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Activity Segregation: Disrupting Snail-Sense Feminist Consciousness in Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's Plays

Okpara, Macpherson C. *
Principal Lecturer
Department of English,
Ebonyi State College of Education,
Ikwo (Affiliation to Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki),
Nigeria.

Abstract

Extant studies on Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's plays are mostly preoccupied with the female characters' revolt against and liberation from patriarchy and traditional norms that undermine their rights in the African setting. This study dissents from attempts to conclude that the female characters achieve freedom from the other sex and debilitating tradition because of their feminist trait. The paper contends that the concept of activity segregation provides ephemeral conditions for the women to organize and rage against exploitative male folk; when such enabling environment is non-existent, the females are inclined to accept patriarchal tendencies and socio-cultural realities in the African world and this would make the sustenance of their liberation impossible. Using the snail-sense feminist theory, the study embarks on qualitative and introspective research. It examines how momentary spatial parting of female and male genders temporarily fuels what has been misconstrued by some critics as snail-sense feminist consciousness in Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's plays, *Hands That Crush Stone* and *Barmaid and the Witches of Izunga*. In attempting to disrupt the stance of existing researches, the researcher randomly selects relevant characters, dialogues/language, situations and settings from the two play texts and analyzes them against the backdrop of the assumptions of snail-sense Afro-feminist strain. The strain under-explores the tendency for African women to embrace their gender roles and accept their conditions of living in the absence enabling environment for them to revolt against their perceived subjugation by the male-folk. The study finds that the female characters in the plays only seize the opportunity of social distancing from the males to launch their liberation bid, they fail to confront the male in the absence of action space. Thus, the researcher challenges the reliance on snail-sense feminist streak by previous studies on the plays to arrive at the conclusion that the female characters succeed in their revolt. That the women slowly act as snails, which are never as aggressive as the angered gender, to reach their goals does not suggest their total success in the battle of the sexes. Freedom from patriarchy and tradition continues to elude them.

Keywords: *Activity Segregation, Snail-Sense feminism, plays, gender studies, African literature.*

* Author: Okpara, Macpherson C.
Email: chiefmacphersocritic@gmail.com https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7544-906X
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Introduction

Critics on Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's plays have been mostly preoccupied with the female characters' revolt against and liberation from patriarchy and traditional norms that undermine their rights in the African setting. This study disagrees with the inclination of previous researches to conclude that the female characters achieve freedom from the other sex and debilitating tradition because of their feminist trait. It contends that the concept of activity segregation provides conditions for the women to organize and rage against exploitative male folk. When such enabling environment is non-existent, the females are inclined to accept patriarchal tendencies and socio-cultural realities in their African world. This study uses snail-sense feminist theory to embark on qualitative and introspective research. It investigates how momentary spatial parting of the female and male gender temporarily fuels what has been misconstrued by some critics as snail-sense feminist consciousness in Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Hands That Crush Stone* and *Barmaid and the Witches of Izunga*.

In disrupting the stances of existing researches, the researcher randomly selects relevant characters, dialogues/language, situations and settings from the two play texts and analyzes them against the backdrop of the assumptions of snail-sense Afro-feminist model, findings and conclusions of previous studies, and women's social-cultural experiences in the African universe. The theory has evidently under-explored the tendency for traditional African women to accept their living conditions and gender roles. The study finds that the female characters in the plays only seize the opportunity of social distancing from the males to launch their libration bid. They fail to confront the males in the absence of action space. This tendency challenges the reliance on snail-sense feminist streak by previous studies on the plays to draw the conclusion that the women slowly act as snails to reach their goals. In any case, this does not suggest their total success in the battle of the sexes because freedom from patriarchy and tradition continues to elude them. Snails are never as aggressive as the angered gender. Focusing on the two plays identified above, the researcher uses the descriptive and analytic approaches to generate findings and implications from the primary and secondary sources. Sampled characterization, dialogues, language deployment, situations and settings from the plays, as well as experiential evidence and other critical studies of the texts form the parameters for arriving at the conclusions.

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Activity Segregation and the Development of Feminist Consciousness

Activity segregation refers to a situation where people are set apart in space due to work or occupational demands. It is a relatively fresh concept in geographic and social discourses. Susan Mayhew describes activity segregation as "the spatial separation of the sexes during the working day, as in a mining village, where the mines were exclusively male preserve and the kitchen an exclusively female one"(6). Mayhew cites M. Longman as maintaining that "…gender division of labour helps to reinforce activity segregation where men and women use space differently and unequally…this has meant that that men are free to inhabit the public sphere and public spaces, while women's lives have been restricted to the private spaces of the home"(6). This view rings true of the traditional African woman who is almost always confined to the home front even when she engages in an activity or occupation that takes her to the public space.

The study appropriates activity segregation to mean the temporary separation of the sexes by any activity such as women cooking while men are engaged in other activities. The separation could afford women the necessary freedom to assess or reassess their subjugation and oppression by the male-folk in a given socio-cultural setting. Activity segregation enables the women in the plays under study to find their voices, to develop feminist consciousness because the men that exploit or oppress them are temporarily absent. In *Hands That Crush Stone* , the women find the boldness to revolt in the absence of the men that engage them to crush stones in the quarry sites. In *Barmaid and the Witches of Izunga*, the women form a group in the absence of their husbands. Using this group, they confront their husbands in the brothel where they always gather to drink and flirt with the barmaid.

Situating Afro-Feminism

Feminist criticism has evolved over the years, producing related theories and strains that currently preoccupy social, political and cultural discourses that attempt to apprehend the condition of women in varying societies. Cuddon views feminist criticism as "…an attempt to describe and interpret (and reinterpret) women's experience as depicted in various kinds of literature"(273). Molara Ogundipe believes that "Feminism is not the hatred of men or seeking to have a sex change or behave as men did or felt empowered to do in a male-dominated society. Feminism is a body of philosophy that advocates and actively seeks the liberation and immunization of women in society"(9). This captures the central objective of feminism:

liberation of women from patriarchal grips. Perhaps this explains why Ato Quayson relates that "feminism has been about challenging the representations of women and arguing for better conditions for them" (586). Thus, the principal concerns of feminism are the experiences of women and achieving social equality. In their bargain for social equality, feminists seek equal rights, status and roles between the sexes, as well as addressing other issues relating to the conditions of women.

To conceptualise the diversity of the women experience, many feminist theorists have emerged, each with differing assumptions. Perhaps, this explains why Elaine Showalter argues that "feminist criticism has not had a theoretical basis; it has been an empirical orphan in the theoretical storm" (331). For Showalter, feminist criticism is not unified. There is western feminism (which excludes the experiences of black women) that produced offspring such as American friedanite feminism, Western womanism, lesbian feminism, and so on. Again, African feminism sprang up, fuelled mostly by West African feminists dominated by Nigerian female scholars, writers and ideologues. African feminism includes many variants, including Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi's African Womanism, Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie's Stiwanism, Obioma Nnaemeka's Nego-feminism, Catherine Acholonu's Motherism, Chioma Opara's Femalism, Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's Snail-sense Feminism, and Buchi Emecheta's Small 'f' Feminism. In attempting to situate Afro-feminism which has also been described as womanism, Onuora Nweke sees "womanism as a qualification, a new terminology to take care of the limitations of feminism. Irrespective of the diverse perspectives represented by the multiple theories of female consciousness even in Africa, an incontrovertible fact is that all African versions of feminism (especially womanism) are concerned with the survival of both males and females. The African woman seeks dialogue and interaction with her man as a way of solving societal problems. She would frown at a utopian world where the difference between men and women is effaced. Such a world would be an aberration to African tradition and culture, in which the African woman is a strong believer. Nevertheless, she believes that some aspects of the culture should be changed. In fact, she does not believe that all the problems in society are caused by men or that men are creators of problems in society as Western feminism seems to posit" (210). This perhaps, throws light on the difference between Western Feminism and African Feminism.

Motivated by African women, African feminism specifically addresses the conditions and needs of continental African women (African women who reside on the

continent(en.wikipedia.org). The Wikipedia notes that "the goal of feminists is to empower women while ensuring their equality to men. For some people, the term "feminists" came to mean a movement that was anti-male, anti-culture and anti-religion. This is a misconception that is important to correct, because feminism is not meant to denigrate men, but rather to attack the system that places the women in a role that is secondary to the man, simply because of her gender. For purpose of inclusion, some women prefer to engage themselves in gender theory and activism by including men into the discussion because men have too much power and control in society " (African feminism). Afro-feminism, therefore is an off shoot of feminism that addresses issues concerning African women. Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's Snail-sense feminism situates as a strain of Afro-feminism.

Gender in Africa and Literary Imagination

Feminist thought has birthed increasing preoccupations with gender studies in recent times. Thus, talks about gender theories appear as replications of feminist perspectives. The Merriam Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature describes gender as a "person's socialization or experience as male or female." (454). In her inaugural lecture, Clara Ikekeonwu argues that gender should be located outside grammar to "… the contemporary understanding of gender referring to all about women from her cradle to the grave" (29). This validates contemporary gender studies being women-centred, making the meaning in current use exclude issues concerning men. Interdisciplinary in perspective, gender studies permeate areas such as literary theory, drama studies, film theory, performance theory, contemporary art, history, anthropology, ideology, socio-linguistics and psychology, each with distinct manner and reasons for studying gender. Catherine Acholonu argues that gender sensitivity is misplaced in Africa. For her, "most African societies neglect a role distribution system between men and women. Traditional African cultures placed male and female hierarchies side by side in the mainstream of the socio-political and economic affairs of the people. Sometimes, women and men may seem to have the upper hand in some cultures or specific customs but there is always a balance that ensures the mutual distribution of power and roles between the sexes"(18). This approximates her rejection of the notion of inequality of the sexes in the African society, as in African literature.

However, in contemporary African female writing, it is common to come across presentations of patriarchy having the upper hand, subjecting the feminine gender to avoidable traumatic

experiences that remind them of their status as women. Such experiences now form a large body of literature by some female writers in Nigeria, as in other African nations. Making inferences from Tess Onwueme's contention that contemporary female African writers have been able "to reunite and represent women as individuals with conscience," Iniobong Uko sums that contemporary female writing in the continent, "… moves African women from the margins to the centre that is from being outsiders to becoming insiders, from being and feeling victimized and neglected to actually becoming the prime actors in all spheres of life in the society" (86). This shift presupposes that contemporary African female writing now centralizes the experience of African women and their craving for recognition in the society. This is the direction of African womanism which is one of the key strains of African feminism.

Discussing literary imagination and nation building in Nigeria, Toyin Falola observes that among other ideas, there are "gendered utopian impulses to free society from male domination" (50). This idea aptly captures the aspirations of gendered visionaries among the ever increasing number of female writers in Nigeria, as in other African countries, such as Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo who in her plays voices sympathy for the suffering women in a society under male domination. Gender-influenced literary constructs often emphasize existing differences between males and females, a phenomenon some female writers have exploited to recreate experiences of women against the background of social and cultural realities. This study recognizes that the differences between male and female characters in the plays under examination constitute ground for the study of the works from gender perspective and that the playwright promotes gendered voice and vision in the plays.

Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo as Feminist Theorist: The Assumptions of Snail-sense Feminism

Besides initiating and developing two related academic courses of study on women issues (Feminism and Contemporary Literature & Introduction to Gender Studies) in the University of Lagos where she started her lectureship as a Graduate Assistant in 1977 and rose to the rank of professor in 1999, Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo has published many works in the field of women studies. These include a non-fiction: *Gender Issues in Nigeria* (1996) and a monograph, *Snail-sense Feminism: Building on an Indigenous Model* (2012). The publications place Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo as a significant female voice in African literary scholarship and theorising, besides standing her out as a gender activist. Appraising the diversity of opinions

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on many of Ezeigbo's literary works, Mnguember Vicky Sylvester writes that "Akachi Ezeigbo is read because she has created a readership to which she appeals especially in the way she domesticates serious issues, be it gender related or stories about the events that led to the Nigerian civil war" (48). This encapsulates Ezeigbo's achievements as a literary artist. Stephanie Newell observes that "as an academic researcher and prolific creative writer, Adimora-Ezeigbo reappraises and rewrites history to include a female presence: her output forms a counter-discourse, interrupting and attempting to displace the dominant gender stereotypes in popular culture. Women have not been silent participants in history or the narration of history, she insists"(88). This lends strength to Adimora-Ezeigbo's strong gendered-voice in her writings and activism. No wonder, Charles Nnolim validates Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's great contributions to the academia and literary scholarship in Nigeria in his *Introduction to Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo: Life and Literature* edited by Ezechi Onyerionwu. Nnolim writes that she "became the foremost pioneer female writer in our literary history"(xvii); he adds that her "accomplishments are titanic in every aspect of her multi-talented life as academic, feminist and creative writer… She has no competitor, especially in the variety and the different genres in which she distinguished herself"(xvii-xviii). In a related commentary, Adaobi Muo points out that Ezeigbo's critical works on gender are "a pointer to her immense contribution to Gender studies in Africa, an area she persistently courts in her creative works" (382). The positive critical receptions of her numerous literary works and intellectual, social and cultural engagements geared to better the conditions of African women attest to Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's towering stature as an African female writer and theorist of note.

Ezeigbo's variant of African feminism which she calls Snail-sense womanism affirms her affinity with other Afrocentric feminist theorists. In an interview, Olu Obafemi asked Akachi Ezeigbo if she was satisfied with the extant theories of feminism in African literature – womanism, motherism, stiwanism and other Afrocentric standpoints and how they conceptualize interventions in the Western feminist theories. Her answer throws more light on the directions of her Snail-sense feminist strain and creative writing: "These are Afrocentric theories and concepts developed to explain the situation in Africa, and to theorize on the condition of women in Africa. I have nothing against them. In fact, this may be a good opportunity to comment on my own theory which I call Snail-sense womanism. This theory derives from the habit of snails which most African women adopt in their relationships with

men. Women here often adopt a conciliatory or cooperative attitude towards their men. This is akin to what the snail does with the environment in which it moves and exists. The snail crawls over boulders, rocks, thorns and rough terrains smoothly and efficiently with lubricated tongue which is not damaged or destroyed by these harsh objects. The snail goes where it will in this manner and arrives at its destination intact. If the worst happens, it withdraws into its shell and is safe. This is what women often do in Africa to survive in Africa's harsh patriarchal culture. It is this women's tendency to accommodate the male and cooperate with men that informs this theory which I call Snail-sense womanism. These Afrocentric feminist theories are saying the same thing more or less" (Obafemi, 29-30). Adimora-Ezeigbo's response leaves the reader without a doubt that she is committed to the improved condition of the African woman within the African social and cultural landscape. This situation makes her voice such concerns in her literary works of art. She does not pretend about her clamour for freedom of women from patriarchal clutches, her desire for changes in African social and cultural practices to accommodate women, and her yearning for cessation of women exploitation and oppression.

Thus, the cardinal assumption of Snail-sense feminism is that it addresses gender-based discrimination, within African cultural limits. Summing her achievement in the monograph, Ezeigbo submits, "I decided to examine indigenous strategies women used and can still use to protect themselves and negotiate around the rugged terrain of patriarchy with its restrictions and subjugations". (SS, 1). Ezeigbo writes: "…new feminist models are needed especially those that are realistic, practical and functional. One such model is snail-sense feminism" (SS, 26) Expatiating the theory, Ezeigbo queries: "What then is snail-sense feminism all about? The theory derives from the habit of snails which most Nigerian women adopt in their relationships with men. Women in our cultures- from different parts of Nigeria- often adopt a conciliatory or cooperative attitude towards men. This is akin to what the snail does with the environment in which it moves and exists. The snail crawls over boulders, rocks, thorns, crags and rough terrains smoothly and efficiently with a well-lubricated tongue which is not damaged or destroyed by these harsh objects"(SS, 27). The obstacles described in the above extracts are symbolic of men's supposed treatment of women in the cultural milieu in discourse, namely Africa. She continues: "Moreover, the snail carries a house on its back without feeling the strain" [symbols of women shouldering many problems of the family without breaking down][but they do break down!]. She presents the African woman as having the ability to surmount the dangers lined on their path by a patriarchal society by imitating the slow and steady

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movement of the snail. She submits: "It is this tendency to accommodate or tolerate the male and cooperate with men that informs this theory which I call snail-sense feminism. The snail may not be a strong creature physically and can be crushed easily; [acknowledgement of the weakness of women in a male-centred setting]… It goes steadily forward. It does not confront objects but negotiates its way past any obstacle"(27). She is convinced that women's confrontation with men is grossly unAfrican: "A woman cannot but behave like a snail in our patriarchal society"(27).

She goes on to describe the notion of snail, thusly: "The snail is wise, sensitive, resilient and dogged or determined. Nigerian women are all these and more. They work very hard, are tenacious and patient.[Like the women in the plays]. However these virtues must not be seen as a weakness on the part of the woman. Rather they should be seen as a way of strategizing to complement the man and join forces with him to develop the society for the benefit of all"(28-29). We infer from the foregoing that Snail symbolizes African women while objects/obstacles, symbolize patriarchal tendency and subjugation of women. Our study is interested in distorting the conclusion of some critics that the women in the plays behave like snails to achieve their goals.

Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's Women in her Plays, Activity Segregation, and the Question of Snail-Sense

The few extant studies on Adimora-Ezeigbo's standpoint on the issues of patriarchy in her dramatic works paint a picture of a writer and scholar who desires the well-being of the African woman achieved through carefulness and dialogue on the part of the women, as her brand of feminism preaches. Iwuchukwu, Onyeka examines Revolt and Snail-sense Feminism in Adimora-Ezeigbo's Plays and finds that in the plays, "the revolt that the women embark on end in the status quo being changed as the women triumph. The idea of revolt by women in this study is seen from the feminist perspective insofar as the women fight for better conditions for women, and the success of the revolt is ascribed to the tenets of Snail-sense Feminism in the women's approach and attitude to the struggle"(276) .Ojukwu, Chinyelu includes Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Hands That Crush Stone* in her study of – The Politics of Power and the Struggle for Self-Assertion in some plays by female playwrights, including Tess Onwueme's The Reign of Wazobia and Julie Oko's Edewede. She argues that the female protagonists "try to circumvent their disadvantages by using tact, commitment to their cause and female bonding

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to consolidate their positions and achieve success in the pursuit of their goals, despite their harassment, intimidation and denigration by men" (315). Ezenwanebe, Osita in "Issues in Women Libration Struggles in Contemporary Nigeria: A Study of Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Hands That Crush Stone* uses Marxist and feminist perspectives in analyzing the play; she conceives the female characters as revolutionary vanguards engaged in women struggle for survival in contemporary Nigeria.

Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's female characters in her plays move from snail condition (as individuals grumbling) to gradual consciousness (group action upon activity segregation) to the climax of their boldness (confrontation with the men/their exploiters). *Hands That Crush Stone* re-enacts the dimensions of male exploitation of women in the workplace, a quarry site; *Barmaid and the Witches of Izunga* recreates the question of abandonment of women by their husbands who flirt with other women. In Hands, the women led by Uto do not act swiftly to achieve their aim of increased wage after the expiration of their ultimatum to Chief Mbu, their exploitative employer in the quarries; they continue to suffer, only to boldly confront their oppressor when Madam Udenta saves them from hunger. In Barmaid, the women allow their husbands to go deep in their new-found place of enjoying erotic pleasure (fantasy?), the bar, before they begin to organize a revolt during their meeting in Ucha's house for thrift; even then, we hear and feel the grumbling and pains of the women as individuals only for them to rely on the boldness of their leader to strategize to free their husbands from the young barmaid's attraction. Thus, it is when separated from the men in space that the reader of the play encounters the brewing consciousness in the women that later leads to direct confrontation with the other sex. In Hands, the women only grumble and fail to revolt as individuals (even as a group), even when the signs of exploitation and dehumanization are obvious. In Barmaid, the women fail to directly accost their husbands at home as individuals but organize behind the men to revolt.

So, activity segregation fundamentally enables the women in the plays to find their voices, to develop feminist consciousness because the men that exploit or oppress them are temporarily absent, giving the women the chance to reassess the depth of their suffering in the hands of the men. In *Hands That Crush Stone* , the women reassess their exploitation by Chief Mbu, their capitalist employer in the quarry business; in *Barmaid and the Witches of Izunga*, the women reassess their husbands' abdication of their conjugal responsibilities. The result is the emboldening of the women in the plays upon separation from the male actors, setting in motion

the slow growth of feminist temperament in hitherto docile and passive characters which soon matures into animated confrontation of the forces exploiting and denying the women their rights. In Hands, the women confront exploitation; in Barmaid, they struggle to save their husbands who have abandoned them to seek pleasure in the bodies of other women.

As individuals, the women in the plays adopt pseudo snail-sense approach in handling the varying threats of patriarchy in their respective homes; they are submissive to their gender roles and the men in their lives. When the women are brought together by common occupational or socio-cultural activities, feminist consciousness begins to brew and soon ignite into clash with their men. It is only in the absence of men that the women in the plays act as groups and organize and unleash their anger (a snail never gets angry) on the male-folk, raising questions of instability in their drive to freedom from male subjugation. The lack of sustenance of the women's clamour for their rights as individuals at home or in the presence of their exploitative male partners projects their glaring acceptance of their place in the socio-cultural order in the African universe. This compels the researcher to believe that African gender theorists are either far from achieving their desired results or are out on mere academic exercise.

The notion of snail sense in the action of the women in the plays as some critics pose is questionable. The actions and inactions of the women challenge the assumptions of snail-sense feminism. That the women wait for ripe conditions or slowly act like the snail to reach their goal does not totally enable their success in the battle: in Hands, it is the attempt to defeat Madam Udenta in the local government election that makes Chief Mbu to increase the stipend of the women labourers in his quarry site; he can lay them off at will, after all the women are casual workers. When the temporary success of the women record wanes, the protective shell of the snail could be cracked open and the snail devoured by predatory men; new shells may form when the oppressed snails regroup if any activity(ies) separate them from the males. The society, the snail shell in which the women live, symbolically, does not give express room for women to abdicate their roles; it is a gendered space with each sex playing their roles for orderly living.

Even the snail-sense feminist theorist contradicts her own assumptions. For instance, realizing the enormity of odds against women in society and the impossibility of total freedom from male-domination of women in the African society, Adimora-Ezeigbo posits, "women cannot escape many of the responsibilities thrust upon them by culture and tradition, but they can at

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least control their destiny to a large extent, and structure and take pride in every aspect of their lives" (Gender Issues 7). A similar defeatist tendency creeps in as she struggles to promote Snail-sense feminism: "I am aware that in spite of the theorizing and analysis done over the years on feminism, the problems women experience in society persist"(Snail-sense, 26). Her female characters in the plays seem initially passive and docile, acting like snails only to develop feminist consciousness when pushed to the wall; they are a sharp contrast to most of the characters in her fiction. For instance, contending that the African woman should not be judged by European patriarchal standards, in her study of Adimora-Ezeigbo's The Last of the Strong Ones, Shreya Bhattacharji notes that "Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's women are vibrant, vocal individuals, with powerful female genealogies, immersed in independent professions" (132). The exploitation of the women at the quarry sites in *Hands That Crush Stone* by the male entrepreneur that engages them could have been forestalled if the women bargain for better conditions from the very beginning or act decisively after their resolution to go on strike. They could have tried their hands on other menial jobs or farm or become creative instead of submitting to the inhuman conditions in the quarry sites, they opt to suffer first before revolting. In Barmaid, the men cannot be completely blamed, as some of them could have been forced into the conditions that enable them to abandon their wives to seek libidinal pleasure in the bar. The society is replete with accounts of women who fail or refuse to perform their conjugal duties satisfactorily. And at home these women are creepy snails only to be become cheetahs when they unite with other women. Thus, the theory and those critics fail to recognize that a snail can never be as aggressive as the traumatized female characters in the plays understudy. Although the female characters act slowly in the beginning, their anger boils over and leads to revolt against men at the end.

Conclusion

The African women as shown in the plays only confront men or find their voices when they group in the absence of their husbands as in Barmaid or in the work place as in Hands. The women in the plays are presented as uncreative, docile, and passive characters. They tie their lives to crushing stones in a world full of opportunities for self-reliance. They could do other things, even using their meager earnings to engage in petty trading, so long as they are healthy and strong. Some of the female characters hide under widowhood to engage in crushing stones, but there are non-widows among them. From the finding and implications of the study, it seems improper to look on the female characters in the plays as embodiments of the dictates of the

snail-sense model of African feminist thought which is inadequate to capture the experiences of Adimora-Ezeigbo's lead female characters in her plays. So, the search for an enduring indigenous feminist model that aptly captures attempts by African women as both individuals and groups to resist the threats to their freedom from discrimination and oppression in the hands of the other sex and tradition continues.

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