

Technical Discourse of Culture as Enigma of Gender Inequality in Osodebamen Oamen's *The Scar*

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Abstract

The thrust of this study is to technically interrogate the effects of culture on gender inequality in Nigeria. As a nexus, culture, envisaged through tradition, norms, value system, mores, and occupation, thus, the general way of life of a given people, possesses attributes – rules and regulations that rather promotes and protects patriarchy which ultimately places the female gender as second filial in praxis of socio-political cum economic strata of the Nigerian state as portrayed in Osodebamen Oamen's *The Scar*. The study, while anchoring on Stiwanim Theory (Feminism in the African context) and Critical Discuss Methodology, interrogates the representation of women in the selected play that seems to copiously favour the cultural structures of the male dominance that has encumber the much-yearned enclosure of Nigerian women in the pursuit for political cum economic reality. The play shows how culture helped to hinder the progress of the woman towards identifying with reality. The study argues that there are tropes of stiwanim in the selected texts; but the play reveals inevitable casualties that trail stiwanim and palliate the inclusion of women in societal transformation. The study therefore recommends that culture, which is made by men, if not favourable towards promoting equality, unity, peace, and development, should be mitigated for societal development.

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Background to the Study

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic national society made up of about 400 ethnic groups. These various groups have cultural traits. Culture is tied to ethnic identity. People of different cultural background have different cultural experiences. In recent times, ethnic cultural practices have posed a threat to the continued survival of many ethnic groups and in a way, this has affected the peace and stability of such groups. Thus, the concern on the impact of such cultural practices on their victims and on the society at large has been on for a long time. National government, United Nations, and many NGO's according to Irene (2006) have resolved to plan out various way interventions, which will more accurately respond to the current dynamics of potential Cultural Revolution and transformation in African societies. Even so, cultural practices according to Irene have become a very pertinent issue in the Nigerian polity that it needs urgent solution if our society is to forge ahead in the scheme of things globally.

Every society according to Irena has its cultural practices that distinguish it from others. These cultural practices encompass the totality of the people's lifestyle. The various aspects of these cultural practices are what give the people an identity. In our society and individual communities, certain practices, no matter how well intentioned, still pose a threat to the empowerment of women and their integration into national development process. Cultural practices have their roots in ancient traditional and religious beliefs. Some of these practices, which are handed down through succeeding generations, are generally detrimental to the health, psychology and social well-being of women and girls (Irena, 2006). There is abundant evidence to show that enforcement of some of these harmful cultural practices violates women's fundamental human and reproductive right, and that such violations are widespread in Nigeria and other African countries.

The central culture that permeates the Nigerian society is patriarchal in nature. This male dominated culture accords women an inferior and secondary position in society. The patriarchal culture of male supremacy still remains embedded, obscured and protected within traditional institutions and structures held in abeyance and relative utmost sacredness (Halima & Falmata, 2020). It is against this premise that Egobueze Anthony, Onyekwere Laretta, and Ogele Ezinho Promise (2022) aver that "in every human society, there is always conflicting interest which defines how the people exist. These are factors that shape competition and rivalries in the society". While quoting Shwap (2017) on the effect of culture on gender inequality, Egobueze, Onyekoro and Ogele further noted that "talent is one of the most essential factors for growth and competitiveness". To build future economies that are both dynamic and inclusive, we must ensure that everyone has equal opportunity. When women and girls are not integrated – as both beneficiary and shaper – the global community loses out on skills, ideas and perspectives that are critical. for addressing global challenges and harnessing new opportunities.

The concept of gender mainstreaming was first proposed at the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985 (UN, 1985). The idea gained prominence in the United Nations Development Community and formally featured at the Fourth

Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China in 1995 (UN Women, 1995). The document that arose out of the conference became known as the 'Beijing Platform for Action' (BPFA) (UN Women, 1995). The BPFA state that governments and other actors should advance active policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all political programmes, in order to ensure that before decisions are made, an evaluation of the impact of such decision on women and men respectively is interrogated (UN women, n.a). To achieve the above, "BPFA adopted the 35% Affirmative Action (Amadi, 2017, p. 153)."

Despite the above positions, gender inequality, caused by culture has risen to become a major challenge on the Nigeria socio-political cum economic front. Apart from this, it has also affected the female gender such that it has amounted to low participation of women in paid employment, politics, leadership and decision making as well as equally high rate of physical and sexually harassment and assaults, trafficking, marital rape, early force marriage and different phases of harmful traditional practice, constituents its cogent effects. All these are portrayed in Osodebamen Oamen's *The Scar*. Thus, interrogating the level of cultural impacts on gender inequality as discussed in *The Scar* forms the thrust of this study. To achieve this, Stiwanism Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis Methodology are employed as guide.

Culture Briefly Discussed

The etymological analysis of "culture" is quite uncontroversial. However, in the field of anthropology, the situation is much more complex. Definitions of culture abound and range from very complex to very simple. For example, a complex definition was proposed by Para-Mallam (2017) that culture is "transmitted and created content and patterns of values, ideas, and other symbolically meaningful systems as factors in the shaping of human behavior". An even less easily comprehensible definition was provided by Worsdale & Wright (2020), who averred that "by culture we mean an extra somatic, temporal continuum of things and events dependent upon symbols".

Much of the discussion of the concept of culture in recent years has been concerned with a distinction between culture and human behavior. For a long time, many anthropologists were quite content to define culture as behaviour, peculiar to the human species, acquired by learning, and transmitted from one individual, group, or generation to another by mechanisms of social inheritance. But, eventually, some began to object to this and to make the point that culture is not itself behaviour; but rather, is an abstraction from behavior. Culture, Remigius & Elota (2020) say "is an abstraction from concrete human behaviour, but it is not itself behaviour." Schilling (2011) and others take the same view, while most see culture as abstraction.

Those who define culture as an abstraction do not tell us what they mean by this term. They appear to take it for granted (1) that they themselves know what they mean by "abstraction," and that others, also, will understand. We believe that neither of these suppositions is well-founded. But whatever an abstraction in general may be to these anthropologists, when culture becomes an "abstraction" it becomes imperceptible,

imponderable, and not wholly real. According to Amaka (36), “culture itself is intangible and cannot be directly apprehended even by the individuals who participate in it”. Herskovits also calls culture “intangible” (Amaka, 2017).

The concept of culture has been defined in a number of different but related ways. Tylor (1871) in Diminyi Christopher Awan and Livinus Ekechukwu (2012) defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”. Again, culture has, in general parlance, been viewed as the finer things in life like good taste, refinement, appreciation of good music, literature etc. It is the totality of what is learned by individuals as members of a society (Miminyi & Livinus, 2012). Culture is also anything that human beings do that does not have a biological basis. In short, McGee defines culture as “any piece or pattern of behaviour, attitude, value belief, or skills that people learn as members of human group, plus the manipulation of any material item derived from these abilities”. Culture has also been defined as the way of life of a certain group of people in a particular society. Based on the above, Ifeyinwa (2004) according to Diminyi and Livinus highlighted examples of cultural groups using the nomadic Fulani, who possess similarities in language.

Gender Inequality Briefly Discussed

Gender refers to the social conception rather than biologically ascertained roles of men and women as well as the relationships between them in a given society. These roles and relationships are not fixed but could and do change. That is, it is “the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male, female and the relationship between women and men and girls and boys (Okojie & Amadi, 2008).” While inequality is a state of unevenness, disparity, injustice, dissimilitude that exists in social relations. It is an unfair situation in a society where some people have more access and opportunities than others. It is indeed anisometric treatment of individuals wholly or partly and it arises as a result of differences in sex, economic and social opportunities, amongst others.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are, thus, not merely issues of human rights, but also economic necessities, and central to the development agenda (UN, 1995). An extensive body of work documents gender inequality in both opportunities (for example, education, health, and finance) and outcomes (for example, employment and earnings), with a particularly rich literature studying the determinants of gender wage gap. The literature dating back by has emphasized the positive effects of gender equality on development.

Most empirical contributions to date according to Schilling also document a significant negative effect of gender inequality on growth. Despite a large number of contributions on the topic, Pathak (2017) aver that “empirically identifying a causal impact of gender inequality on economic growth is a major challenge”. The standard methodology in this macro-economic literature is to use a regression analysis to relate the countries' per capita income growth to different proxies of gender inequality, controlling for standard growth

covariates, such as population growth, level of investment, openness to trade, and governmental and institutional quality (Clark, 2011).

Such cross-country approaches, however, raise endo-genuinity concerns - well known in the economic growth literature. Reverse causality is an issue in studying the role of gender inequality for economic progress, as the two are closely related: in one direction, development alone can play a major role in reducing gender inequality; in the other direction, higher gender equality may support development (Dorius & Firebaugh, 2010). Furthermore, there may be some omitted factors that both enhance the growth of and narrow the gender gap. One avenue to take to address these challenges would be to use an instrumental variable analysis, but a plausible instrument to identify the relationship would require finding a variable that contributes to growth only through its impact on gender inequality - which poses a challenge of its own (Busemeyer, 2015).

Visibility of gender inequality in Nigeria

Women constitute about half of the population of the Nigerian State and are known to play vital roles as mothers, producers, managers, community developers/organizers etc. Their contribution to the social and economic development of societies is also more than half as compared to that of men by virtue of their dual roles in the productive and reproductive spheres. Yet their participation in formal and informal structures and processes, where decisions regarding the use of societal resources generated by both men and women are made, remains insignificant (Makama, 2013). The Nigerian society as noted by Aina (1998) in Makama (2013) has been patriarchal in nature which is a major feature of a traditional society. It is a structure of a set of social relations with material base which enables men to dominate women (Stacey 1993; Kramarae 1992; Lerner 1986 in Makama, 2013). It is a system of social stratification and differentiation on the basis of sex, which provides material advantages to males while simultaneously placing severe constraints on the roles and activities of females.

The patriarchal society sets the parameters for women's structurally unequal position in families and markets by condoning gender-differential terms in inheritance rights and legal adulthood, by tacitly condoning domestic and sexual violence and sanctioning differential wages for equal or comparable work (Makama, 2013). Tradition or culture and religion have dictated men and women relationship for centuries and entrenched male domination into the structure of social organization and institution at all levels of leadership. Patriarchy justifies the marginalization of women in education, economy, labour market, politics, business, family, domestic matters and inheritance.

Also, this culture of patriarchy according to Makama is a very strong determinant of male dominance over female and as a result men in Nigerian society will sit back in the family to keep the family name and lineage growing while women will be married out. Thus, men are being trained for leadership activities while women are confined to domestic activities; roles ascribed to them by culture which affect them later in life, thereby making them to lose self-confident/worth and have low self-esteem in their career in adult life,

politics inclusive. This position of women in society in relation to men and the subordination, oppression and marginalization of women has attracted the attention of scholars, activists, feminists and development workers for a very long time (Makama, 2013). The issues relating to what is also known as gender inequality in Nigeria has become very prominent in the last few decades.

Stiwanism Theory

While quoting Lewis, 2001; Kolawole, 2002; Naemeka, 2003; Mekwe, 2008; Akin-Aina, 2012, and Niadu, 2013, Yemisi (2018) writes that many African Feminists scholars have argued that discussions about African feminism(s) - whether it exists, what it means, if it's singular or plural - needs to be contextual focused and not over theorized. Stiwanism (African Feminism) includes theories and movements which specifically address the experiences and needs of continental African women (African women who reside on the African continent). From a western perspective, these theories and movements fall under the umbrella label of Feminism, but it is important to note that many branches of African "feminism" actually resist this categorization. African women have been engaged in gender struggle since long before the existence of the western-inspired label "African feminism," and this history is often neglected.

Stiwanism therefore, according to (Aharanwa, 2021) is a theory that explains the need for African feminists to be self-defined and not copied based on Western female ethos, as women situations are not identical globally. The African feminists and critics, Ogundipe-Leslie believes that feminism as a word should not be restricted to Western Ideologies and practices, but should also exist on the African soil, with ideologies, beliefs and tenets that are strictly indigenous to African women and addresses their plight; the form of subjugation they are exposed to and the type of emancipation they crave. Stiwanism connotes the process of achieving social transformation. This can be done if African women are allowed to actively participate in the diverse social spheres.

Ogundipe according to (Yemisi, 2018) maintains that both sexes complement each other; unhealthy rivalry is not welcomed, and marriage should strengthen the union between sexes. The African women should also be cognizant of her cultural context and not channel her feminist thought to that of the western feminist, who may be averse to the customs and tradition of Africa (Aharanwa, 2021). However, this study is of the view that the play interrogates the message of inevitable casualties that trail women's inclusion in societal reforms thereby negating stiwanism. It is this lacuna in the play that is ostensibly pro feminism that this study intends to spotlight.

Critical Discourse Methodology

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a qualitative analytical approach for critically describing, interpreting, and explaining the ways in which discourses construct, maintain, and legitimize social inequalities. CDA rests on the notion that the way we use language is purposeful, regardless of whether discursive choices are conscious or unconscious. CDA takes a number of different approaches and incorporates a variety of methods that depend on research goals and theoretical perspectives.

This methodological guide presents a general CDA analytic framework and illustrates the application of that framework to a systematic literature review of CDA studies in education. CDA research studies are no less likely than other forms of scholarly research to reproduce ideological assumptions; qualitative rigor and trustworthiness are discussed. The study therefore employs CDA because it aims at describing, analyzing, interpreting and explaining the effect of culture on gender inequality in Nigeria as portrayed in the selected Nigerian play. Through this method, the researcher retrieves his information from two sources: primary and secondary. The primary source includes the researcher's basic idea on the area of the research and the play text, while the secondary sources include the use of library materials such as scholarly journals, text books, articles, magazines, Google Scholars, and other materials relevant to the study.

Synopsis of *The Scar*

The Scar revolves around Isehakhe, who returns to the village to represent the people of Omanekhui community who for long has been ruled by greedy men that makes laws that favours them and enslaves the women in the state house of assembly. On her arrival, she was informed about a political meeting in the community town hall where the choice of their candidate for the state house of assembly will be decided. She quickly rushes to meet up with the meeting so she can reveal to the men that having learnt the wisdom of the white men, she should be given the opportunity to represent them, but is refuted with the ideology that it is against the culture of the land for a woman to take up political or leadership positions when the men are present. She arrives home disappointed to meet Chief Kina, who had lifted sand on her private part when she was a child who had been waiting to inform her of his indication of having her as his new wife, so she, as an educated woman, can be the head of all his wives at home.

Isehakhe, understanding that it is a taboo to reject a marriage proposal from a revered Chief in the community, noted that she wishes to make her stand known to the community people. In jubilation, Chief Kina placed a call, inviting all the village people to his house, so they can witness his marital overturn with Isehakhe, and thereafter, merry with his family.

Observing that the villagers are all gathered, Isehakhe narrated how Chief Kina lifted sand on her private part when she was playing sand play with her fellow children; and equally asked the villagers to judge if it is advisable for her to marry a man who despises her womanhood as a child but turns up to value same when grown. Due to the response from the villagers, which for sure is a negative affirmation, Chief Kina decides to employ the services of WOMAN who is the community women leader, to threaten Isehakhe on the idea of circumcision, believing that Isehakhe would ask for his assistance, then he would present marriage request to her again. Obviously, Isehakhen, understanding the magnitude of the demand for her circumcision from WOMAN and the community people, placed a question to Chief Kina, that if she should accept his request of been his wife, if she can avoid circumcision ritual? Chief Kina, glad that his plan has worked, accepted that he will make sure nobody will disturb her about circumcision in the

community. When asked for the reason for his change of mind, Chief Kina reveals that the law on female circumcision was done to restrict women urge for sexual activities, that there was no traditional value attached to it. With this revelation, the women, led by Isehakhe, decided to revolt against the culture that favours the men and enslaves the women.

Technical discourse of culture as enigma for gender inequality in *The Scar*

From the forgoing, it is plausible to note that the issue of gender inequality in the Nigerian society is caused by culture. Most often, this culture only favours the selfish men. In the play, Isehakhe, while arguing with Chief Kina asserted that: **Isehakhe:** Our culture favours only men more than women. Why? Because they were the people who sat down and took the decision in the absence of women... (15). Isehakhe explicitly accuses the men of drafting laws which are practiced in the form of culture, just to enslave the women. This is also observed in Chief Kina statement when he tried to differentiate African culture with western civilization.

Chief Kina: Western knowledge has turned you around. Is that how you were taught in your western school? (Frowns) so your waist does not bend again. This is the truth. Some of you Omanekhui women are lost in between cultures. The culture which gave birth to you and the western culture which intends to educate you (15).

Chief Kina, like most Nigerian men believes that according to the culture of Omanekhui, women are expected to bow in response to them and any woman, who fails to demonstrate as thus, is referred to have violated their culture. Even so, the issue of selfishness relating to culture is also visible when Chief Kina indicated interest in marrying Isehakhe. He sees Isehakhe's refusal to marry him as taboo. Thus, his statement: **Chief Kina:** When she returns, tell her and Ogona that the great Chief Kina is interested in his daughter... as a chief in this land, remember it is a taboo to refuse my request (14).

On political setting, it is also a taboo for a woman to take or contest any political position in Omanekhui community. This was visible when Isehakhe, as the most qualified candidate in the community was asked to drop her ambition of representing the community people in state house of assembly. First politician obliged: **1st Politician:** A woman must not be allowed to represent us or given any leading role in our society, no matter how bad it is, the head should always be a male.

This attribute of culture is also visible in the Nigerian society where major political or societal positions are set aside for the men while the women are to take up minor positions or none at all. Women positions are usually questions and often times; they are reminded that their place is in the household activities. First Politician's statement below justifies it:

First Politician: How can a woman that is referred to as the weaker sex govern the affairs of people? Even in the absence of men who will give a woman privilege. To me, a crippled man is better than an able-bodied woman when it comes to politics and administration.

Just like First Politician, most Nigerian men believe that the women do not have the proficiency to manage the affairs of governance. It is against this backdrop that First Politician still averred that "...Women are meant to manage homes on behalf of men (19)". Isehakhe immediately rebuked him by noting that "...your mother was referred to as a weaker sex, but she carried you in her belly for nine months, gave birth to you, cared for you until you are man enough to man a woman (19)". Isehakhe also highlighted the roles that women must handle to uplift their statues when she said: Isehakhen: The women should play motherly roles, professional roles, I mean roles that will equate them with men in all spheres of life...stop your illicit partnership and provide and support enabling environment – equal opportunities... (23). This conformed to Stiwanism Theory that tries to interrogate feminism studies on the African metropolitan sphere; where African decorum must be visibly maintained even when there is quest for equality.

Despite Isehakhe's position on women integration in policy making, Chief Kina still pleaded to Isehakhe not to educate the women on the other side of life which are not enshrined in their culture when he said: Chief Kina: Promise us that you will not expose our women to their rights and politics. The rural, illiterate women may not know their right, based on this; we are able to manage them. They should remain our helpers; we are the men (23)".

In the same plain, evidence of culture being an enigma on gender inequality and enslavement on the female gender by the male gender is also visible in the play when MAN decided to enslave WOMAN his wife with the ideology that she was only suffering to sustain her husband and family according to culture, to avoid polygamy. His statement below explains: MAN: ...is she? She is only caring for her family. Our tradition demands this responsibility of her. If she refuses her duties, so many women are there; ready to do same twice to please their husband, if they can find one... (26). Isehakhe also expanded this as she noted: Isehakhe: ...and the Lord created them male and female, a helper we were told he created Eve... but she bears so much than a helper... what makes her slave? You mean your mind cannot guide you to assist her? (26). The same issue of inequality was also visible when Complainant explained to Oria.

Complainant: ...their threat was like thunderstorm. Why? Because she is not pregnant. And if eventually she is pregnant, she must not for any reason give birth to a female child, or else the promised to lynch her and her baby. Well, someone will bring the warning notice soonest. Mind you, I wasn't here and I never told you... (28).

On the same plain, Complainant also narrated how Jaga dealt with his wife: Complainant: Jaga dealt with his wife this morning. It was raw. As he was beating her, she was moving backward until she fell and put her buttocks into a hot pot of soup placed on fire b her (28). Such as Jaga, most men in the Nigerian society see their wives as slaves and they vent their anger on them for slight provocation. They would hit, beat, rape and inflict injuries on them. They believe that culture has made them lord over the women; thus, the women should not be given opportunity for development.

Furthermore, issue of culture being an enigma of illegal female circumcision was also interrogated in the play. And it was on that premise that Isehakhe vowed to stop its existence against the women in the community when Woman was asked by Chief Kina to perform the circumcision ritual on her. Her statement below justifies it:

Isehakhe: (gently) you want to leave a scar on my womanhood, isn't it? Over my dead body. Woman, do you know what you are talking about? To leave a lifelong scar on every woman that experiences it? Whenever you remember, it crushes your emotion, and you feel like exiling yourself. The grief is insurmountable, especially when you realize it after it has been done, and when you find out that there was no genuine need for it. The scar is not restricted, it goes beyond its physical appearance, and it remains till you go back to mother earth. I don't want to be mutilated with the crude knife and untrimmed fingernails of a culture bound woman, who does not know nor has the intention to find out the essence of what she does. Of course, it is business, even if it is wrong, if she has no other skill what will she do? She has continued with her emotionally, socially and medically unhealthy business... (34-35).

Despite these enumerations, Chief Kina still insisted that she must pass through the circumcision ritual. Hence her statement: Chief Kina: You need it. As far as you want to remain a daughter in this land. Forget pride, or else, none of us will sit down when it is time to hand you over for marriage. If you don't need it, we need it, do it to save this land from shame (35). Isehakhe obviously refuted the Chief Kina's ideology by quoting the Holy Bible which supersedes all culture, norms and tradition. His statement:

Isehakhe: ... it appeases the gods, young men will flock your corridor, hmmm. Even the Creator Himself did not approve female circumcision. He said in Genesis 17:10: "every male among you shall be circumcised." Not female. Why can't we just evolve along the revolving world? But I wouldn't mind the circumcision of the inhibiting factors affecting the entire women of Omanekhui (35-36).

Against this statement, Woman reveals the importance of female circumcision, such as it is accorded to culture. She said: WOMAN: Because it is a treasured scar on every woman in this land. Without it your birth passage will not be open and the gods will not bless you with a child because they believe you don't have the ideal passage for a child to come into the new world (36).

More so, Chief Kina reveals through his speech that all the rules and regulations that sum culture are drawn by men to satisfy their egocentrism. His speech below: Chief Kina: I am the only person, empowered to do that, after all, dressing hasn't anything to do with childbearing or life itself. It only helps the woman to capture and control her feelings, so that she can be faithful to her husband (37).

This extract explains that culture is made by men to subjugate the women towards being faithful to the men; while the men are empowered by the same culture to feel and do

whatever they like. It is therefore to this that Isehakhe vocally obliges the women to come together in unity, to put an end culture enigma that has enslaved them for a long time. Her statement:

Isehakhe: All women must come together and fight against violation of their rights. Every humiliating socio-cultural scar on every Omanehkui woman must be rejected. And because I admire the role of a mother, I therefore offer myself to whoever will respect the womanhood in me, let him come and touch my golden buttocks and let his children suck my golden breast. Like the unceasing flow of a river is a woman's life (38).

Conclusively, women of Omanehkui, through the confession of Chief Kina, understood that the culture that was promoting female circumcision was drafted by the greedy men in the community, led by Chief Kina. Against this backdrop, they decided to stick together to hunt all rules and regulations that does not favour the women, starting from female circumcision. This is the kind of Stiwanism movement that is generally concerned with how African women on the continent and in the diaspora manage and challenge multiple layers of oppression; this includes the deconstructing of ideologies of racism and sexism that devalue them. The movement came as a result of the “experiences and conditions of colonialism, slavery and patriarchy” (Norwood, 2013; 225), which has therefore meant that it has had a difficult relationship with western and white feminism.

Conclusion

From the study, it is observed that the Nigerian society is patriarchal in nature which is a major feature of a traditional society. It is a structure of a set of social relations with material base which enables men to dominate women. Women are therefore discriminated upon from, in most cases, acquiring formal education, mistreated and perpetually kept as house help; the average Nigerian woman is seen as an available object for prostitution, forced marriage, street hawking, instrument of wide-range trafficking and a misfit in the society. Thus, the purported irrelevance associated with the status of women in society has merely reduced an average woman to an inferior commodity.

The issue of patriarchy is also made visible in the play when the men decided to draft laws, enshrined in their culture to subjugate and enslave the women, mostly as it concerns female circumcision. But through the proper application of wisdom, Isehakhe, through stiwanism movement, was able to mobilize the women to end every form of female circumcision, gender inequality, gender-based violence, marginalization, discrimination, and intimidation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered:

1. Culture, which is made by men, if not favourable towards promoting equality, unity, peace, and development, should be mitigated for societal development.
2. To achieve this, there shall be urgent need to empower women towards achieving gender equality and should be based on the premise that there should not be

- inequality between men and women.
3. The policy plan or practice that seeks gender equality must balance these power relations for the optimum benefit of both parties.
 4. Women should employ the theory of stiwanism, which is the act of feminism that sticks to African way of life in pursuing equality.
 5. Women should be united in the quest of seeking redress in political cum economic operations in Nigeria.

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