Chidi, who assumes the role of the first son follows Nkechi to her late husband’s house with two removal vans and starts to remove the properties of Afam and takes them away. He takes the cars and some other things he feels will be of great importance to him.

Radical feminists have been setup to help protect the rights of women from all forms of suppression, subordination and oppression faced by women. There are agencies for women such as WIN (Woman In Nigeria) that usually takes up cases like that of Nkechi and give her the freedom she deserves. But Nkechi is not ready for the fight. She still has the mentality of men being the subject and women the object which the existentialist feminists are against.

When she is interrogated by her best friend Uzoma why she did not report the incident Nkechi said ‘sadly, ours is still a world dominated by men who are ruled by greed in circumstances like this’. (Pg.106).

**4. ‘Nkechi could see the handwriting on the wall. She was on her own...She found herself taking major decisions for her family’. (Pg.103 and 106).**

**Analysis**

The popular saying ‘what a man can do, a woman can do better’ is evident from the above excerpt. Being a widow is not the end of life. Nkechi realised that she is alone and her husband is no more with her to fend for the family. She has to assume her new role as a widow and the head of the family. She is able to take major decisions for the family, fend for the family and keep the family in a happy and healthy condition.

Nkechi gets a job in a specialist eye centre in ilupeju that is accompanied with accommodation. She uses her income to pay for her children’s education and run the home. Cultural Radical feminists are of the opinion that why it seems impossible for the both sexes to have equal right is because of the low value the males assign to feminine qualities. They believe that the females cannot do without them. When the husbands of these women die, they try to make them miserable widows and put them in a position where these widows will depend on them for survival.

**5. ‘Uzoma was always on hand to assist, advise, or provide logistic support to Nkechi...’ (Pg.107)**

**Analysis**

Uzoma, as portrayed by the author is a feminist. She is always ready to help, support and assist Nkechi in the little way she can. Unlike Nkechi, who is portrayed as weak, Uzoma is strong. She hates the way Nkechi is treated by Afam’s family because she is a widow. She wants Nkechi to fight for her right and gain her freedom ‘she respected Nkechi’s decision but she would have preferred to fight’. (Pg.107)

Uzoma is an accountant. She is Nkechi’s free financial advisor and also helps Nkechi to manage her finances and make wise investments. After the death of Afam, Uzoma opens a

personal account for Nkechi. She also informs the airline of Afam's death and cancels the proposed family vacation to the United Kingdom (Uk). The ticket fees of one million (1,000,000) naira is refunded and Uzoma pays the money into Nkechi's personal bank account.

Feminism is not all about an organization or association. It is more of agitating and helping women that are being oppressed. Uzoma is not in the association or organization of feminists but this does not stop her from helping her fellow woman who was being oppressed by her husband's family. The support she offers to this oppressed woman, helps Nkechi at the period of her trials. This simply implies that; women do not have to be in the association of feminists before they can help other women that are suffering to gain their freedom from the oppression of men. Any woman that renders such help is indeed a feminist.

- 6. "Ezinwanne on the other, had suffered greatly in the hands of her estranged husband, Nze Ugoji. Her sin was that she gives birth to three female children and no son". (Pg.100).**

### **Analysis**

Ezinwanne is the mother of Nkechi Emetcheta. The origin of her problem is the inability to give birth to a male child. Her husband is disappointed at her and maltreats Ezinwanne. Unlike the Radical feminists that says the root cause of the oppression of women is closely related to their biology. Cultural Radical feminists posit that feminity is not the only root cause of women oppression but the low value patriarchy assigns to the females. Ezinwanne is not just maltreated for being a woman but she is also maltreated for giving birth to female children.

When she gives birth to the third child which is also a girl, Nze Ugoji did not wait for the customary three-month child nursing period (*omugwo*) to elapse before taking a second wife. He moves Ezinwanne and the children to the room farthest from his, claiming that the third

child Obumneke disturbs him with her midnight cries. Nze did not hesitate to send Ezinwanne and the children packing on the occasion Ezinwanne reacts to the annoying behaviour of her co-wife.

Nkechi was twelve years old when Ezinwanne and Nze Ugoji separates. Ezinwanne works hard to raise her female children to the best of her ability. When Nkechi comes to her for advise on how she will cope as a widow, her mother does not fail to remind Nkechi that she raises her and her siblings singlehandedly as if she is a widow which in reality she is not. Nkechi is able to draw strength from her mother as well which helps her to overcome most of her trials.

**7. ‘In igbo culture, female children were expected to marry and leave their fathers’ houses, and therefore, had no right of inheritance’’. (Pg.101)**

**Analysis**

Socialist feminists are of the opinion that the oppression of women in the patriarchal society is as a result of the capitalist system. Here, women are not allowed to own properties, only men can properties. These female children are made to see marriage as their only inheritance, this is why Nze Ugoji did not see the need for female children and never plays a fatherly role to his daughters. Marxist feminists believe that the capitalist system makes the women to depend solely on the men for their economic survival. They posit that the destruction of the capitalist society is the only path to gender equality.

### **Excerpts from *Shadows from the Past***

- 1. ‘Most of the time I thought about my mother- that lovable woman who had persevered in a loveless marriage and endured endless humiliation to stay and raise us’. (Pg.136)**

### **Analysis**

The above excerpt is said by Ada Richard who is the main character of the story. The statement is made in the introduction as a form of flashback. Mrs. Ben Chukwuma who is the mother of Ada suffers domestic abuse and violence in the hands her husband Mr. Ben Chukwuma. Ben Chukwuma is a very hard man to please and does not fail to beat his wife at the slightest provocation of irrelevant things.

Radical feminists agitate against the oppression of women by male power through practices such as: domestic abuse, physical violence etc. Despite these countless number of violent abuses, she still agrees to stay in a loveless marriage. She suffers of these because Mrs. Chukwuma wants her children to have better lives which she believes can only be given by her husband. Little does she know that the abuse will cause great traumas for the children.

2. **“She was partly educated, and had stopped schooling in standard three”.**  
**(Pg.136)**

#### **Analysis**

The genesis of Mrs. Chukwuma’s problem is because she is partly educated. This single disadvantage of her makes her to marry Mr. Ben whom she feels is more educated because he is able to complete standard six. He was also working as a Court Marshal in the colonial court which she sees as an added advantage to his other qualifications.

Liberal feminists are not only in the opinion of women having something to do to earn a decent living but they are also of the opinion that women should be educated. When these women become educated, they would be able to get better lucrative jobs that will enable them to take great care of themselves and not depend on men for their economic survival.

Mrs. Chukwuma is partly educated and she becomes a petty trader that makes very little or no profit. The profit she makes from her petty trade is not enough to cater for her needs and that of her three children. This is why she has to endure a marriage with so much domestic abuses in order for her husband to fend for her and her three children.

3. **“A small mistake such as dragging one’s feet on the corridor to his hearing could result in one spending several hours in his ‘guardroom’ after some admonition from strokes of Father’s Onyedumekwu”.** (Pg.140).

#### **Analysis**

The above excerpt shows that Mr. Ben Chukwuma loves to discipline his wife and children for irrelevant reasons. He does not only discipline them but maltreats them inhumanly by locking them in his guardroom. His father’s guardroom is a large wardrobe in his study. When the children commit an offence he will flog them with his cane *Onyedumekwu* (the one who helps me speak).

After this, he will lock them in the wardrobe for several hours. They are only allowed to make use of the convenience before they get locked in the guardroom. Once they are admitted in the large wardrobe, they are not allowed to eat, drink water or make use of the convenience. Ada’s longest stay is 2 days in the guardroom.

- 4. “Opening the door after a delay was associated with grave consequences mediated through *Onyedumekwu*. So, we sometimes took turns staying awake each day of the week”. (Pg.147)**

#### **Analysis**

Existential feminists explain this better: ‘man puts himself as the subject and the woman as the object...’. Here, Mr. Ben tells the children and his wife that everyone must be home by 6pm (Pg.139) but Ada’s father comes home by midnight. At the time he gets home drunk and everyone is asleep he begins to knock for the children to open the door for him. Opening the door late by the children attracts some strokes mediated through his *Onyedumekwu* (the one who helps me speak).

Mrs. Chukwuma gives him a set of keys that will enable him to quietly and in peace. Yet, he refuses to use the keys because he feels the house is his and is entitled to come and go as he pleases, whether it is convenient for his family or not. As lord of the manor he claims to be, makes the children and even the wife to take turns staying awake on each day of the week for peace to reign in the house.

- 5. “ Sometimes, to humiliate Mother, he would give graphic details of his rendezvous with Clara....” (Pg. 142)**

#### **Analysis**

Clara was a maid to the wife of one of the colonial masters. After they left, she has to fit into the traditional society and survive. Clara opens a business which she calls a café. There, she will serve her customers tea, coffee and biscuits. She also buys daily newspapers that enables her customers engage in heated discussions of events making waves in the national and global political aspects of the country.

Mr. Ben becomes her favourite regular customer. He does not quit to compare Mrs. Chukwuma with Clara. He sometimes gives her details of his romantic date with Clara just to humiliate Ada’s mother. He tells her that he would have married Clara as a second wife but Clara does not comply to the absurd idea ‘if not that Clara does not want to be a second wife, I would have married her years ago. She finds the idea preposterous’. (Pg. 147).



6. **‘When I enrolled at the university, two things were uppermost in my mind- to graduate in flying colours...and to engage in some income generating ventures....’ (Pg.161)**

#### **Analysis**

Ada who is the narrator of the story also suffers a lot in the hands of her father, but all of these maltreatments did not disrupt her to stop her education half-way. She is determined to succeed at all cost. Unlike her mother that stopped at standard three. Ada gets admission and goes to the university. At the university, she has two (2) main goals.

First, she wants to graduate with a good result and second, she wants to work and earn some money for her upkeep. She has the skill of her making. Ada utilises her hair making skill to generate income for herself. In school, she makes braids and fixes weaves. From these, she is able to make enough money for her upkeep. Her siblings are not left out. During the holidays, they usually engage in some income generating ventures which also paid off as they all become university graduates.

7. **‘Mummy, do you remember there was a day, many years ago, that you saw some stains on my clothes...Yes...you were twelve then...Amaka!... What? Why are you calling me?...It is because you raped me that my marriage is on the brink of collapse’’. (Pg.183-184).**

#### **Analysis**

Amaka is the daughter of Mr. Morris. Mr. Morris is Ada’s uncle. When Amaka is twelve years old, she is raped by her father. The incident that occurs twelve years ago is the reason Amaka’s marriage is on the brink of collapse. Amaka does not have a normal feminine response to intimacy. She cringes out of fear. This act makes her husband to send her packing.

Ada tries to proffer solution to this problem. She tells Amaka to undergo psychotherapy which will help her overcome her fears. She also encourages her to tell her husband she is a victim of rape which can enable him to understand her better.

- 8. “ Sister Ada, I watched our mother show sacrificial love and devotion for years. I watched Father treat her lie a domestic staff or even worse...I swore that if I marry, I would be nobody’s doormat’’. (Pg.191).**

#### **Analysis**

Just like Amaka, Justina who is the younger sister of Ada also has the problem of showing love to her husband. This is because she witnesses the inhuman treatment given to her mother by her father for several years. He has no respect for her, says no kind words to her and beats her mercilessly for minute issues that should not lead to argument. Yet, her mother keeps giving her sacrificial love and devotion to him for nothing.

For these reasons, Justina swears that if she marries, she will not be as loving and caring as her mother. Ada tries to convince her on the need to show love to her husband. She tells her that she is aware of the trials and challenges as a family but in life, one does not choose the trials and challenges he/she faces but the response to those trials and challenges is the person’s choice to make.

#### **Excerpts from *Erased Reproach***

- 1. “Funke Ojo was a tall, beautiful damsel with an hour glass figure...Her walk was purposeful and regal but despite beauty, she lacked self- confidence and deeply desired peer approval’’. (Pg.4)**

#### **Analysis**

Funke Ojo is seventeen years old. From the excerpt above, one can say the beginning of her problem is the lack of self-confidence despite the enviable qualities she has. Funke is not satisfied and chooses to be a member of the popular girls’ clique that she feels are confident and not as naïve as she is. The girls are very pleased to have Funke in their group and does not hesitate to tell her that the main reason for her acceptance is because of her exquisite beauty.

Everyone in the group has one or more boyfriends. Funke on the other hand, has none. Her task is to have a boyfriend. At first, she is uncomfortable with the idea but after being convinced wrongly that the boy will help her studies, she decides to succumb to peer pressure and gets into a relationship with Dayo. Little does she know that complying to the completion of the task will create a problem that takes a long time to solve.

Feminists are of the opinion that young girls and women should be confident in themselves because the lack of confidence can lead one to become members of groups or clubs that may end up ruining their lives. They should learn to appreciate themselves first and not solely desire it from other people.

If only Funke knows the enviable qualities she has, she will not desire peer approval for confirmation. The popular girls clique she joins is one of the major reasons her trial begins. This is because she wants to complete the task of the group and prove to them that she is not as naïve as they think.

- 2. “When Funke told Dayo she suspected she was pregnant, he advised her to get rid of it. He did not deny paternity, but told her plainly that he would, if she dared to mention his name in the matter”. (Pg.10)**

### **Analysis**

After Funke confirms she is pregnant through the pregnancy test kit Agnes gets for her, she decides to tell Dayo about it. He surprises her with his reaction. Dayo tells Funke to abort the pregnancy despite the risk it involves. He explains his impregparation of being a father and will not allow the pregnancy to truncate his education and future. Funke is speechless because she does not understand why he is so selfish thinking about only himself, his education and future but not hers.

Later, Dayo begins to avoid her and their intimate relationship starts to drift apart. Agnes who is a member of the popular girls’ clique, pressures Funke to collect some money from Dayo for an abortion. This time, Funke is wise and refuses the idea because she is aware that the procedure is dangerous which can result to death or cause worse complications in the future.

3. **“Can I be left alone to face my shame? Whispered Funke, lifting the wrapper covering her face to reveal a tear-streaked face and swollen bloodshot eyes”.**  
**(Pg.16)**

### **Analysis**

Abortion not being an option, Funke and her friends think of other methods to hide the pregnancy. Akin who is a Lagos-based business man comes to ask for her hand in marriage. Funke tells her friends about and they are happy at the turn of events. Funke is advised to pass the pregnancy on Akin since she is only seven-weeks pregnant. She sees it as a safe idea and decides to accept Akin’s proposal.

On the day of introduction, Funke realises that a particular middle-aged woman keeps staring at her tummy which makes her uncomfortable and confuses her because the stomach was still very flat. She later discovers that the woman is Akin’s maternal Aunt and the friend of her cousin Deola’s mother.

Although, the introduction is a success and the date of the traditional marriage is decided but the traditional wedding is not as successful as the introduction. Akin arrives with his family for the traditional wedding in Funke father’s compound. Funke begins to notice that Akin’s expression is not like that of a happy groom. She sees Akin and her cousin Deola involve in a brief conversation after he takes her to his parents. This makes Funke and her friends more confuse because they did not think Deola and Akin are close friends.

After Deola talks to Akin parents. Akin’s family goes to talk to the elders in Funke’s family and Akin quickly prostrates before Funke’s father who takes sometime before patting his back and motions him to stand. All the guests of Akin’s family leaves Ojo’s family compound and moves to Deola’s family compound. It is at this point that Funke realises that her secret is out. Her friends try to comfort her but she is too sad and ashamed which makes her say the statement above. After this, she motions them to leave because she becomes aware she needs to be alone to solve her problem.

4. **“She told Funke, Papa had decreed that she should reveal the identity of the man responsible for the pregnancy, so that he could approach his family to initiate marriage rites between them. He could not bear to have her deliver his**

**first grandchild outside of wedlock...So, he offered her a safe abortion as a second option’’. (Pg.22)**

### **Analysis**

That night, Funke’s mother comes to her room to have a talk with Funke and confirm if she is pregnant. Mama is surprised and disappointed after Funke agrees that she is pregnant. Funke tries to inquire about the state of her father on the issue from her. She becomes scared when her mother tells her she did not know his stance on the issue.

Mama tries to know the person responsible for the pregnancy but Funke has made up her mind not to reveal the paternity of the child to anyone including her family members. In her defence, she will not be able to bear the shame of Dayo’s denial of the child and she prefers to suffer alone. Mama tells her she will give Papa the details of their discussion and get back to her on his stance on the issue.

Funke’s mother comes in the early hours of the morning and tells her the two options her husband gives to Funke. The first is that she should reveal the man responsible for the pregnancy in order for the both parties to get married. The second option which Mama vehemently opposes is for her to have a safe abortion. The two options are too impossible for Funke to make a choice.

Mama is certain that Papa will not allow Funke stay in his house unmarried and pregnant. She suggests that Funke should stay with her mother who is Funke’s Grandmother in Akure. Funke is very grateful for her mother’s thoughtful idea. She packs her things and Mama accompanies her to the pack. Mama waits for Funke until the vehicle she is in departs before she goes home.

**5. “Grandma, I could not bear the shame if he did. The whole village would have assumed I am a wayward girl who cannot tell who got her pregnant’’. (Pg.25)**

### **Analysis**

Although, Funke swears not to disclose the paternity of her child to anyone including her family members but when she encounters Grandma Akanji she has a re-think and tells her everything that leads to her getting pregnant including Dayo, the father of the child. When

Funke arrives at Grandma Akanji's place, she does not ask her anything about the pregnancy even if Funke expects her to ask.

Grandma makes enquiries about possible examination centres that Funke can write her SSCE examinations and also encourages Funke to work very hard so she can excel. She tells her to forget the mistakes of her past but not the lessons from them. As the pregnancy becomes more visible she gets her a wedding band. She gets her the wedding band because she wants to limit the gossip of the neighbours. Instead of thinking she gets pregnant outside of wedlock, they will think she is a young pregnant bride.

The day she gives Funke the ring, she cries uncontrollably and does not hesitate to tell Grandma Akanji everything that leads to the pregnancy and also the threat of Dayo to disown the pregnancy. She knows if he does this, it will make her look like a wayward girl in the slight of the people in her community.

- 6. "Funke worked hard at her studies and by the time Victor was six years old, she had completed her Open University Degree Program. Everyone that heard in Akure town was impressed, she became an example and reference point for young girls in the community". (Pg.29)**

#### **Analysis**

Funke decides to take control of her life and utilize the limited resources she has. A neighbour who lives next to Grandma Akanji's house is also a candidate for the Senior Secondary School Examination (SSCE). Funke uses the opportunity to borrow notes from her, read them quickly and returns them to her the next day. When Funke sits for the examination, she has good grades in all subjects. This makes Grandma Akanji very proud of her because despite the unfavourable circumstance she is able to make something good out of it.

After some months, Funke Ojo goes into labour and gives birth to a baby boy. She names the boy Victor. As the child grows, Grandma Akanji tells her to start saving in order to rent a

shop in the market. This will help Funke fend for herself and the baby boy. She listens to her Grandmother and sets up a provision and cosmetic shop.

From this, she is able to enrol for a distance learning degree program at the National Open University of Nigeria. She does this, to save cost and take care of the child. All these pays off as she becomes a graduate and a successful business woman. Everyone in Akure are happy and makes reference to her as an example for the young girls in the community to emulate.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **5.1 Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this research are:

1. The various ways women are being oppressed by men can be divided into two:
  - i. The use of derogative words and expressions for the women.
  - ii. The display of manpower using violence of all sorts.
2. The reasons responsible for the oppression of these women are:
  - i. The lack of having a job.
  - ii. Not being educated.
  - iii. The low value the society places on feminine abilities.

##### **5.1.1 The Use of Derogative Words and Expressions for Women**

Derogative words are disparaging words that tends or intends to belittle a person or persons. Men usually make use of belittling expressions for women. This is because they believe they are the head and women are subordinates or helpmates to them just as the society has assigned the roles to them. This makes them to talk to the women anyhow without respect. Derogatory words such as: witch, low-class, low-life, inferior, liability, second class, second sex, weaker vessels, mediocre, comparing them to animals, body-shaming them such as fat, ugly etc.

The associative meaning of semantics examines the emotional effect a word has on the hearers or listeners. When women hear these hurtful words especially from their husbands, fathers or even their counterparts, it could make them sad, angry, depressed, confused and frustrated. If not well managed can lead to serious health problems and complications for them. All demeaning words should not be used for women. These words are hurtful which can hurt them emotionally, mentally and psychologically. It can also affect them from achieving what they are meant and expected to achieve. Thereby, reducing their input to the growth of the economy.

#### 5.1.2 Display of Manpower Using Violence of All Sorts on Women

The display of manpower is used by men in various ways and forms of violence. They make use of violence of all sorts on women. Violence are actions that causes pain, destruction and suffering. Men acts in ways that inflicts pain on women. Some of these forms of violence are: Physical violence, Sexual violence, Economic/Financial violence etc.

Physical violence involves inflicting pain and causing harm to a person. Men exhibits physical violence through batter, beating i.e slaps, punches, flogging etc. This is seen when Ada's father beats his wife and children for minimal reasons and offences in *Shadows from the Past*. Sexual violence it involves engaging in sexual acts with a person without the consent of the person. An example of this is rape. Women and young girls are oppressed by the male counterparts through rape. This can lead to some psychological traumas for the women. Economic/ Financial violence is seen when there is a restriction to financial resources and supplies by someone. Most women experience this form of violence. Their husbands restrict them from having



access to their earnings which makes them to depend solely on their husbands to provide the basic needs needed for the survival of human beings i.e food, clothing, shelter, education etc.

Some consequences of the above form of violence is that it can lead to: death, physical injuries, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, depression, frustration, psychological disorders, stealing, the use of drugs and alcohol to subside the pain which can turn them into drug addicts. It can also affect the children because they can become abusers, behave in uncertain ways in school that can be traced to emotional and psychological disorders.

### 5.1.3 Unemployed Women

Unemployment Is a reason responsible for the oppression of women. Most women are maltreated because they are unemployed. This makes the women to rely solely on the resources of their husbands for their economic survival. Because Nkechi Emetcheta was not employed her testimony that she and her husband shared a joint account before he died was considered a lie and was even insulted a witch in *Rude Awakening*. Ada's mother agrees to go through so much abuses from her husband Mr Chukwuma because she depends solely on him for both her and her children's survival. Funke's Mother agrees to send her daughter Funke and the unwanted pregnancy to her mother Grandma Akanji because she knows if she does not comply with the husband's decision to send Funke away. Her husband might end up throwing both of them out of the house which will be difficult for her to fend for herself, her daughter and the unwanted pregnancy in *Erased Reproach*.

### 5.1.4 Uneducated Women

One of the reasons for the oppression of women is the lack of adequate education. When women are not fully educated, they do not end up having good jobs that can enable them to be able to find for themselves. Education brings enlightenment to the ignorant dark minds of people. It teaches a person a lot of things about life. It makes one to reason logically and solve problems that are arising in the society.

Here, it teaches women their rights and all they need for their survival. The feminists that started fighting and agitating for the rights of women are educated. If they were

not given the opportunities and they did not strive to be educated, they would not have been able to know their rights and fight for it. Most ignorant families do not see the need to educate a girl child because of the grievous saying that ‘a woman’s education ends up in the kitchen’. Therefore, they feel it is a waste of resources but little do they know that there is a counter saying that ‘educating a woman means educating a generation’. Women should strive to be educated.

#### 5.1.5 Low Value Placed On Feminine Abilities by the Society

The low value placed on feminine abilities by the society is a problem that causes the oppression of women. Here, the society makes constraining boundaries on what can be achievable by women and what cannot be achievable them. For example, it says things like ‘a woman can have ambition but not too much’, ‘a woman can aim to be successful but not too successful’, ‘a woman that is too successful will be seen as a threat to a man and end up dying single’, ‘a successful woman of a certain age that is not married should be seen as a failure by the society but a successful man of a certain age that is not married should be seen as a man that has not found the right one’ etc. Certain courses are considered masculine and feminine. More women are found in the department of Arts and more men are found in the department of Sciences.

### 5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, feminism is an evergreen topic that is not about man hating or despising men. Feminism is not all about an association or organization. It is more of agitating and helping women that are being oppressed in the hands of men. This oppression cuts across religion, politics, economy etc. If we have more successful women in top prestigious positions that are ready to help these oppressed women out of their dilemma, the society will be a healthy one. This shows solidarity and sisterhood which will help to reduce and eventually abolish the oppression of women. We are held in this world by one mother (earth) we should also love ourselves, support ourselves and see all women as our sisters irrespective of the age, class, race, ethnicity, religion etc.

### 5.3 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations:

1. The men should respect the women through their use of language and their actions especially in marriage.
2. Women should have something doing no matter how little. In so doing, their sole dependency on their husbands will be minimal and their husbands will not see them as a liability.
3. The women should strive to be educated in order to have better lucrative jobs.
4. The society should be educated on the need to place higher values on feminine abilities.

#### 5.4 Suggestions for further Studies

Researchers can also research on the following:

1. The concept of feminism in Chigozie Anuli Mgbadugha's *Beyond the Trial*.
2. The language of feminism and its impact to the society: a case study of Chigozie Anuli Mgbadugha's *Beyond the Trial*.
3. A stylistic analysis of feminism in Chigozie Anuli Mgbadugha's *Beyond the Trial*.

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