



## **A Comparative Analysis of Marital Issues in Nigerian Films: A study of *Mr. and Mrs.* and *Broken***

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines comparative and feminist analysis marital issues in Nigerian videofilms using *Mr. and Mrs.* and *Broken* as case study. It is relevant that the roles played by women in the both films are abused, victimized, oppressed and marginalized by their male counterparts. Their place deserves to be brought to the fore as a framework to ascertain the reason for women's stereotype in movies and the society at large. This study addresses the feminist discourses which women are gradually coming to the realization of the fact that their intervention in their homes is inevitable and thus undeniable. This study proved the point that whether a woman plays the role of a mother, a daughter, a wife, a sister, or a friend, as portrayed in movies in their home and larger society, the impact they has on their husband, children, relatives and those around them are undeniably remarkable. The findings of this study show that marital issues can result from women's interest in their office work and business than domestic duties in their homes. Some men do not see anything good in their wives despite their effort to sustain the family. This study recommends that Nigerian women should begin to have confidence in their abilities at home and their offices to help them cope with marital issues. Government should make laws favourable to curtail marital issues in our society. Finally, Seminars and workshops should be organized regularly to educate women on the need to speak up to necessary bodies whenever they are faced with marital issues.

**Key Concepts: Comparative, Feminist, Analysis, Marital, Issues, Videofilms**

## **Introduction**

The need for women to take their rightful place in the society alongside men has been an issue of great concern in most Nigerian videofilms. This is because the advocacy for equality of rights and power sharing among both sexes has gained some victories for women as evident in key positions they occupy today in Nigeria, Africa, and the entire world. According to Marjorie “Mo” Marlum in God’s presence (2013), a member of the British parliament, “it is important for women to not just be in office but in power; women must be in power before she can be said to be equal”. The desire for women to attain equality of rights with men, to be independent, and to gain freedom from oppression and male dominance has given rise to various women’s movements (God’s presence, 2013, p.5). It can be noted that both the fight against gender discrimination and the desire for gender equality have been crucial to the feminist movement both in Africa and the Western World.

The historic Aba Women Riot of 1929 according to Blackpast.org (2014) portrayed the feminist undertone of women who had to work in order to register their protest against oppression and resistance to male chauvinism. The result of the riot however, improved the position and status of women who served as warrant chiefs in their native courts then. Feminism as a movement has helped to create awareness for women to know their rights and to fight against male chauvinism or patriarchy as depicted in some Nigerian films but most women are yet to identify their worthiness in their home and workplaces (Feminism, 2014, p 2).

In most Nigerian video films, women are still being stereotyped as desperate for power and are ready to be sexually exploited by men in exchange for power. This problem of gender stereotyping is very prevalent in Nigerian films because women are subjected to all forms of marginalization. This fact has made some Nigerian video film makers to portray women as widows, prostitutes, housewives, housemaids. These stereotypes reinforce the degrading and humiliating image of women which do not reflect changing statuses and attributes of women as being firm and courageous. Despite the fact that feminist theorists and critics have written extensively on the negative representation of women in films and literature, there is much left undone. This study therefore, is a comparative and feminist analysis of marital issues in Nigerian videofilms using *Mr. and Mrs.* and *Broken*.

## **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to do a comparative and feminist analysis of marital issues in Nigerian videofilms using *Mr. and Mrs.* and *Broken* as paradigm.

## Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses on women's oppression and victimization as portrayed in Nollywood videofilms. The scope of this study is restricted to *Mr. and Mrs. and Broken* with reference to works on feminist film theories and criticism. The films under study were selected to reflect upon the various segments of society and fields of endeavour to show that women have the feminist undertone. Thus, this study is interested in the feminist approach to the women's image especially those represented as mothers, wives and housemaids in Nigerian video films rather than in the appraisal of stereotyped roles as objects of male sexual gratification, prostitutions, widows and the weaker sex. This study is limited to these two Nollywood movies because it aims at outlining the means by which women are oppressed, discriminated, subjected, subjugated and abused through the practice of male dominance.

## Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on feminist theory. The origin of the word feminism according to Jane Pilcher and Imelda Whelehan (2014) in *God's presence* (2013) could be traced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from the French word 'feminisme'. The feminist theorists believe in the desire for women to attain equality of rights with men, to be independent, and to gain freedom from oppression and male dominance (God's presence, 2013, p. 16). The feminist theory holds onto the perennial battle against gender discrimination and the desire for gender equality. Barry (2012) in Okoh (2012) explained that the feminist theorists are interested in the feminist approach to the women's image as mothers, wives, leaders, as objects of male sexual gratifications, prostitutes, widows and the weaker sex (Okoh, 2012, p.16). Feminists believe that women are human beings, that the two sexes are at least equal in all significant ways and that this equality must be publicly recognized.

The desire for women to attain equality of rights with men, to be independent, and to gain freedom from oppression and male dominance has given rise to various women's movements. According to Okoh (2012) and Benokraltis (2008) there are diverse feminists groups which are seen as types of feminism for examples:

**Liberal Feminism:** This group or type of feminists fights for access to education and argues that if men and women are educated equally, they will get equal access to society.

**Socialist or Marxist feminism:** They see revolution as the only answer to effecting a change in the lives of women.

**Radical feminism:** This group of feminist believes that men are part of the problem therefore they should be part of the solution.

**Womennism:** The term 'womanism' was used by Alice Walker to replace feminism as a means of domesticating feminism and also to root it in the African experience. This is an attempt at delimiting the term to suit the African and the blacks in Diasporas. Walker

however, explained that ‘a womanist’ is a black feminist or feminist of colour committed to the survival and wholeness of the entire people male and female ... (Okoh, 2012, p.12). Womanism is not radical rather it sees the male folk as part of the struggle for equity.

According to Mill (2011) and Okoh (2012) other types of feminism include: Black feminism, post-colonial feminism, postmodern feminism, western feminism. However, such persons as Patricia Hill Collins, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Alice Walker, Julie Okoh, John Yesigbo, Emily God's presence, Ms. Margret Ukwu are critical feminist that advocates for women's freedom. The feminist theory is relevant to this study because this study seeks to address women's suffering and marginalization to end and encourages men to empathize with women just as one part of the human's body does not work in isolation without affecting the other. Again, the feminist theories relevant to this study are the liberal and radical feminism because this study wishes to enlighten women who are subjugated because of their sex and that women deserve at least formal equality in the eyes of the law.

### **The Concept of Marital Issues in Nigeria**

Paul and Sobolewski (2001) and Chukwuma (2012) in agreement, opined that marital issue refers to challenges and problems that emanated between husband and wife in their marriages that if not resolved, could cause the breakdown of such marriages. Such marital issues include a willful intimidation, physical assaults, battery, oppression, gender discrimination, marginalization, sexual assaults, abusive behavior, deprivation of opportunities, cheating and infidelity (Paul & Sobolewski, 2001, p.12). These issues in marriages can result to domestic violence, verbal abuse, psychological and emotional abuse that can cause anxiety, depression, and traumatic disorder that can lead to divorce in marriages (Vernick, 2007, p.49). The rate of divorce in Nigeria families cannot be overemphasized. This is because among every ten (10) marriages (wedding) taking place in Nigeria today, seven (7) of such experience divorce. This also indicates that divorce has consequences in marriage. Thus, the greater use of destructive behaviours and withdrawal in early marriages among Nigerians many lead to high rate of divorce among couples. Obot (2011) further explained that the high rate of divorces can lead to unresolved marital issue which has psychological/emotional, physical implications on the larger society and directly on the children who are vulnerable (Obot, 2011, p.13). These implications may cause violence, lack of self-esteem, cultural/traditional factors and peer pressure.

### **Historical Development of Videofilm in Nigeria**

According to Udom (2018) the history of film development in Nigeria and Nigeria videofilm can be classified as the colonial era and the 1980's era till date. Television was successfully demonstrated in 1950 using Kodak films, while the first video tape recorder was invented by the corporation of Japan, the video film developed from video coverage which was a popular

form of social documentation as it was considered to be a superior adduction to still photography the beginning of video film, development in Nigeria can then be traced back to August 1903 out this gloves memorial hall in Lagos; when the European merchant Mr. Stanley Jones started the exhibition of regular film for a fee of three shillings with documenting as its major content(Udom, 2018, p.30).

In 1907, a film was shown to a school audience by missionary catholic fathers before distribute films, until this beginning of World War II when they participated fully in this film business and them Colonial Film Unit (CFU). This established with the main aim to exhibit and produces films encouraging this colonizer and relegating this colonized. In 1947, the very first film were made by the CFU and later the Federal Film Unit (FFU) was established after the decline of colonial film unit maintained the functions of the colonial film unit and produced films in 1956 which dealt with small pox, education, woodcarving and rural development. In 1958, a film called Fincho by same Zebba was the first Nigerian attempted feature film first produced in Nigeria (Shaka, 2012, p.16).

Shaka (2012) also explained that the 1960's and 1970's witnessed the Yoruba traveling theatre groups headed differently by people like Hubert Ogunde, Ola Balogun, Ade Yemi, Afoloyan, Eddie Ugbornah, AfolabiAdesanya who diverted from stage performances to movie though in 1962, the laitole films and Calpeny Nigeria Ltd. These are the earliest and first film production companies in Nigeria. These troupes of Yoruba traveling theatre groups as the foundation for movie production in Nigeria as the first film makers, at that time most films were the adaptations from books and the first indigenous film produced is titled Kongi's Harvest (1970) the film is regarded as the first major full length feature film produced in Nigeria by an American Ossie Davies. Even though the cost of movies production was financially racking in that Zra, they put in major effort to measure up to standard as most films produced was not a major hit, during these period between the 1970s and 1980's, the film industry witnessed a lot of growth(Shaka, 2012, p.30).

The pioneers of video film production are Solomon Eze, Ade Ajiboye who produced *SonsoMeji* (1988) and AdadeAjomire produce *Ekun*(1989). These films were regarded as the first video film to be screened for a fee to an audience. The film industry witnessed a decline in mid-1980 due to political instability, increase crime rate, economic depression and high cost of production celluloid film also contributed to the demise of marketing distribution and exhibition channels (Shaka, 2002, p.12).However, in the early nineties Kenneth Nnebue's Nek video links produced *Living in Bondage* (1992). This film was the ground trail blazer in movie production in Nigeria and the national popularity of the film opened the flood gates of video film production in Nigeria and the birth of Nollywood film industry. Haynes, (1997) opined that others movies of his at the time also includes *Glamour Girls*, *Circle of Doom*

which was all funded and produced by him. Other films such as *Taboo I & II* was produced by Dan Oluigbo and *Jezebel* by France Agu followed subsequently (Haynes, 1997, p.31).

These Nollywood films were produced with VHS (video home system) for viewing audience using traditional analog video; such as betacansp, due to the affordable rate of digital film and editing, technologies has set a huge pace for the development of Nigerian films and video industry as today almost all Nollywood films are produced using digital cinematography technology laying a solid foundation for the Nigerian movie in his assertion:

One major contribution of Kenneth Nnebue to the video film industry which must be acknowledged is the opening up of the theatrical space and the video film market to the Igbo audience which elicited the eventual expansion of video film production in English language. This fact, no doubt, deserves acknowledgement, because it transformed the hitherto regional theatrical cum film entertainment activities of the Yoruba, to become a more or less national phenomenon, especially with the release of the first English language video film” (Haynes, 1997,p.31).

This effort yielded solid foundation in the Nigerian movies industry which has since metaphase into the brand today known as “Nollywood”. Today, Nollywood has blossomed ahead of many film cultures in the world. According to Shaka in Bellgam (2013, p.17) Nollywood is rated the second largest film industry in the world after Bollywood. However, the video film industry did not attain its present status and fame without its own challenges and obstacles. Though the video format was able to minimized cost as compare to the days of the celluloid format there were repercussions at the stage, and this attracted a lot of criticism, Shaka (2012) observe that:

The late 1980’s and the early 1990’s experienced poor production quality as most film were hastily shot with VHS cameras, thereby resulting to extreme depreciation and poor picture quality after editing. The directors and crew had limited knowledge and experience on screen production and therefore, the lighting was poor, the productions were extremely stagy, and the pictures were extremely photographic (Shaka, 2012, p.16).

He blamed all this on poor funding and the use of low standard cameras before better cameras were imported. Coupled with this, the technical know-how was also lacking in the beginning. Nollywood films were produced using celluloid, later Nollywood shifted to straight to video productions using traditional analog video; such as Beta Carusp, but the good news is that the industry has evolved as almost all Nollywood film are produced using production is a multi-billionaires industry which provides a source of livelihood for many both at home and abroad. In this light, Shaka (2012) commended the Nigerian movie industry on their positive role towards national and economic development.

He clearly states that:

The entertainment industry in Nigeria is a multi-billion naira industry which provides gainful employment to millions of Nigeria youths who would otherwise be without jobs and would have become ready recruits into armed robbery, prostitution, religious fundamentalism, youth militancy, cultism and so on (Shaka, 2012,p. 74).

The industry is arguably one of the largest employers of Nigerian youths; it is therefore not out of place to say that Nollywood has contributed positively and immensely towards the nation's development. The industry has also produced many "stars" as well. The appearance of actors like Olu-Jacobs, Richard MofeDamijo, Kanayo O. Kanayo, Sam Dede, OmotolaJalade-Ekeinde, Mercy Johnson, Rita Dominic, MonalisaChinda, Patience Ozokwor, Kenneth Okonkwo, Ramsey Noah, Genevieve Nnaji, amongst others currently in a video film guarantee good box office success(Shaka, 2012,p. 78).

### **Research Methodology**

This study adopted the qualitative method of research. The research methodology essentially involved the application of feminist theories to the analysis of the selected films. The approaches employed in this study are historical and analytical. From the historical views, the study examined the feminist undertone of women in their marriages, their image which women represent in *Mr. and Mrs. and Broken*. This study traced the positive and negative roles of women in the society. The historical approach explores the theme of women, their challenges and successes. The analytical approach examines and analyzes *Mr. and Mrs. and Broken* with the marital issues being focused. This study adopted both primary and secondary sources of material. The primary sources is Nigerian video films in which the two selected Nigerian films were examined while the secondary sources entails the use of related text-books, journals, internet, magazines, literature and other written materials relevant to this study.

### **Storyline of *Mr. and Mrs.***

The film was directed by Ikechukwu Onyeka and produced by Chinwe Egwuagu in March 28, 2001, starring Benjamin Joseph (as Mr. Kenneth Abbah), Nse Ikpe Etim (as Susan), Paul Abel (as Charles), Telma Okodua (as Linda), Nonye Ike (as Kate). The duration of the film is one hour, thirty minutes. The film detailed the scandalous lives of two outwardly responsible looking families that are close to each other but their secret desires rooted in cheating on the opposite sex playing dirty games of seduction, sexual scandals, lies and profane love. The film opens with Kenneth Abbah's (Benjamin Joseph) home with his wife Susan (Nse Ikpe Etim) as married couples. There are different shots showing their marriage conditions. Their marriage was not a bed of roses as Susan who happens to be a housewife has done everything to satisfy her husband, Kenneth Abbah. She expects appreciation from her husband but unfortunately,

her husband was not pleased with her services to him and the family. Kenneth instead of commending Susan of her good effort for keeping the family going in terms of preparing good foods when due, keeping the rooms neat and ensuring that the house is in order whenever her husband returns from work, received the nagging nature of her husband. Kenneth accused her of her imperfection in her cooking and other requirements as house wife. He lamented that he pays the bills and keep the family going, for this reason, he demanded, perfection from Susan in her services. This opening sequence gives the viewer insight into the fact that Susan was the wife of Mr. Kenneth Abbah and that their marital situation subject Mrs. Susan as house wife and mother. The rest of the film plays out the individual experiences gained by Susan as a woman who liberated herself and how the lessons of her marital condition can be applied in everyday life.

In another scene, the film reveals a similar story of their family friend, Charles (Paul Abel) and his wife Linda (ThelmuOkodua) who does not have time for her family because of her job. Linda does not attend to domestic issues; she is always busy with her work. Though, she employs the service of Kate (Nonye Ike) as house help to do the cooking, cleaning of the rooms and other domestic activities. This sequence revealed that Charles is not happy with his wife for her less attention towards him. He is motivated to have affair with Kate his housemaid in the absence of his wife. When the wife finds out, she is worried and begins to report the situation to her friend Susan.

Again, in a different scene, the film revealed that Susan visited Mrs. Brown (ChidinmaNwosu) and narrates her ordeal of how her husband maltreated her even when she is trying to please him. Mrs. Brown advises her to be a woman of herself to regain her freedom from her husband oppressive nature. She (Mrs. Brown) advises Susan to seek for divorce, if possible to understand the reaction of her husband. This is to enable her capture the mind of her husband. In a reverse shot, in the same sequence Mr. Kenneth Abbah watching at the attitude of his wife Susan, narrated to his mother Mrs. Abbah (Barbara Sokey) who downgraded Susan and brought housemaid, Maggie (Beauty Benson) to cook for Mr. Kenneth Abbah. But Kenneth Abbah is not comfortable with the food, she prepares, hence, he still wishes that Susan should come back to her place.

Susan in another sequence displays herself of being liberated from the oppression of her husband when she allows her husband to cheat on her. Mr. Kenneth Abbah brought Monica (MpelMapetla) as his mistress to frustrate Susan but discovers that Susan influences her. Mr. Kenneth Abbah becomes more troubled and asks Monica to end her friendship with Susan, they picked quarrel. In a reserve shot, Susan brings in the phallic of a man's penis which makes Mr. Kenneth Abbah think she has become crazy of being alone. The scene further reveals Mr. Kenneth Abbah stolen the male phallic and Susan insisted that he should



pay for her 'thing' which was not disclosed to Mrs. Abbah who accepted to pay Susan 300,000 pounds for it.

Mr. Kenneth Abbah, obviously jealous of Susan when he discovers that she has gained her freedom and perhaps he might lose her to another man meets Mrs. Brown to reverse the divorce agreement so that they can reconcile and reunite. In the same sequence, Linda is also jealous, noticing that her husband Charles has sexual affair with her housemaid, she employs the service of the gate man (Festus Ede) and the body guards (Joe Ugwu and Linus Godwin), and sent the housemaid out of her home (Linda's home). However, Linda admitted her mistakes of not caring for her family and reunite with her husband Charles promising to pay less attention in her job as a banker. In the closing sequence, Mr. Kenneth Abbah pleads with Mrs. Brown to reverse the divorce agreement, he reconciles with his wife Susan, promising her of not being oppressive to her and a party is organized marking their reunion as second marriage ceremony.

### **Storyline of *Broken***

Bright Abasi's *Broken* (2013) stars actors such as Nse Ikpe Etim, Bimbo Manuel, Kalu Ikeagwu, Iyke Adiele, Tehilia Adiele, Mary Chukwu. The duration of the film is one hour, twenty minutes. *Broken* is a film that presents women as weaker sex, and their desire from male chauvinism. The film opens with Samuel Gabriel (Iyke Adiele) falling into the trap of policemen while trying to sell hard drugs. He attempts escaping but is ambushed by several policemen. He is taken to the police station though; his interrogation by the police at the station is aborted when the officer interrogating him is the same officer who violated his fundamental human rights some years ago as a minor. He is ordered to be released. After his release, he is informed that his sister Emmanuella (Tehilia Adiele) who is mentally disturbed and asthmatic is still alive. He visits her at the asylum and after much persuasions and assurances to the Doctor and nurses, he goes home with her.

In the same sequence of the opening, Mariam Idoko (Nse Ikpe Etim) and Morris Idoko (Bimbo Manuel) are not home but their children Cassia (Shalom Sharon Bada) Pamela (Margret Anpe) and Stanley (Pankoyes Anpe) with their house maid, Anna (Mary Chukwu) are alone. After a brief knock at the door, Anna promptly responds by opening the door. Samuel Gabriel suddenly enters with his sister Emmanuella on his arms and hurriedly tries to remedy her asthmatic attack. When Morris Idoko returns and enters the house, he sees them and threatens to get them arrested for bagging into his house without his notice but his wife, Miriam Idoko disagrees and disapproves his action. Miriam later tells her husband, Morris that Samuel Gabriel and Emmanuella are actually her children from her previous marriage.

Morris angrily ignores her and sleeps off. In the same sequence of the film, Samuel Gabriel and his sister, Emmanuella creates several incidents due to the emotional pains they had previously suffered which makes Anna and Pamela uncomfortable in the house. Morris noticing the unavoidable pressure asked his wife to explain to him why she decided to allow her other children to live with them noting that it affects their marital home. It is revealed in the sequence that the marriage of Morris and Miriam is full of infidelity as both of them had children out of wedlock before their marriage. However, Morris confessed that Anna his housemaid is his biological daughter.

Again, in another sequence, Miriam speaks to Anna about her knowledge and feelings on her Dad's rejection and how she is able to create a cordial relationship with her lost children. Anna, replies that love is the most important thing needed in the family. She passionately reconciled with Morris, and then advises Miriam to make peace with all her children.

Another sequence of the film reveals Miriam narrating her ordeal in her previous marriage to Samuel and his sister, Emmanuella. The narration is quite surprising as they express shock when their mother (Miriam) tells them that they had a brother that was sold and is now in prison. Miriam visited Gabriel Ortega (Kalu Ikeagwu) her ex-husband after 16 years and tell him that his children are in her matrimonial home. In a reverse shot, in the same sequence, Samuel eventually meets his brother Eric Gabriel (Chuks Chuke) in prison and explains what led to his death sentence. In the closing sequence of the film Eric Gabriel is sentenced to death by hanging. It is interesting to note that the women in this film have a consciousness of their marginalization and that is why they realize themselves as instrument of family reunion and peace makers.

### **A Comparative Analysis of Marital Issues in *Mr. and Mrs.* and *Broken***

The film *Mr. and Mrs.* focuses on female oppression, infidelity and cheating in marriages while the film *Broken* focuses on victimization and subjugation of women as weaker sex and the oppressive nature of male chauvinism whose desire to gain freedom from oppression and to be independent from male dominance. The women in the both films are good examples of how women exercise their right of equality and how they fight for their right of freedom. In *Mr. and Mrs.* both Susan and Linda are married. Susan uses a non-radical approach to marital issues as a better means to achieving her goals. She does not see the need for power play or having equal right but needs appreciation. On the other hand, Linda sees male dominance as an oppressive system which does not allow women to exercise their rights. Hence, Susan resorts to seek radical measure to determine her right as a woman while Linda seek liberal measure to address the issues of her family.

Furthermore, in *Broken* the images of Miriam Idoko and Anna are good examples of women who have been marginalized. Miriam Idoko was rejected by her Dad for having children at her tender age and was pushed out of home for marriage to suffer humiliation in the hand of her two husbands. Anna was degraded to the position of housemaid in her father's house. Miriam and Anna are presented as women who are loyal to patriarchal dictates but later desire to gain freedom from victimization and oppression of male dominance. They women in both films are portrayed as weaker sex and reinforce their degrading and humiliating picture to peaceful and courageous women in the family. The women in both films reposition themselves as women in their roles whose desires have been crucial of the changing trend of male chauvinism to feminist movement.

Again, Susan, Linda and Miriam in both films are presented as housewife who are loyal to patriarchal dictates at the early stage and were characterized as womanism and liberal feminist and were later radical feminist who seeks for a change of patriarchal structure that have marginalized women to their own disadvantage for too long. Susan, Linda and Miriam in both films sees men as enemies because some men are cunning and can be carried away by other women who agree to offer them sex as weaker sex.

Susan and Linda are presented by screenwriter and director of *Mr. and Mrs.* as women who are positive rather than the mundane stereotyping of women in a degrading manner. The film presents them as the centre of attraction as they find ways of unraveling the challenges they are entangled in. Susan is also presented in her traditional sense as a mother. She is a good mother and house wife-figure in her family. She lives in the midst of rebellious man as her husband who is always demand of her perfection in domestic activities claiming he pays all the bills. She successfully fought her rebellious husband and gained prestige over him as her second wedding ceremony was organized to celebrate her womaness.

On the other hand, Linda is another figure whose attitude represents the positive image of women. Linda's doggedness is an undertone of feminism because she resisted every form of low self-esteem and fear as to take up task that is equal to that of her husband in her marriage. Her roles often reflect upon a determined advocacy for an improved status for women, financially and socially as she prefer to work as business executive, a banker than to remain as housewife in the home. For this reason, she requested for the service of a housemaid in her home. Despite the fact that Kate, her housemaid slept with her husband, she device ways of sending her parking to ensure that she did not lost her womaness in her home. Linda has a reputation for the restoration of women's dignity, rights and privileges of women. It is obvious that Linda made a mistake of bringing in a housemaid because of her less attention in her home but that does not validate her subjectivity and marginalization. She

aimed at correcting the male subjective point of view that sees women as object of patriarchal structure.

It is quite obvious that the screenwriter and director present Miriam Idoko as architect of her own flaw but she does not validate her subjectivity and victimization. She fought for her right by reinforcing the subjection which she aimed at correcting the male point of view. In her conversations with the husband and children, she realizes her womanhood and desire to gain freedom from oppression and male dominance. She fought against gender discrimination and the problem of gender stereotyping negatively. Miriam Idoko is a kind and loving daughter to her father, wife to her husband and mother to her children but her weakness degraded her. She positively represented the liberality of women who are enthusiastic to make peace in their family. This can be noted in her conversation with her housemaid (Anna). Miriam Idoko identifies herself as worthy and displayed a shift from mundane stereotyping of women in a degrading manner to represent a woman's true strength, dignity and authority as she debunks the negative image of sexual object of attraction and gratification. In essence, Anna tends to define a suitable approach for the rights and freedom of women. Most often, women are objects of ridicule like Anna who was victimized to be a housemaid in her own father's house. She refuses to be silent in her role, she refuses to be marginalized but vocal, assertive and desperate when she passionately addressed her father. Anna helped to create awareness for women to know their rights to doggedly fight patriarchy to make an impact in the family and society just as she did in her father's house.

## **Conclusion**

Marital issues are common in most marriages in Nigeria. In most homes, women have been deprived of their rights and are treated as weaker vessels due to their nature. Marital issues have caused a lot of damages in most Nigerian homes. As portrayed in the both selected films, marital issues such as oppression, discrimination, cheating, infidelity and domestic violence have led some families to divorce and render some broken homes. The researcher therefore, concludes that government should create awareness among married couples to understand the need of remaining faithful to their marital vows. Finally, filmmakers should portray the image of women as useful and valuable to the society like their male counterparts instead of subjugating them as objects of male dominance.

## **Recommendations**

At the end of this study, the following recommendations were made by the researchers:

- 1) Nigerian women should begin to have confidence in their abilities at home and their offices to help them cope with marital issues.
- 2) Filmmakers, screenwriters and producers should experiment with woman's film as a way to project Nigerian women in their true light with strength, talents and contributions to national development.
- 3) Government should make laws favourable to curtail marital issues in our society
- 4) A course on marital issues should be incorporated into the syllabus of feminist film studies both in cinema/film studies and gender studies/ feminism.
- 5) Nigerian feminists and their sympathizers should embrace the opportunities that accompany the internet as a social medium to preach against the ills of marital issues in the society.
- 6) Seminars and workshops should be organized regularly to educate women on the need to speak up to necessary bodies whenever they are faced with marital issues.

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