

Female Education: Panacea for Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development in Nigeria. A case study of Tsitsi Dangaremba's *Nervous Condition* and Mariama Ba' *So Long A Letter*

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Abstract

This paper focuses the relationship of female Education and it's importance in the societal development. It has been of note in this 21st century, how the females have come on ground to be a good agent of change in the society. Issues of female, nature and society are interwoven because they are both interrelated and are both affected by the patriarchal hegemony which exists in the society. The females of recent, have been having a consensus that the females should be allowed to be educated, which is a fundamental factor of inclusive development and a good tools for poverty reduction. This research work will examine two literary texts, which are Tsitsi Dangaremba's *Nervous Condition* and Mariama Ba's *So Long A Letter*, through the Ecofeminism Theory of how Ecosphere as a binary entity of male/female and nature/culture have a great impact on female education and societal development. The books themes of poverty, feminine challenges and actualization of their dreams and how they finally succeed in contributing immensely to the societal development and reduction of poverty in their society will be examined. The books emphasise that female education, can lead to a reduction of poverty either directly or indirectly. Females if empowered will have a good resultant effect on the society in order to create equity in the society for better opportunities which can lead to improved social, political and economic outcomes. The study concludes that female education is an effective tool in reducing poverty and promoting inclusive development. Further research is required to understand the behavioural changes around female education and the different ways by which it can be used to promote growth, reduce poverty and ensure great inclusion.

Keyword: Education, poverty, female, environment and patriarchal

INTRODUCTION

Women are the core of the societal structure. They have an integral role in the society, right from the pre-history time till date. Biologically, women were created as the sole being that can procreate. They take up the key role of household keeper, nurturer and assistant. They are indispensable in the society, without them, the society will have no form and without the assistance of women in so many domestic sphere in the society, men cannot be economically productive. Their relevance starts from their families to the society.

Culturally, women found themselves to be the subordinate of male and Society had made them to be dependent on the male because the society is male centered, and the Traditional African

culture exhorts the male highly above the female. Hence, patriarchy is believed to have started from the home. In Africa, Culture is the way of life. It is the foundation of gender inequality and there is need to be revamped to be inclusive of women, because, culture structures the society. It is our identity. It shapes the society and it is the foundation of patriarchy. In Africa, it has been passed to our subconscious mind subtly that women are second fiddle. It is seen as a norm, that there are certain fields, positions and roles that are seen as natural and such positions should be occupied by males. It has been an inherited cultural fact that women are seen as subordinates to men.

Women were thought to be a "supp" to the men and not wanting to agree that the women are 'sup'. Women through their economic efforts, bring increase to the society. As women began to have a great insight into the plight of the women, they saw the need to 'sup' for better advocacy of feminine rights as remarked by Lober, (1997).

..... visible sources of gender discrimination, such as gendered job markets and inequitable wage scales and with getting women into positions on authority in the professions, government and cultural institution (9).

In African societies, women were regarded as passive and docile. Women were also aware of this, marginalization, but they were to accept it as a natural order, being a patriarchal society. So, they were cowed into accepting the status quo, but women's roles cannot be swept off, simply because, they are the skeleton that hold the body of the society together, as said by Nwapa and Adimora, they present woman as the backbone of the society. Gloria Chuku opines also that, " evidence suggests that women in the past and present have played a more important role in the economy..... they have also been responsible and receptive to a high degree of economic opportunities and innovations (37).

From the Traditional African Societies, women have been playing a great economic role. There has been some of them that had great outstanding achievements societally. In Nigeria for example, Tinubu Efunsetan, Funmilayo Ransome Kuti, Onyeka Onwenu, Oby Ezekwensilu, through them, Nigeria, had achieved great economic breakthrough. They have transited from the margin to the center and had contributed to social change in the patriarchal paradigm. Through education, they were able to stand up to show case their innate ability and intellectual wit. This is what the ecofeminist stand up to enforce. Women should have equal rights with the male They shouldn't be denied to assert their rights to right the wrongs in the society and contribute immensely towards the societal development.

Therefore, this study shows up the importance and contribution of women economically to the society in order to reduce poverty and give a better future.

Literature Review

Both African and Western cultures seem to be greatly influenced by the idea of the supremacy of the fathers. African culture is a stereotypic male-centric society, who sees men as the only sex that can have more economic impact upon the society. Patriarchy is one of the strongest ideologies in cultures and these ideologies have a great impact on the gender structure of the societies. Thus, patriarchy is a set of social relations between men, which have a material base and create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women. According to Kate Miller (In Mosetse, 1998:97)

..... our society.....is a patriarchy. The fact is evident if one recalls that the military, industry, technology, universities, political offices, finances- in short, every avenue of power within the society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands

That is why in the traditional African ingenious community, it is believed that the woman's role is predominantly in the home, where she is expected to act as a wife, mother and housekeeper. This implies that she is to be catered for by her husband, whom she is to solely depend on. It is often seen as odd, if she feeds for herself or takes on any form of occupational activities which is considered to be for men, except the agricultural activities which is the major preoccupation of majority of African Traditional society. As stated by Adamu, "the cultural orientation by which a woman is seen as dependent on her husband, is what creates the enabling environment for her subordination and restrictions in pursuing education. So, hierarchically, women were to fill particular places that is, excluding women from access to some essential productive resources and by restricting women sexually.

This patriarchal structure has a devastating effect on women, education and society, thus women were discriminated against in literally every sector of the society (Lemmer 1993: 22,23). Women were believed to be intellectually inferior and not suitable for positions of management, educational sector or elsewhere. (cf Lewis, 1993:196). Women were kept in subservient position through measures like less educational opportunities than men, economic dependencies, physical harassment, exclusion from taking leading roles in education, politics, church and society at large (cf. Lemmer, 1993:23; Report of the Gender Equity Task Team, 1997:23-25).

In the sphere of economic activity, there is a practice of preferential treatment, either deliberately or not, which cause imbalance, disparity or inequality in position of women in *inter alia* education. Although, it is generally believed that the economic position of women has been improved by policies and campaigns, calling for "equal pay for work, or equal worth; research indicates that through out the labour market, women earn notably less than men; even with equivalent educational attainment" (Report of the Gender Equity Task Team (1997:137)

Women are fully involved in the family work, i.e, cultivating, planting, harvesting and selling of the farm produce, which made women to be enterprising. So, they had been contributing economically to the development of the society and traditionally, according to Gamble (2001), women experienced a lot of negativity by their denial of equal access to societal issues, that is why feminism wants there to be a drastic change in the whole scenario. Ezeigbo (1996) also buttress the fact that feminism "emerged" as a response to oppressive and unjustly laws and attitudes arrayed against women, which have kept them in subservient, dependent and marginalized position permanently relegating them to the background (Ezeigbo, 1996). It means a rejection of inferiority and a striving for recognition. It seeks to give the woman a sense of self as a worthy, effectual and contributing human beings. It is a reaction to such stereotypes of women which deny them a positive identity (p.ix).

African history has not been gender sensitive in their analysis of the contributions of females to development and this affected the development of the country. Without mincing words, women engaged in food processing, pottery making, mat weaving and cooking, just to mention few. They also farmed with their husbands and children, e.g, in the South Eastern part of Nigeria, women were involved in the production of various food items and commodities. Fish drying was done in the coastal areas of Calabar, Oron and Niger Delta. Women in Okposi, Yala and Uburu were known for salt production. Pottery making and weaving was popular among the Afikpowomen and their contributions help the sustenance of their families. All these point to the fact that women are a strong force to be reckoned with in the society. They are the solution to some economic problem that the societies are facing. They are the right medicine needed to heal a sick economy. Therefore, women arouse to yank themselves off this marginalization, subjugation and inequality, because it has not been totally eradicated in the male centred societies. There arose some women groups to assert their rights, like the feminine movement.

Feminism can be traced back to 18th century, as a result of Reformation in Europe, where women also seeks new liberty. According to Mary Wollstonecraft in her feminist tract, "Vindications of rights of women (1792), called for consciousness-raising in women through education (Freeman, 1975, p.13). The goal of feminism is to articulate a self consciousness about women's identity both as inherited cultural fact and as a process of social construction [and to] protest against the valuable [-ve perceptions] of female becoming (Miller, as cited in Heilbrun, 1988, p.19).

In America, it was after the abolition of slave trade that women started to demand for self freedom, after the change in social values and structure. In 1849, in America, the first feminine convention was held at Seneca Falls. Women aired their grievances and thus, first wave feminism started. According to Lober (2005).

It is hard to believe these rights were among those once denied to women of every social class, racial category, ethnicity and religion- the right to vote..... [and] to own property and capital, to inherit, to keep money earned, to go to college, to become a professionally

certified physician to argue cases in court and to serve a jury (Lober, 2005, p.1)

There has been emphasis on female education through the consciousness-raising efforts due to colonialism experiences. Women have been empowered to challenge societal ideas and perception of womanhood that are wrong, advocate new perception that show case the real condition of women, that justify equity. Flora Nwapa (2009), remarked that:

Woman have started to redefine themselves, they have started to project themselves as they feel things should be [perceived].

There have been tremendous changes in all facets of life which contribute to the continent wide awareness and rethinking of women's problems and roles in the society. (Pp, 528-529).

Female writers tried to bridge the gap by reawakened the consciousness of African Women through their pens. They have been able to revealed, reawakened and restructured their thinking. They were able to rewrite the history or situation of the women in a phallic society and empowered them to rediscover their innate /naturally endowed abilities and resources. They encouraged women to stop being passive and should not be relegated to the lower rung of the societal ladder. They should see themselves as equal partners in the society, in order to foster greater development.

The female writers have consciously encouraged the women and create in them self awareness of their great relevance to the society and how they can explore the opportunities which were naturally bestowed unto them by nature. They were able to do this through passing of information and instruction through their literary works. Among the feminine writers are Tsitsi Dangarembga, Nawaal El Saadawi, Buchi Emecheta, Zulu Sofola, Flora Nwapa, Chimamanda Adichie, Julie Okoh Mariama Ba and Mabel Segun, just to mention few.

Theoretical Framework

Ecofeminism and Marxist Feminism

The feminine writers give voice to the women in their literary writings by giving significance values to their feminine characters. In order to do a qualitative work, in this paper, two theories will be made used of, which are: Ecofeminism Theory and Marxist Feminism Theory.

Ecofeminism movement emerged in late 1980s in the United States of America. The field of Ecocriticism has newly emerged as an important critical perspective that explains how human beings relate to the environment and how non-humans are presented in fiction. According to Cheryll Glotfelty (1996:xviii), a pioneer in this field, defines ecocriticism as "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment"

Ecofeminism movement aims at interrogating modern technology in order to negotiate better understanding of the domination of nature. Industrialization and new technology are appropriate tools for economic growth. According to this study, the theoretical and practical significance of Ecofeminism is that, it tries to put an end to the sexist oppression and discrimination against women and nature, which include any concept that controls the dominance or subordination of women which led to the existence of oppression of sexist in many fields like education and employment disparity between men and women. Also, it tries to safeguard the potentials of women and also to eliminate inequality and creates equal and harmonious relations and culture.

Eleanor Marx, daughter of Karl Marx, is thought to be one of Marxist feminism's pioneers in England in the 19th century among them is, Rosa Luxembourg. The main goal of Marxist feminists is to abolish capitalism. Through this, they believe that patriarchy itself can be tackled. Overthrowing the existing economic system is thought to liberate women.

Marxist Feminism, according to Distefano (2014), defined Marxist Feminism as follows: [It is] a species of feminism theory and politics that takes its theoretical bearings from Marxist, notably, the criticism of capitalism as a set of structures, practices, institutions, incentives and sensibilities that promote the exploitation of labour, the alienation of human beings in the debasement of freedom. For Marxist Feminism, empowerment and equality cannot be achieved within the frame work of capitalism. They are of the opinion that capitalism is responsible for limiting women on the basis of inferior occupational and pay level. To them, the family is a place where exploitation and oppression of women start. They advocate for economic independence in the economic structure of the society. They are of the opinion that women should have equal provision of opportunities and resources. Women cannot be excluded from economic development . Women with their feminine nature, introduced major changes into the socio economic development and as long as the society exists, women can never be done without in fostering great socio economic development.

Methodology

In *Nervous Condition*, Tsitsi Dangarembga depicts the challenges faced by women in an attempt to be educated and the challenges surrounding it. Also, *So Long A Letter* by Mariama Ba, presents a protagonist, Aissatou Ba, as a figure, who stands out to alleviate and give panacea to her friend, Ramoutulaye Fall. The study employs a qualitative research, which adopted textual analysis method. Critical reading of the primary texts will be done via sourcing for materials electronically, journals and Library. Ecofeminism and Marxist Feminism will be used as theoretical lenses for a qualitative information.

Discussion

Economic independence is about expanding the capacity of women to make genuine choices about their lives through full and equal participation in all spheres of life. Women are valuable socially and economically. Studies have shown that both in the past and present, women has been recognized to play vital roles in the development of economy of their communities, i.e,

in Kenya, among the Kikuyu, women were the major food producers, have land, use it, cultivate it and have sole authority and process food items.

In Nigeria, there are some notable women, whose position in Nigerian politics have brought a good face to Nigerian economy polity. In other words, in reference to African women as 'traditional' is erroneous and must be rectified because women are no more inferior creatures, and this must not be subsumed from position of power and influence.

There was women revolt in Aba in 1929 in Nigeria, which marks a significant landmark in the display of women's voice and bravely in the Igbo society. Buchi Emecheta and Flora Nwapa created a real good female image of the Igbo women in their literary works (Idu and Efurū) as industrious and enterprising in order to erase the Achebe's perception of women as "destined to carry foo-foo and soup to men dealing with 'important' matter" (66) that is, females as stereotypical myth of subservience and docility of the women while theirs is a creation of strong-willed female characters that overshadow male characters.

Women are not to be depicted as 'stay at home' they should equate women with men and also see women as major actors of social changes. Shiva 2010 explains in her research that most food producers in the world are women. They produce more than half of the world's food and most girls are trained as future farmers. This provide food security and also knowledge in biodiversity as medicine.

Women's contribution to the society in bringing relief to the society, providing food and reducing poverty to the barest Minimal level cannot be over emphasized. This is what the two selected literary works expatiate through their various themes, feminine challenges and actualization of their dreams and how they finally succeed in contributing immensely to the societal development and reduction of poverty in their society . Therefore, the main thrust of this paper is, Education as a key to liberating the woman. It is seen as a vehicle on which a woman can ride, in order to assert her rights in the society and touches on the impact of education in making a complete woman.

The books emphasise that female education, can lead to a reduction of poverty either directly or indirectly. Females , if educated, will have a good resultant effect on the society in order to create equity in the society for better opportunities which can lead to improved social, political and economic outcomes.

Female education is taking a good dimensions in the society in this recent times. Although in some rural areas, this is not so. In the Northern Nigeria, tradition and religion affect the exposure of the woman to education a lot especially in the rural.

Nervous Condition by Tsitsi Dangarembga.

It is a story told from the narrative eye of a young female protagonist, Tambu. She is a young girl in Colonial Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). The story was set in Rhodesia and the plot is a chronological account of her quest to educate herself. She was eager to learn, but there were two men and her mother, that pose as stumbling blocks to her achieving her goals. These are her father, Jeremiah and mother, who thought educating her was a waste and her brother,

Nhamo, who maltreated her badly and often make a jest of her. After her brother's sudden death, she was given the privilege of going to school by her uncle, Babamukuru, who was a Headmaster in a missionary school and agreed to sponsor her education and made her age long dream come true. Some themes will be made use of in qualitative analysis of the text.

Cultural influence

This is the overriding theme in this literary work. It tells of the poverty state of her family. They had to work from dawn to dusk to eke out a living for their family. Nobody is exempted in this farm work. (8).....my mother decided to water her vegetables-rape,covo, tomatoes, derereand onions- which she grew on a plot that had been my grandmother's, quite close to the homestead although still a quarter of an hour's walk away. We walked from the fields together, my mother and I, with the cattle, until we reached the vegetable garden, where we parted, she to her watering, I to the homestead, the cattle-whip in my hand but ununused because the animals were as eager to be home as I was. Our shadows had already elongated thinly eastward as the sun sank behind the hills. It was well past six'o clock.....

The Traditional African women had subtly accepted their condition and they see it as a societal norm. (17)

My grandmother who had been an inexorable cultivator of land, sower of seeds and reaper of rich harvests until, literally until, her very last moment (pg 17).

The poverty state of Tambu's family sends a signal to her consciousness. The poverty state didn't exonerate anyone and it is the children and women that suffer most, this made her to have passion to be educated, so as to relieve her mother, most especially, of the poverty.

Patriarchal issue

She was deprived of going to school, being a female and this made her to loathe her family members. The needs and sensibilities of the women in my family were not considered a priority, or even legitimate. That was why I was in Standard Five, as I should have been by that age.....I felt the injustice of my situation every time I thought about it..... feeling the injustice of it, this is how I came to dislike my brother, and not only my brother, my father, my mother- in fact,everybody(12).

Her father didn't help the matter, being the head of a patriarchal family, he wants to ensure that his daughter conforms to the patriarchal structure of their society by telling her that

My father thought I should not mind. ' is that anything to worry about? Ha-a-a, It's nothing,' he reassured me, with his usual ability to jump whichever way was easiest.' Can you cook books and feed them to your husband? Stay at home with your mother, Learn to cook and clean. Grow vegetables' (pg.15).

From the excerpt, the father is a typical African man, who believes in the African culture of women as a housekeeper, second fiddle to the husband, to be seen and not to be heard. Her mother didn't help the matter too,

"This business of womanhood is a heavy burden," she said...

you have to start learning them early, from a very early age.

And these days it is worse, with the poverty of blackness..... (pg 15).

Determination

The heroine, Tambu is an intelligent, hardworking and curious fourteen years old girl. She has a great thirst and hunger for good and qualitative education. This is evident in the way she spoke, when her father emphasized it that she will not go to school.

' I will earn the fees,' I reassured him. I'm, laying out my plan for him as I had laid it out in my own mind. ' if you will give me some seed, I will clear my own field and grow my own maize. Not much. Just enough for the fees.(17).

My father was greatly tickled by this. He annoyed me tremendously Laughing and laughing in an unpleasantly adult way. ' Just enough for the fees! Can you see her there?' he chuckled to my mother. ' such a little shrub, but already making ripe plans!

Seeing her undaunting spirit, her father allowed her to have her own piece of land and she began to cultivate the land in order to have money to send herself to school, due to her hunger for education.(17)

I began my project the next day, a day in December 1962.

I worked on the homestead, in the family fields and on my own plot.

She told one of her teachers about the maize and was advised to sell it, so that she can have money for her education. He took her with her harvested maize cobs in the school truck and went to town to sell it. It wasn't bought by anybody, but Mrs Doris gave her Ten pounds towards her school fees. The money was kept by her Headmaster. This was a great source of inspiration for her and longed more to acquire a good and standard education.

Finally, she was able to go to school when her brother, Nhamo died. According to her uncle Babamukuru, " These children who can go to school today are the ones whose families will prosper tomorrow". These statement, paved a great way for her in fulfilling her dreams, through the help of her uncle.

Economic emancipation

Her uncle Babamukuru's wife, being an educated somebody. She too had her degrees and was able to accommodate the extended family of her husband. Her contribution economically and hospitable nature of hers, made it possible for her husband, Babamukuru, to be a good and exemplary leader to his siblings. He reduced the poverty status of the extended family by providing job for Lucia. (160).

Babamukuru has found me a job. He has found me a job! She knelt in

front of Babamukuru, energetically clapping her hands. truly, we could not survive without you..... My mother came hurrying with her own shrill ululations. 'That is why they say education is life,' she cried also.

***So Long A Letter* by Mariama Ba.**

This is a semi-autobiographical epistolary novel, written in French by the Senegalese writer, Mariama Ba. The book focuses on woman, education, culture, divorce and widowhood. It is an exchange of letters between two friends who shared their widowhood experiences and reminiscences of the past through their exchange of letters. The two protagonists are Ramatoulaye Fall and Aissatou Ba. The death of Modou Fall, the husband of Ramatoulaye and her observance of *mirasse*, the funeral rites for the dead husband with her encounter during those periods, necessitated the letter writing. Aissatou married Mwado Ba, they were in love and this culminated into marriage. This didn't go down well with the mother in law, who thought it was a mis match. How can they of noble birth, now allow her son to marry a goldsmith daughter. They were in serious love, until the mother avenged by marrying her niece for her son, Mwado Ba. Aissatou Ba seeing this kind of treatment, left her husband and decided to relocate to America and work at the Senegalese embassy with her diploma degree in diplomacy, which empowered her economically and she was able to buy a car for her friend, Ramoutulaye, who was in dire need of a car. (56)

Cultural influence

She depicts the different ways in which women fight for survival in an environment of cultural conflicts change. Ramatoulaye and Aissatou both suffered from the traditional custom, but reacted differently to the domestic victimisation. Ramatoulaye decided to live with her community in Senegal, while Aissatou chooses to move forward with her education and relocates to USA.. Ramatoulaye was timid, fears the criticism in her community, unlike Aissatou and Daba, who are in the class of women, who are certainly brave and crucial in their idea of life. Daba gets married to a man who respects her and treats her equally. Both use their power of education to free their minds.

Daba does not find household work a burden. Her husband cooks rice

as well as she does; her husband who claims, when I tell him he 'spoils'

his wife: Daba is my wife. She is not my slave, nor my servant(73).

Aissatou husband, Mawdo Fall, marries Young Nabou, as an excuse of obligation and pressure by his mother, despite the fact that they had been engaged in their youth. She decided to pull out of the marriage because she felt cheated. She decided to write a letter to him

I am stripping myself of your love, your name, cloth in my dignity,
the only worthy garment, I go my way. (pg. 32) .

Religious beliefs

Religiously, it was believed that a man is not complete without having a second wife. Knowing fully well that as a patriarchal society, women don't have a say in the decisions of the men, especially, marrying many wives. To them, it shows how opulent the man is.

They entered laughing.....I sat in front of them, laughed with them. The imam attacked: There is nothing one can do when Allah the Almighty puts two people side by side.....He took a breath and continued. There is nothing new in this world.....some things we may find to be sad are much less so than others.....I followed the movement of the haughty lips that fall these axioms, which can precede the announcement of either! (pg 36).

Daba, Ramatoulaye's daughter being a young educated woman, rejected the marriage vehemently and even advised the mother to divorce her father, when Modou accepts to marry Binetou, a young girl, who is her friend, as his second wife, she says:

Break with him mother! Send this man away. He respected neither you nor me

..... I can't see you fighting over a man with a girl my age (pg 39).

Patriarchal issue

Although, there is great patriarchy in the Senegalese society, because despite that Ramatoulaye is a teacher, she wasn't given a higher position. The men still hold higher positions that give them good reputation in the society, an example is the case of Dauda Dieng, her suitor, who is the National Assembly Leader while Aissatou's former husband, Mwando Ba, is a Medical Doctor.

Aissatou didn't allow the patriarchal hegemony to affect her. She was able to stand her ground because of her exposure to education, which gives her the boldness to assert her rights. Looking from the religious, cultural and societal perspective, it seems impossible, but her level of education, helps her to maintain her firm determination, instead of depending on her husband and thereby, lack the will to leave

..... books saved you. Having become your refuge, they sustained you.

.....they enabled you to better yourself, what society refused you, they granted.

The school of interpretersled to your appointment into the Senegalese embassy in the United States. U make a very good living. You are developing in peace, as your letters tell me..... (pg. 32).

Unlike Binetou, whose husband's death had made her and her family returned back to their poverty state. They couldn't get their footings back in the society, after his death. They depend solely on him, as the breadwinner according to the patriarchal believe, that women are to be dependent on their husbands.

As for Binetou, she is a victim, your victims! feel sorry for her'. Lady mother-in-law sobbed. Binetou? Indifference itself. What did it matter to her, what was being said?

She was already dead inside....ever since her marriage to Modou (pg.71).

Economic emancipation

Ramatoulaye and Aissatou's friendship remains because of education and the recognition of the path each one took. Ramatoulaye is a teacher and Aissatou is an interpreter, both are highly educated. It is education that embellish their better understanding. Education give a greater reasoning power and the chance to make decisions. Education is a tool to a better life, which help to make choices and personal decisions. It is education that made Aissatou assert her rights and sense of being. Ramatoulaye desires that the two of them meet up and discuss as friends, which show how education can help to supply the lasting foundation between human beings as equals as a transcendency quality amidst a world of temporal contingency. It is education that Aissatou receives that empowers her to leave her polygamous husband. She was able to get a good job as an interpreter in the USA. She was able to identify herself, empowers herself , thereby reflect the power and importance of education.

Daba and Aissatou reflect generation of thinking women that establish their determination on reason. Daba is a self independent woman, who is a representative of the new wave of African women. She doesn't reject culture, but approaches it with sense and reason. She encourages her husband to rent the SICAP villa and paid for five years rent, so that they will be able to have their own share of their father's property, instead of Binetou.

They had led the fight for the distribution of Moudou's estate.

My son-in-law laid down on the table, the advance for SICAP villa and five years rent(pg.70).

While Aissatou's economic emancipation, makes her to help relief her friend from the burden of going in public bus with 12 children of hers.

I shall never forget your response, you, my sister nor my joy and my

surprise, when I was called to the Fiat agency and was told to choose a car which you had paid for, in full (pg 53).

If Ramatoulaye is not educated and have her own financial freedom, she won't be able to take care of her children .

The upkeep and education of young children do not pose serious problems; washed, fed, cared for, supervised, my own are growing well.....(pg 74).

It is education that gives her the alternative of ignoring her brother-in-law and elder brother of Modou, Tamsir's betrothal. She was able to wittily reject the marriage proposal of Daoudo Dieng. Also, it is education that gives young Nabou, the chance to establish a better thinking capability and to be a lady of purpose.

Ramatoulaye and Aissatou were both panacea for economic independence in this literary text. They were able to weather the storm, when their husbands married another wife. It was through their education that they were able to get their good footings and soft landing in the society. They didn't count it as a loss, when they got the wind of it that their husband had married another wife. In the case of Aissatou, she leaves without anything, but her sons, rent a house and starts her life afresh. She divorced him and travelled to America, this shows the importance of female education as a panacea to poverty reduction in the society. Aissatou was able to stand her ground because of her exposure to education, which gives her boldness to assert her rights.

Educating a woman gives her a chance to stand on her own and reach greater heights. Thus, a total education of a female brings about a great inspiration of a woman to the family, society and the whole world due to enlightenment.

Conclusion

These female characters, depict a change in the advancement of women's cause culturally and realized education as a good and great tool to overcome injustice and maltreatment. It is through education that the women were able to conquer and stand up to face several challenges. Through education, Aissatou was able to leave her husband, rise above and be a powerful source of support for her friend, both financially and psychologically. This study concludes that, Tambu and Ramatoulaye are representation of African Women, who are determined, resolute, ambitious, courageous and hardworking in order to use the educational means as a panacea to poverty reduction and inclusive development in Nigeria.

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