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The Conflicting Roles of African Women in Sefi Atta's "Hailstones on Zamfara"

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Master Degree in Literature

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, Ibrahim and Ourida whose words of encouragement and push me towards. My sisters

Selwa, Yamina, Meriem. My brothers Chafick, Abdekarim, Hossem.

This thesis work is dedicated to my beloved husband Mohamed source of support and encouragement during the challenges. I am truly thankful for having you in my life. To my

dearest daughters: Serine, Rima, Meiem .

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the conflicting roles and marginalization of African women in Sefi Atta's novel "Hail Stones on Zamfara," in reference to Nigerian women. Atta highlights the lack of attention given to the education of women and employs feminist perspectives to challenge patriarchal hegemony. The study delves into the feminist discourse within the context of Sharia law in Zamfara, the first Islamic state in Northern Nigeria, where the punishment of stoning to death is enforced. Furthermore, the study explores the mistreatment and cruelty experienced by women within domestic institutions, revealing a disparity in the punishment of crimes committed by influential individuals compared to impoverished women who face immediate sentencing regardless of mitigating circumstances. In order to fulfill the desired aim, the researcher applies the feminist approach to examine the atrocities against Nigerian women. The study resulted in the following: The protagonist chooses her faith by taking the road not taken. Thus, it resulted in her punishment by patriarchal society. In fact, her attempt to escape her reality deemed to failure, and at the end her society wins. According to Islamic Sharia, Adultery is not tolerated, and punished.

Key words: African women, Islamic state, Nigeria, Socio-cultural dynamics

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the content of this dissertation is purely the result of my research, and that appropriate references or acknowledgements to the work of other research are made where required.

Signature

Gagui

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General Introduction

Introduction

Since time immemorial, women have been forced to face obstacles and accept the limitations and regulations imposed on them by their culture and traditions. In fact, for many years, women have been assigned a lower status and subordinate roles than men, and have been forced to accept this marginalized status. They perform roles, functions and responsibilities without asking for anything in return. The Nigerian society, like all other patriarchal societies, women face various challenges including sexism, gender inequality, domestic violence and social patriarchal practices. Thus, female subordination and patriarchy is one of the main features of Nigerian society that is deeply entrenched (Ghosh 09).

Conflicting roles refers to the societal roles experienced by every person, be it at work, school, or at home. Feminists use the term patriarchy to explain the relationship of power between men and women. So patriarchy is a term that was weaponized by feminists to acknowledge women different experiences and how they are forced into them. Feminists also used the term to fight against the system and achieve certain goals. In fact, patriarchy has always been an obstacle to women development and empowerment. This prevents her from making her own decisions in all areas of her life. It allows men to exercise all privileges and dominion outside of society or at home with their families (Makama117,127).

The stereotypical image assigned to women was always hated by women because it underestimates them. Women were not against their roles as housewives, but they hated the act that these is the only role they can do in their lives. All the hatred and negative aspirations and even hopes were reflected in many literary works, since the beginning of feminist movements. Africans, like others, shared the same aspirations as women all over the world, thus they chose to make their voices heard through writing. The elite saw that they have to be a part of the universal fight against masculine superiority, by providing works able to speak the truth without disguise, and Sefi Atta is one of them.

Sefi Atta is a Nigerian writer that chooses to represent Nigerian women experiences in her novel "Hail Stones on Zamfara". She is a winner of the African Wole Soyinka Prize for Literature. In "Hailstones on Zamfara", Atta follows the story of the novels protagonist. The study also attempts to analyze the strategies and mechanisms that Sefi Atta' empower the protagonists with to subvert and challenge the patriarchal system. As such, it emphasizes the removal of masculine discourse about marriage and family life. "Hailstone's on Zamfara" refuses to abide by the gender roles assigned to her. Since then, she has grown into an independent and confident woman, no longer limited to the category of women.

African society forces women to be subservient and inferior. Some of them would rather remain silent and submit to the customs and traditions of the society, while others were objected to being confined to these patriarchal structures. "Hailstones on Zamfara" is the compelling story of a girl who manages to break free from society, transcend patriarchal boundaries, subvert the male voice and empower herself. The aim of this study was to shed light on the different forms of subordination and marginalization suffered by female characters. " hailstones' on Zamfara " is a great achievement by Sefi Atta's on Zamfara. She sheds light on many aspects of the challenges women face throughout their lives, such as: parents, tradition and femininity.

Rational of the Study

The reason behind choosing this topic is to investigate how do conflicting roles of African woman in Safi Atta's "Hailstones on Zamfara" contribute to the exploration of gender dynamic and societal expectation.

Statement of the Problem

Women writers try to break the shackles of society, to express their subordination, and to express their resistance. They developed a new type of fiction depicting the various experiences and stories of women in a patriarchal society. On the one hand, these authors

manage to describe the struggles women have had, and are still fighting, to break down patriarchal boundaries, assert their identities, and fulfill their agency. On the other hand, they show that sometimes women can choose to accept victimization and stick to their assigned gender roles.

Research Questions

1. How does author's social background affect characters' behavior in Sefi Atta's "Hailstones on Zamfara"?

Research Sub-Questions

2. In what way does Sefi Atta portray the gender discrimination in her main character?
3. How is the sense of victimization depicted in Sefi Atta's "Hailstones on Zamfara"?

Methodology

This study is both descriptive and analytical in nature. It is theoretical as it introduces the framework through which the story will be analyzed and studied. Feminism is used to explore the female subjugation and empowerment will be tackled with reference to their main work. The study is analytical because it offers a reading of the selected story through applying the theoretical framework.

Objectives

- This study aims at learning about African women literature and the way they transmit their dynamic gender issues.
- The study also tries to examine the double burden of African women via their literature.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

This research is confined with the study conflicting gender roles in Sefi Atta "Haistones on Zamfara". This research focuses on exploration of gender dynamics and societal

expectations. When it comes to challenges to the study, there are a couple of problems that the researcher faces. Time was the first obstacle that the researcher has faced. Due to time constraints, besides other working duties, the researcher could not dig well into the work. In other works, the study is a little bit superficial. Since literature can be studied in different angles, the researcher could only explore the work from one angle.

Chapters' Demarcation

This research is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the Safi Atta's "Hailstones on Zamfara's" cultural and social Background, by mentioning its Nigerian cultural and social Norms, then it introduces the Women in Nigerian Literature. Also, this chapter will introduce Sefi Atta's "Hailstones on Zamfara". After that, the second chapter is entitled "The Debating Death, Life and The Afterlife. It is devoted to the explanation of concepts of feminism, gender and sexuality, and adultery. The last chapter has the title "Taking the Road Not Taking". This chapter is devoted to the feminist reading of "Hail Stones on Zamfara".

**Chapter One: Safi Atta's "Hailstones on
Zamfara" Cultural and Social Background**

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1.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on several aspects related to African postcolonial literature. Firstly, it discusses the cultural and social background of Nigeria, examining the norms and traditions of the country. The literature explores the challenges and consequences of decolonization in various regions that were previously under European rule. Additionally, the chapter recognizes the influential role of women writers in the decolonization process. These writers forged their own language to liberate themselves from the dual oppression of patriarchy and colonization. Nigerian female authors, such as Flora Napa, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and Sefi Atta, actively challenged the hegemony of patriarchal societies by adopting feminist ideologies.

1.2 Nigerian Cultural and Social Norms

With a population of over 200 million people, Nigeria is known for its rich cultural heritage and diverse society. The country is home to over 250 ethnic groups, each with its own distinct language, customs, and traditions. This diversity is a result of Nigeria's historical development, migration and settlement patterns of various groups across the region.

The cultural and social norms in Nigeria are deeply influenced by a variety of factors, including religion, colonialism, and globalization. Religion plays a significant role in Nigerian society, with Islam and Christianity being the two major religions practiced in the country. These religious beliefs and practices have had a profound impact on the cultural and social fabric of Nigeria. (Metz 96,140).

The assertion that gender discrimination and women's subjugation in Africa, specifically Nigeria, are rooted in African culture is a complex and controversial claim. While it is true that Nigeria, like many other countries, has cultural practices that perpetuate gender inequalities, it is important to recognize that these practices are not inherent to African culture as a whole. African cultures are diverse, comprising numerous ethnic groups with varying

traditions, norms, and values. Therefore, it is essential to avoid making sweeping generalizations about an entire continent's cultural practices (Adams,29).

It is worth mentioning that Nigeria is a diverse country with numerous ethnic groups and religions, and cultural practices and beliefs can differ significantly across regions and communities. In recent years, there have been efforts to challenge and change discriminatory norms and promote gender equality through various means, including legal reforms, advocacy, and education. These efforts aim to address the existing gender inequalities and empower women in all aspects of life, including leadership positions and decision-making roles Haut du formulaire (Essien and Ukpong 287).

Some cultural and religious beliefs have been deeply rooted in Nigerian society for a long time, to the point where they have become legal norms. Consequently, these age-old beliefs and cultural practices often violate equality laws and international instruments meant to protect women's rights (Bake and Syed 8,9). The influence of Christianity and Islam, the dominant religious beliefs in Nigeria, on gender equality, have a significant impact on the social, cultural, and political aspects of people's lives in Nigeria. It suggests that certain practices within these religions, such as gender segregation and seclusion in Islam or the concept of submission to men in Christianity, contribute to the discrimination against women (Owoyemi and Olusanya 10,14).

1.3 Women in Nigerian Literature

Colonialism often imposed its cultural norms and values upon the colonized societies, including patriarchal structures and practices that perpetuated gender inequalities. These patriarchal systems, which prioritize male dominance and control, frequently resulted in the marginalization, subjugation, and suffering of women. Women's voices, experiences, and agency were often silenced or disregarded, leading to their further disenfranchisement (Abram237).

English was used to articulate the experiences and perspectives of the colonized, thus Achebe and other Nigerian writers have effectively subverted the language's original purpose as tool of colonial control. They have redefined its significance and demonstrated its capacity to express the diverse and authentic voices of the Nigerian people, thereby contributing to the development of a unique and distinct Nigerian literary tradition (Achebe 340,349).

Nigerian writers like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Chinua Achebe, and Sefi Atta have indeed contributed to giving English a local tone by incorporating Nigerian words, phrases, and expressions into their writing. This practice is often referred to as Africanized English or Nigerian English (Bamiro 16).

Nigerian female writers have indeed played a crucial role in shedding light on the struggles faced by women in a patriarchal society. They have tackled various issues such as domestic abuse, forced and unprotected sex by partners, lack of female education, and societal roles that limit women's independence. These writers have used their works to highlight the experiences and challenges faced by Nigerian women, aiming to raise awareness and promote women's rights.

One notable Nigerian novelist is Sefi Atta, who is recognized as an iconic American-Nigerian feminist writer. Born in Nigeria, she has received accolades for her writing, including the prestigious Wole Soyinka Prize for Literature in Africa. In her short story "Hailstones on Zamfara,"² which was originally written in English and later adapted into a play in the German language, Atta explores the intersection of religion and marital institutions in oppressing women. The story garnered significant attention from critics and further emphasized the struggles faced by Nigerian women.

Buchi Emecheta, another Nigerian feminist writer, focused on the politics of race, gender, and sexuality based on her personal experiences. Her novel "In the Ditch" portrays the challenges of a Nigerian woman attempting to integrate into a European community.

Emecheta's works provide insights into the difficulties faced by Nigerian women in foreign environments and the discrimination they encounter.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is yet another prominent Nigerian feminist writer, who has contributed significantly to raising awareness about the experiences of African women. In her play "For Love of Biafra," she highlights the suffering of an Igbo woman, belonging to her own ethnic group. Adichie's writings and talks often explore the complexities of gender, identity, and culture, shedding light on the marginalized status of African women.

These Nigerian female writers have used their literary works to give a voice to the experiences of women and to challenge societal norms that perpetuate the neglect of Nigerian women. By addressing issues such as domestic abuse, limited access to education, and societal constraints, they have played a crucial role in promoting awareness and advocating for women's rights in Nigerian society and beyond (qtd in. Bahri 2016)

In Nigerian women's literature, female protagonists are often depicted as oppressed in various ways, which severely limit their freedom. They are denied opportunities such as education, independence, and personal growth beyond the confines of their homes. Nigerian women writers highlight the struggles faced by women and demonstrate the ways in which they are portrayed in society. By addressing these issues through their writing, Nigerian women writers have contributed to the larger feminist movement and have given a voice to the experiences and challenges faced by Nigerian women. These writers aimed to carve a path towards liberty for African women who faced the double colonization of both the colonizers and the ingrained patriarchal mindset within their own communities.

Aimé Césaire, in his book "Discourse on Colonialism" that was published in 1950, argues that the colonizers' justification for colonialism was the civilizing mission. Native women, in this context, were often exploited and used as symbols of cultural subjugation by the colonizers (Cesaire and Robin 9).

1.4 Sefi Atta's "Hail Stones On Zamfara"

Sefi Atta is indeed a highly respected Nigerian contemporary writer who has gained recognition both in Nigeria and internationally for her works. Her novels, including "Everything Good Will Come" (2004), "Swallow" (2010), and "A Bit of Difference" (2012), have received critical acclaim and have been widely praised by fellow Nigerian writers such as Buchi Emecheta, Flora Nwapa, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

Atta's writing explores the status and roles of women in Nigerian society, shedding light on the challenges they face in their struggle for independence and freedom from societal expectations of marriage and motherhood. Her novels vividly portray the real-life circumstances experienced by African women, drawing from the author's extensive research into modern Nigerian culture and tradition. (Collins introduction)

Through her characters, Atta addresses the hereditary challenge to patriarchy and the ways in which African women fight against societal norms. Her work offers new insights into various modern topics in African literature, delving into themes such as patriarchy, hybridity, culture clash, alienation, colonization, globalization, sexuality, gender, trauma, language loss, and exile.

Sefi Atta's contributions to literature have not gone unnoticed. She has received several literary awards for her works, including the prestigious Wole Soyinka Prize for Literature in Africa in 2006 and the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa. Her novels have garnered attention and acclaim not only in Africa but also in the United Kingdom and the United States, further cementing her status as a significant voice in contemporary literature.

"Hail Stones on Zamfara" tell a story of rural a Nigerian woman that was forced to leave the school at early age 14. She gets married an old man always drunken of burukutu. She has three daughters and her husband wants a boy, for that he gets married the second wife "junior wife" in the story. The narrator was mal treated by her husband; always beating her till

became deaf in one ear. She has illegal relation with unnamed man and she becomes pregnant. She tries to hide her pregnancy but junior wife knows with it. She tells her husband and he accuses her of adultery. She was taken to court and condemned to death by stoning. Her husband is taken to court because his junior wife tells her father that her husband is drinking Alcohol, and this is forbidden in Islam.

1.5 Conclusion

Atta's writings highlight the struggles faced by women in Nigerian society and shed light on the oppressive structures that perpetuate their marginalization. In her works, Sefi Atta addresses the issue of gender discrimination, emphasizing the unequal treatment of women in Nigerian society. Through her characters, she explores the limitations placed on women's agency and their struggle for autonomy within traditional patriarchal norms. Atta delves into the complexities of gender dynamics, exposing the deeply ingrained sexism that permeates societal structures. It is crucial to approach Nigerian women's literature with a nuanced perspective, recognizing the multi-dimensional portrayal of female protagonists. While some may experience oppression, their stories also highlight resilience, determination, and the pursuit of freedom and equality. Nigerian women writers continue to contribute immensely to the literary landscape by amplifying the voices and experiences of women and addressing important social issues.

Chapter Two: Debating Death, Life and the Afterlife

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2.1 Introduction

The role of gender differences has gained significant attention, with proponents like Sefi Atta emphasizing the need for feminists to advocate for equal treatment of women while claiming that there are no inherent differences between women and men. The purpose of this research is to delve into these themes of gender, gender discrimination, feminism, adultery, and sexuality, and analyze their implications within the context of the story. Women have expanded their expectations of non-discrimination and have pushed for absolute equality by rejecting the idea of inherent differences between the sexes, as advocated by some feminist perspectives. This study aims to begin by examining the controversial debate surrounding gender differences and provide a historical perspective on women's roles throughout history.

2.2 Feminism

During Enlightenment, there was a growing emphasis on reason, individual rights, and equality. Feminism, in this context, can be seen as a response to the Enlightenment's ideals of equality and the questioning of traditional hierarchies and norms. Mary Wollstonecraft's book, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, which was published in 1792, is often regarded as a foundational work of feminist philosophy from that era. In her book, Wollstonecraft argued for the equal rights and education of women, criticizing the prevailing gender inequalities and societal restrictions placed on women (Ford 189,205).

"Feminism" emerged as a social and political movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, advocating for women's rights and challenging gender inequalities. The term itself has evolved over time and encompasses a wide range of perspectives and approaches. The early waves of feminism focused on issues such as women's suffrage (the right to vote), access to education, and legal rights. The suffrage movement, in particular, played a significant role in achieving political rights for women in many countries. Over time,

feminism expanded to address a broader range of concerns, including societal norms and expectations. (Hebert 2)

One of the key aspects of feminism is the recognition that women have historically been marginalized and oppressed in various ways. Feminists seek to address these power imbalances and advocate for gender equality. While feminism primarily focuses on women's rights, it also acknowledges the interconnectedness of gender with other forms of oppression, such as race, class, sexuality, and disability, and strives for an inclusive and intersectional approach (Careless).

2.3 Gender and Sexuality

Traditionally, the term "sex" has been used to refer to the biological and physiological differences between males and females, primarily based on reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormones. In contrast, "gender" encompasses the social and cultural aspects of being male or female, including roles, behaviors, and expectations imposed by society. It is important to note that gender is not solely determined by one's biological sex but is shaped by a complex interplay of social, cultural, and psychological factors. In the past, the term "sex" was often used interchangeably with "gender." However, in more recent times, there has been a growing recognition of a distinction between sex and gender. While sex refers to biological attributes, gender refers to the roles, behaviors, activities, and expectations that society assigns to individuals based on their perceived sex (Diamond 320,334).

Margaret Mead's research in New Guinea highlights the cultural variability in gender roles and expectations. Mead's work demonstrated that the perception of masculinity and femininity is not fixed or universal but can vary significantly across different cultures. The temperaments and qualities associated with men and women in one society may be completely different from those in another society (Sanday 340, 348)

The dichotomous view of gender, where individuals are categorized strictly as either male or female, is not universal and varies across cultures. Many cultures have recognized and embraced the concept of gender fluidity or multiple genders. In the case of certain Aboriginal groups and other indigenous cultures, there have been historical and cultural practices that acknowledge and honor gender diversity, one example is the recognition of "two-spirit" individuals. The term "two-spirit" was coined in the 1990s as a pan-Indigenous umbrella term to describe individuals who embody both masculine and feminine qualities or who engage in activities traditionally associated with the opposite gender (Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang, 290).

2.3.1 Sexuality

Sexuality is not solely about the physical act of sex but also encompasses a broad range of emotional manifestations such as passion, affection, and desire. Regarding sexuality in Africa, it is described as a socially constructed space and identity that undergoes constant renegotiation in response to societal expectations and norms surrounding human sexual behavior. It is important to note that Africa is a diverse continent with numerous countries, cultures, and beliefs, and attitudes towards sexuality can vary across different regions, certain African countries have laws criminalizing alternative sexualities. These laws, often referred to as homophobic laws, contribute to the marginalization and stigmatization of individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, etc.) (Mtenje 2016).

2.3.2 Gender

Society often assigns certain roles, expectations, and characteristics to individuals based on their perceived gender. These expectations can vary across cultures and change over time. However, it is important to recognize that gender identity is a deeply personal and individual experience, and it may not align with the societal expectations or norms associated with a particular gender. (Butler)

The socialization process begins early in life, even from birth, as children are exposed to the behaviors, attitudes, and expectations associated with their perceived gender. Family, peers, schools, media, and other social institutions all play a part in transmitting and reinforcing these gender roles. Common observation in many societies regarding the gendered expectations and behaviors are associated with children. It suggests that society tends to assign specific colors and toys to infants based on their gender, reinforcing gender stereotypes and roles from an early age. It also states that children often choose to play with toys that align with their assigned gender, even when presented with options that are traditionally associated with the opposite gender (Caldera, Huston, and O'Brien from abstract).

According to Beauvoir, society assigns certain roles, behaviors, and expectations to individuals based on their sex, and these expectations vary across different cultures and historical periods. For example, in many societies, women have been traditionally expected to fulfill domestic and caregiving roles, while men have been expected to be providers and assertive leaders. These gender roles and expectations are not inherent or fixed but rather learned and reinforced through socialization processes (Judith 40).

Gender roles are the set of behaviors, expectations, and responsibilities that are considered appropriate for individuals based on their gender. The construction of gender roles and the inequalities that arise from them can be seen in how societies differentiate and treat men and women differently. These differences are often perpetuated and reinforced by social processes and institutions, leading to disparities in various aspects of life.

To comprehend these inequities, scholars analyze gender relations, which refer to the dynamic and constructed power dynamics embedded in social interactions and institutional structures. Gender relations emphasize that gender functions as a social organizing principle, shaping individuals' identities and power in relation to each other. It recognizes that gender

roles and expectations are not fixed but evolve over time and vary across cultures and social groups, including different age cohorts. (Butler42,43)

The translation of biological sex into gender roles influences the experiences of both men and women throughout their lives, including old age. The societal understanding of what is considered masculine and feminine affects the opportunities, constraints, and expectations placed upon individuals based on their gender. These dynamics continue to impact individuals as they age, influencing their social interactions, access to resources, and overall well-being.

2.4 Adultery

Indeed, the theme of adultery has been explored extensively in literature throughout history. It is a topic that delves into the complexities of human relationships, sexuality, loyalty, and societal expectations. Adultery arises from the conflict between individuals' sexual desires and their commitment to a partner or the institution of marriage. Marriage plays a crucial role in the theme of adultery. The concept of adultery would be meaningless without the existence of marriage, as it involves a breach of the trust and commitment established within the marital bond. Marriage is often regarded as a sacred and essential institution in many societies, and adultery is seen as a violation of that sanctity.

2.4.1 Religious Interpretation

There exist different religious texts that prohibit adultery, amongst "He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself." ~ Proverbs 6:32 "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous." ~ Hebrews 13:4 : "Those who commit unlawful sexual intercourse of your women - bring against them four [witnesses] from among you. And if they testify, confine the guilty women to houses until death takes them or Allah ordains for them [another] way."(Qur'an 4:15).

Islam like other religions condemned adultery. One of Quranic verses says, "Those who commit adultery, men or women, give each of them a hundred lashes" Qur'an 24: 2. It is considered as a sin should be punished whether a man or woman. Moreover, Islam strongly encourages repentance, forgiveness, and mercy. While the punishment for adultery is mentioned, Islam also emphasizes the possibility of seeking forgiveness from God and repenting sincerely. Islam recognizes the fallibility of human beings and encourages individuals to turn back to God, seek forgiveness, and make amends for their mistakes (Lamrabet).

2.4.2 Feminist Interpretation

Feminist Biblical scholars encompass a diverse range of perspectives and approaches when engaging with the Bible. Exploring Relevant Biblical Characters, Books, and Themes: Some feminist scholars seek to identify and examine stories, characters, books, and themes within the Bible that are particularly relevant to women's experiences in modern society. They may focus on narratives that highlight women's agency, resilience, and empowerment or explore the challenges and constraints faced by women in biblical times. Another group of feminist scholars reads the entire biblical text through a feminist lens. They aim to understand and interpret the Bible from the standpoint of feminist theory, examining how gender dynamics, power structures, and social norms shape the portrayal of women and their roles in biblical narratives. This approach often involves analyzing and critiquing patriarchal elements within the text. Other feminist scholars is called Challenging Patriarchy and Oppression. This group reads the Bible as women with a specific purpose of challenging patriarchal norms and exposing the ways in which the Bible may have been used as a tool of oppression against women. They aim to uncover and criticize instances where biblical texts or interpretations have been used to justify or perpetuate gender-based discrimination, inequality, or violence.

Their goal is to advocate for justice and drive feminist movements for change within religious contexts (Schüssler- Fiorenza 1,5).

Understanding the motivations behind betrayal requires an exploration of the justifications individuals provide themselves. People often rationalize their actions to alleviate guilt or justify their behavior. They might convince themselves that they deserve happiness or that the situation is more complex than it appears. These justifications serve as psychological coping mechanisms, allowing individuals to navigate the tension between their actions and their own sense of morality. It is important to recognize that feminism, like any ideology, can be interpreted and used in various ways by different individuals. While some may use feminism as a means to shirk personal responsibility, it is not representative of the entire feminist movement or its core principles. Feminism, at its core, seeks to advocate for gender equality and challenge traditional gender roles and expectations (Lorraine135).

2.5 Conclusion

The concept of human death as a consequence of sin is widely spread in literature. This sin is seen and interpreted from different perspectives of religious point of views and feminist ones. Religiously, adultery is condemned and should be punished, feminist views justify the betrayal that they deserve happiness because it seeks for gender equality.

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3.1 Introduction

The road not taken symbolizes the path or choices we didn't pursue, the act of making a choice itself has significance. It emphasizes the importance of individual agency and the realization that our choices shape our lives, and small choices can have a profound impact on our future. One of the most important aspects of wrong choices is how we respond to them. It's easy to dwell on our mistakes and feel regret, but it's crucial to remember that wrong choices are an integral part of our growth and development. They provide us with opportunities to reflect on our actions, assess our values and priorities, and make adjustments for the future.

3.2 Victimizing Women

The excerpt the researcher provided discusses the intersection of feminist theory and general victimization theory in understanding female victimization. Feminist theory emphasizes that women's experiences of victimization are influenced by structural issues of male power and inequality. It argues that gender relations and power imbalances between men and women in society are crucial for understanding crimes like rape and intimate partner violence. Feminist theorists highlight the importance of considering the status of women in society when explaining violence against women.

On the other hand, general victimization theory focuses on individual-level and situational factors in explaining crime, including female victimization. It suggests that factors such as routine activities and self-control can help explain why individuals, including women, become victims of crimes. While the theory of general victimization has demonstrated the efficiency in understanding female victimization, it is acknowledged that feminist perspectives that consider structural issues provide a necessary complement to this approach (Kercher).

Feminist theorists have made significant contributions by emphasizing the role of patriarchy in understanding gender-based victimization. They have highlighted how power imbalances and societal norms contribute to the marginalization and victimization of women. This perspective is crucial for recognizing and addressing systemic issues related to gender inequality.

3.3 Submissiveness

In the context of relationships, submission can be viewed as a voluntary choice made by both partners to prioritize the well-being and happiness of each other. It involves open communication, trust, and a shared commitment to mutual growth and support. Submission, in this sense, does not diminish a person's worth or agency but rather fosters health and balance. Ultimately, the decision to submit or not is a personal choice that depends on the context, values, and goals of an individual. It is essential to critically evaluate the circumstances, assess the impact of one's actions, and make informed choices that align with one's principles and well-being partnership.

Interpreting and applying religious teachings is a personal journey, and individuals and couples may have different understandings and interpretations based on their beliefs and values. It is important to engage in respectful dialogue and seek guidance from religious leaders or counselors who can provide insights based on specific religious traditions” We need to understand what this whole concept of submission looks like and what it means in life and marriage and in relation to God’s plan for everything” (Horn).

The concept of submission can be complex and multifaceted, and its interpretation and implications can vary widely depending on personal, cultural, and historical contexts. It reflects a specific perspective on women's submission within the context of male domination. However, it is crucial to recognize that gender roles and power dynamics vary across cultures,

societies, and individuals. It is not accurate or fair to make generalizations about all women being submissive or having a predetermined essence that leads them to submission.

3.4 Unable to Escape Realities

However the truth is cruel but people should face the reality as it is. Sefi Atta's main character stand in critical position where she can't went back, she chose to face her destiny that will never change, she faces it with brave heart proving that she was not guilty but she was forced to do unwillingly, she promised her executioners to regret and this back dropped in the beginning of the story "On the day I die I will rise up, arms outstretched....." "We were wrong. We should have revered you more." (Atta 26)

3.5 Conclusion

By the end of this chapter, the researcher finds that the protagonist chooses the wrong way to escape from the real situation. She thought that if she had a new experience she might avenge her soul, her dreams to complete study instead of being a house giver; however, these given interpretations but were not enough to survive from the patriarchal discrimination of her husband and the cruel of the domestic institutions in applying sharia extremely without pity wrong choices are an inevitable part of the human experience. They can lead us astray temporarily, but they also offer profound opportunities for growth and self-discovery. By acknowledging our wrong choices, taking responsibility for them, and learning from them, we can cultivate resilience, wisdom, and make more informed decisions moving forward.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Literature has been influenced by several social and cultural norms, which depict the individual's experiences and communities too. Many themes are dealt with in Nigerian literature such as colonialism, identity, feminism, religion. The Nigerian writers tried to explore these themes in different Nigerian ways and technique. The Feminist Nigerian Writer SEFI ATTA has tackled several subjects. One of her major themes is woman that faces oppressions and marginalization but this woman was able to challenge the difficulties with brave.

"Hailstones in Zamfara" by Sefi Atta is a short story that examines a woman experience in Nigerian state of Zamfara, she was forced to the school at early age and get married. The story is set in time where women's roles are restricted and undermined by the social norms. The women at that time were given less attention to education; they were seen as house wives and care givers. Sefi, in her short stories, attempts to draw the attentions of readers to the social needs and the missed values in Nigerian society with many female writers in order to advocate for their rights. Among the female writer is Buchi Emecheta, who explored themes of gender, race, and identity in her novels: *The Joys of Motherhood and Second Class Citizen*. Other Nigerian female writers include Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Her works advocate for gender equality and women's rights. Throughout these female writers Nigerian woman succeeded to break the shackles of the patriarchal society and pave the way for the future generation to achieve their rights.

It is worth noting that while Qur'an establishes the punishment for adultery, Islamic legal scholars and jurists have debated the applicability and implementation of this punishment throughout history. There are diverse interpretations and variations in how different Muslim-majority countries and communities apply these laws. Many modern

Muslim societies have reformed their legal systems and introduced additional requirements for evidence and due process to ensure fairness and justice.

In summary, Qur'an sets a high evidentiary standard for proving adultery in order to protect individuals from false accusations and preserve their rights and dignity. This requirement reflects the Islamic legal tradition's emphasis on fairness, justice, and the avoidance of harm.

Sefi Atta gives insightful idea about the misuse of authority under the name of Sharia's law. Each state in Nigeria has its own laws apart from other states in terms of applying Islamic procedures in punishing criminals, so domestic institutions were too excessive in trials. Sefi portrays this with her main character when she accused of adultery, she was brought to court regardless to details with unfair trial without lawyer to speak out in her defense; she was sentenced to be stoned to death. the scary woman said” Iam not guilty” (Atta 26). She compares her actions with her husband why sanctions are not applied all over us the person who get a hand cut off because he wants to feed is punished the one who drink alcohol also should cut his throat to fulfill justice.

In many societies, including Nigeria, there are diverse cultural practices and legal systems that can vary across regions and communities. However, it's essential to recognize that certain aspects of this story, such as stoning as a punishment for adultery, may be influenced by specific interpretations of religious and cultural traditions. It's crucial to approach such discussions with cultural sensitivity and avoid making generalizations or assumptions about an entire culture or religion based on isolated incidents.

Violence, mistreatment, and discrimination are issues that affect individuals worldwide, regardless of their cultural or religious background. It's important to promote understanding, empathy, and respect for human rights in all communities. Gender discrimination is extremely apparent in African societies where women are under man's subjugation, and the

underage marriage is the most discriminatory element against them. Many feminist movements are claimed for their rights and gender issues such as the less attention shown to the education of girls that appears in the main character when she was forbidden to complete her secondary school and she worries about her daughter's education because her father had son and this later will have more opportunities than his sister to be educated.

Adultery is controversial between religions and feminist views. All religions condemned adultery as a sin that should be punished, whereas the feminist interpretation is that person should pursuit happiness without referring to morals.

This research tries to give an overview of context of the respondents, including their reference persons, the place of traditional practices such as early marriage and FGM/C in their communities, and experiences with and attitudes towards those practices. Next it presents the social norms prioritized in the campaign design workshop, accompanied by findings from the research and testimonies from workshop participants. Finally, it discusses possible sanctions for refusing these norms, and the first step towards challenging the norms: breaking the culture of silence

Religion is yet another significant aspect Atta incorporates into her works. She examines the influence of religion on women's lives and critiques the ways in which religious institutions can perpetuate oppressive ideologies and practices. Atta's writings shed light on the intersection of gender and religious identity, exploring the tensions and conflicts that arise from the clash between traditional values and personal freedom.

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ملخص

تناولت هذه الدراسة رواية " هالي ستون اون زمفرة " للكاتبة سيبي أتا كنقطة انطلاق لتحليل الأدوار المتضاربة والتهميش التي تعاني منها المرأة الأفريقية، مع التركيز الخاص على المرأة النيجيرية. تسلط أتا الضوء على الانتباه المحدود الذي يولي لتعليم المرأة، وتستخدم المنظورات النسوية لتحدي الهيمنة الأبوية. تتطرق الدراسة إلى الحوار النسوي في سياق الشريعة الإسلامية في زامفارا، أول دولة إسلامية في شمال نيجيريا، حيث يتم تنفيذ عقوبة الرجم حتى الموت. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تستكشف الدراسة المعاملة السيئة والقسوة التي يتعرض لها النساء في المؤسسات الأسرية، مكشوفة التفاوت في معاقبة الجرائم المرتكبة من قبل الأشخاص المؤثرين مقارنة بالنساء المتحسرات الذين يواجهن الحكم الفوري بغض النظر عن الظروف المخففة. من خلال تسليط الضوء على هذه القضايا، تسهم هذه الدراسة في فهم أوسع لديناميات الاجتماعية والثقافية المحيطة بحقوق المرأة في نيجيريا وأفريقيا ككل.

كلمات مفتاحية: المرأة الأفريقية، الدولة الإسلامية، نيجيريا، الديناميات الاجتماعية والثقافية.