

EMPOWERED WOMEN IN A PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY: A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF OGUNDES' SONGS, 'MAMA EKO' AND 'TÈMI A DARÀ'

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Abstract

This study focuses on the display of power by women in a patriarchal society. It argues that in patriarchal societies, women's agency in some cultural activities is often sidelined. Although Hubert Ogunde's songs *Mama Eko* (1970) and *Tèmi a Dara* (1972) focus on the anti-social behavioral patterns of city women, in a satirical mode, this study aims at foregrounding female resilience and power within Yoruba cultural contexts. This study addresses the gap in feminist analyses of Nigerian music, particularly the underexplored gendered dimensions of Ogunde's discography, which reframes women's activities in post-colonial patriarchal settings. It examines how these songs subvert traditional gender hierarchies through lyrical and performative strategies. The methodology adopts a qualitative approach, using primary data from the lyrics and recordings of *Mama Eko* and *Tèmi a Dara*, sourced from archival materials. Secondary data were gathered from relevant books, journal articles, and credible internet sources on Nigerian music and feminist discourse. The data are transcribed and analyzed within the theoretical framework of the bell hooks' feminist theory (1984), which emphasizes intersectionality and resistance, providing a robust lens to interpret the gender dynamics in Ogunde's songs. The findings indicate that Ogunde's female characters employ strategic agency, womanist rigor and cultural subversion to challenge patriarchal norms, positioning women as agents of social change. The songs transcend mere entertainment, redefining women's identities beyond traditional roles. This study contributes to knowledge by enriching feminist scholarship on African music, particularly Yoruba oral traditions, and highlighting Ogunde's role in advocating gender equity. It offers insights into the intersection of music, gender, and cultural identity, providing a foundation for further research on feminist representations in African musical heritage.

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Introduction

In patriarchal societies, cultural productions such as music often mirror and reinforce gender hierarchies, positioning women as secondary to male authority. However, the musical works of Hubert Ogunde, a pioneering Yoruba artist, challenge these norms by focusing on women as resilient and transformative figures within Nigerian cultural narratives. Ogunde's songs, *Mama Eko* (1970) and *Tèmi a Dara* (1972), serve as powerful vehicles for social commentary, blending Yoruba musical traditions with feminist undertones to portray women who navigate and subvert patriarchal constraints. Rooted in post-colonial Yoruba society, these songs highlight female agency, womanist solidarity, and cultural resistance, offering a unique lens to explore women's empowerment. This study situates itself within feminist scholarship, examining how Ogunde's musical compositions disrupt patriarchal ideologies and contribute to discourses on gender equity in African performative arts.

Academic literature on Nigerian music and Yoruba cultural productions has largely overlooked the feminist dimensions of Ogunde's songs, focusing instead on their socio-political or ethnomusicological significance. This gap in the feminist analyses of *Mama Eko* and *Tèmi a Dara* underscores the need for a targeted study that explores how these works redefine women's strength in a patriarchal context. By analyzing these songs, this research seeks to address this scholarly oversight, illuminating the ways in which Ogunde's music serves as a platform for gendered resistance and empowerment. The study asks: How do *Mama Eko* and *Tèmi a Dara* employ feminist strategies to empower women and challenge patriarchal norms within Yoruba musical traditions?

This study examines the portrayal of women in Ogunde's selected songs through a feminist lens, utilizing bell hooks' feminist theory (1984), which emphasizes intersectionality and resistance to systemic oppression. The study is limited to *Mama Eko* and *Tèmi a Dara* due to their explicit focus on female characters and their availability in archival recordings. Limitations include the scarcity of secondary sources specifically addressing the gendered aspects of Ogunde's music and the challenge of interpreting historical songs through contemporary feminist frameworks. The methodology adopts a qualitative approach, drawing primary data from lyrical content and recordings of the two songs, supplemented by secondary data from relevant books, journal articles, and credible internet sources. Data were transcribed and analyzed thematically within the hooks' feminist framework to identify strategies of empowerment and subversion.

This research contributes to academic discourse by advancing feminist scholarship on African music, particularly Yoruba oral traditions, and highlighting Ogunde's role in promoting gender equity through song. It provides new insights into the intersection of gender, music, and cultural identity, laying the groundwork for further studies on feminist representations in African musical heritage. By addressing the underexplored gendered dimensions of Ogunde's work, this study bridges a critical scholarly gap, fostering a deeper understanding of how Nigerian music can challenge patriarchal structures and amplify women's voices in both historical and contemporary contexts.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adapted for this study is Feminist Theory with a focus on Bell Hooks' Feminist Theory (1984). Feminist theory, however, emerged from the socio-political movements advocating for gender equality, women's rights, and the dismantling of patriarchal structures. The origins of feminist thought can be traced back to the Enlightenment era, with early feminist writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft (1792), who argued for women's education and autonomy. However, feminism gained significant momentum in the 19th and 20th centuries through waves of activism—first-wave feminism (focused on suffrage and legal rights), second-wave feminism (addressing workplace discrimination, reproductive rights, and cultural oppression), and third-wave

feminism (emphasizing intersectionality and diversity). Feminist theory critiques systemic gender inequalities and seeks to redefine the power relations between men and women in society (Tong, 2009).

Feminist theory broadly examines how gender oppression operates within social, political, and cultural institutions. It challenges the traditional male-dominated narratives and advocates for women's agency, voice, and liberation. The key concerns include the objectification of women, economic marginalization, and the cultural reinforcement of gender roles. Feminist theorists like Simone de Beauvoir (1949), in *The Second Sex*, argued that womanhood is socially constructed, while later scholars such as Audre Lorde (1984) emphasized the intersections of race, class, and sexuality in shaping women's experiences. This intersectional approach is crucial in analyzing how different forms of oppression interact, particularly in postcolonial contexts where women face compounded marginalization (Crenshaw, 1989).

Beyond bell hooks, several feminist scholars have contributed to the discourse on gender and power. Audre Lorde's *Sister Outsider* (1984) highlighted the importance of acknowledging differences among women, while Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality (1989) exposed how race and gender discrimination overlap. Additionally, postcolonial feminists like Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1988) critiqued Western feminism's homogenization of Third World women, advocating for context-specific analyses of oppression. These perspectives enrich feminist discourse by recognizing the diverse struggles women face across cultures, which is particularly relevant in analyzed African women's experiences in patriarchal societies.

Bell Hooks (1984), a prominent Black feminist, revolutionized feminist discourse with her 1984 work, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. She critiqued mainstream feminism for excluding marginalized women, particularly Black and working-class women, arguing that feminism must address the interconnectedness of race, class, and gender oppression. Hooks emphasized that patriarchy harms both men and women by perpetuating toxic masculinity and limiting emotional expression. Her concept of "feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression" (hooks, 1984, p. 26) shifts the focus from individual empowerment to collective liberation, advocating for systemic change rather than mere equality within existing structures.

Hooks' (1984) theory is transformative in its insistence on inclusivity and intersectionality. Unlike earlier feminist movements that often centered on white, middle-class women, hooks called for a feminism that acknowledges and resists multiple forms of oppression. She also introduced the idea of "love ethics," arguing that genuine feminist practice must be rooted in mutual respect and care rather than adversarial power struggles. Furthermore, Hooks' critique of media and popular culture as tools of patriarchal conditioning provides a useful lens for analyzing how art and music either reinforce or challenge gender norms—an essential consideration in studying Ogunde's songs.

This study, "Empowering Women in a Patriarchal Context: A Feminist Analysis of Ogunde's Songs Mama Eko and Tèmi a Dara," benefits significantly from the hooks' framework. Her intersectional approach allows for an examination of how Nigerian women navigate patriarchal oppression within cultural and socio-economic constraints. By analyzing Ogunde's lyrics through the hooks' lens, the study can uncover whether his songs reinforce traditional gender roles or subvert them, contributing to women's empowerment. Additionally, Hooks' emphasis on the role of culture in shaping gender perceptions aligns with the study's focus on music as a cultural tool for either perpetuating or dismantling patriarchy. Thus, applying Hooks' theory ensures a nuanced critique of gender dynamics in Ogunde's work, highlighting its potential for feminist resistance in a patriarchal society.

Literature Review

Feminist Theory and Gender Studies

Few-Demo and Allen's (2020) work provides a comprehensive review of gender, feminist, and intersectional literature on families from 2010 to 2019, emphasizing systemic social stratification, feminist praxis, and intersectionality to address inequities in family dynamics. Their analysis aligns closely with the study "Empowering Women in a Patriarchal Context: A Feminist Analysis of Ogunde's Songs Mama Eko and Tèmi a Dara," which uses feminist perspectives to explore how Hubert Ogunde's songs challenge patriarchal norms and advocate for women's empowerment in Nigerian society. Few-Demo and Allen's focus on gender as a system of social stratification resonates with the study's examination of how Ogunde's lyrics critique patriarchal structures that marginalize women, highlighting power disparities in familial and societal contexts. By identifying empirical exemplars that apply critical feminist approaches, Few-Demo and Allen provide a framework that supports the study's approach to analyzing cultural artifacts like music as tools for feminist resistance and empowerment, situating Ogunde's work within a broader discourse of challenging gender-based oppression in the private and public spheres.

Furthermore, Few-Demo and Allen's emphasis on intersectionality complements the study's exploration of how Ogunde's songs address the compounded effects of gender, cultural, and social inequities in a postcolonial Nigerian context. Their call for inclusivity and relevance in family studies mirrors the study's aim to foreground African women's voices within patriarchal settings, using Ogunde's music as a medium to amplify marginalized perspectives. While Few-Demo and Allen advocate for pushing family studies toward more inclusive methodologies, the Ogunde study exemplifies this by applying feminist and intersectional lenses to African cultural productions, revealing how art can serve as a site of resistance against intersecting oppressions. However, the study could further align with Few-Demo and Allen's future directions by explicitly incorporating empirical data or broader intersectional factors, such as class or ethnicity, to deepen its analysis of women's empowerment in Ogunde's work, thus contributing to a more nuanced understanding of family and gender dynamics in African feminist scholarship.

MacArthur, Carrard, and Willetts' (2021) article, "Exploring gendered change: concepts and trends in gender equality assessments," provides a systematic review of gender equality in the development literature from 2009 to 2019, focusing on conceptual approaches to assessing the generated impacts of interventions. Their analysis, which employs bibliographic trend visualization and co-citation analysis, highlights the dominance of empowerment-focused frameworks in gender and development studies, while noting a lack of geographic diversity and limited inclusion of men and boys in gender equality dynamics. This work is highly relevant to the study "Empowering Women in a Patriarchal Context: A Feminist Analysis of Ogunde's Songs Mama Eko and Tèmi A Dara," which examines how Hubert Ogunde's songs challenge patriarchal norms and promote women's empowerment in a Nigerian context. MacArthur et al.'s identification of empowerment as a central concept aligns with the Ogunde study's feminist approach, which uses music as a cultural artifact to critique systemic gender inequalities and advocate for women's agency within a patriarchal society. However, the study's focus on Nigerian cultural production addresses the geographic gap noted by MacArthur et al., contributing a context-specific perspective from sub-Saharan Africa, a region underrepresented in their reviewed literature.

The theoretical frameworks outlined by MacArthur et al., which emphasize feminist principles and divergent disciplinary approaches to gendered change, provide a robust lens for analyzing the Ogunde study's methodology and findings. The study's feminist analysis of Ogunde's songs fits within MacArthur et al.'s conceptualization of empowerment as a pathway to gender-transformative change, particularly through its exploration of how cultural

expressions can reshape gender norms and power dynamics. However, MacArthur et al.'s critique of the limited engagement with men and boys in gender equality research highlights a potential area for expansion in the Ogunde study, which primarily focuses on women's empowerment. By incorporating intersectional elements such as cultural and postcolonial contexts, the Ogunde study aligns with MacArthur et al.'s call for more nuanced, feminist-informed approaches but could further benefit from explicitly addressing how men's roles or masculinities are portrayed in Ogunde's work to fully embrace the transformative potential they advocate. This alignment with the findings of MacArthur et al. underscores the study's contribution to gender-transformative development.

Tulasi (2023) observes the significant role of African women writers in challenging gender inequalities and amplifying marginalized voices through literature. The abstract effectively underscores how these writers use their works as tools for empowerment, reflecting real-world struggles and advocating for social change. The emphasis on their inclusion in academic curricula, particularly in Gender Studies and African literature programs, reinforces their growing influence in shaping discourse on identity and patriarchy. However, the review could benefit from more concrete examples of specific authors, texts, or rhetorical strategies employed by these writers to "reconstitute cultural erasure." A deeper engagement with feminist literary theory or postcolonial critiques would also strengthen the analysis of how African women's writing disrupts patriarchal norms.

While the abstract succinctly captures the oppressive structures faced by African women, it generalizes the "patriarchy in African social orders" without acknowledging regional or cultural variations in gender dynamics. A more nuanced discussion of how different African societies interpret and resist female subordination would enrich the argument. Additionally, the claim that these writers enjoy a "more extensive audience" in higher education could be substantiated with empirical data or references to specific institutions' curricula. Despite these gaps, the review succeeds in framing African women's literature as a vital force for social transformation, inviting further exploration of its intersectional and transnational dimensions.

Music as a Tool for Feminist Resistance in Nigeria

In Nigeria, music has emerged as a powerful medium for feminist resistance, with female artists and activists using lyrics, performance, and cultural influence to challenge patriarchal norms, advocate for gender equality, and amplify women's voices. From the Afrobeat protest traditions of Fela Kuti, later reinterpreted by women like Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, contemporary artists such as Tiwa Savage, Yemi Alade, and Simi, Nigerian women have harnessed music to critique systemic oppression, demand bodily autonomy, and redefine femininity in a male-dominated industry. Their work not only reflects societal struggles but also mobilizes public discourse, making music a dynamic tool for feminist consciousness-raising and social change. This review of literature explores how Nigerian women musicians subvert traditional gender roles, negotiate cultural expectations, and contribute to broader feminist movements through their art.

Ojukwu and Ibekwe (2020) explore music as a vital instrument for feminist resistance in Nigeria, focusing on how Igbo women use songs to articulate their collective experiences and resist marginalization, stereotyping, and humiliation. Their study highlights the pervasive issue of domestic violence and its detrimental effects, such as depression and physical harm, on Nigerian women. Employing a survey method and feminist theory, the researchers analyzed the content and textual elements of songs used by Igbo women to express emotions and subtly protest societal issues, offering a non-violent means of communication to address family conflicts and draw attention to their plight. The study underscores music's role as an effective tool for voicing suppressed narratives and advocates for musicologists to prioritize the collection, notation, and recording of these culturally significant female songs to preserve them for future generations.

Patriarchy

Patriarchal societies have been characterized by the dominance of social, political, and economic spaces by men in almost all parts of Africa and many other regions of the world. Even with the said control of the aforementioned sections of the society by men, it is not in all cases that women are pushed to the background as mere recipients of gender norms. Women are often associated with some resistance, and from recent research, women are (though not overtly) engaged in some struggles to subvert and challenge male dominance in the field of politics, religion, economy, etc., (Sultana and Alami 2023).

Patriarchy is defined as a system in which men dominate in the roles of political leadership, moral authority, and control of property, while women are relegated to subordinate positions (Connell, 2020). Despite the restrictions, women now have a means of organizing the power dynamics. Even amid patriarchy and limitations, women still maintain a considerable level of active involvement in family decision-making and even make their voices heard in matters that involve private and public participation (Mahmoud and Ali, 2022). As a result of women's increase enrollment in school, up to the tertiary level, and their exposure to social media, they are now actively engaged in social activities and political endeavors, thereby reducing the prevalent level of restriction against women (Alami, 2023). Women, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, now use economic power through engagement in trade to compete favorably with their male counterparts, to emancipate themselves from the limitations placed on them by the patriarchal societies. The economic breakthrough has also given the women the authority both in their various household and communities, a good number of them are assuming the roles of breadwinners (Adeyemi and Ogunleye, 2021).

In the same vein, research shows that in South Asia, microfinance aids given to women have significantly empowered such women in the decision-making power. (Sharma and Patel, 2022), also found that Indian women became more prominent in family decision making based on their (economic) self-reliance. They ultimately challenge their male counterparts in a society where patriarchy been influential. Also in Africa, where patriarchy is the norm, women became more relevant in the scheme of things as they have the economic wherewithal to compete with the male folk in the area of family control; women now influence the behaviour of their, particularly, male children when it comes to choices like marriage partners. Female counselors are becoming more pronounced in family affairs (Osei-Bonsu, 2023). According to Gozalez and Rivera (2021), "In Latin America, women are often seen as the moral center of the family". In their argument, they maintained that societal power strengthened the women to reshape the values and behaviours in contrast to the hitherto male dominance.

Women, in recent times, are now faring prominently in political activities and gaining more ground. They participate in grassroots mobilization through protest and demonstration against patriarchal hegemony (Hosseini and Khadivar, 2023). The resistance movement embarked upon by some Arabian women indicates their impact toward inspiring the womenfolk in creating more awareness in women recognition and consideration for a more acceptance into the societal norms (Kandiyoti, 2020).

Okonkwo and Edem (2021) posit that women, in many traditional African societies, are saddled with the responsibilities of presiding over some cultural and religious institutions and that a women act as priestesses and spiritual leaders. We now have an avalanche of women reverends and pastors all over countries in the sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Nigeria. With this development, women now challenge the dominant roles played by men in the church hierarchies (Reinhart, 2023). Even in Nigeria, many General Overseers/Supreme heads of churches are women. There are cases of women taking over the leadership of the churches of their husbands after their demise, which has never been the norm before the recent times.

In the modern world, sexuality tends to exert a vigorous influence, if not total control over men by women. Women taunt men with their beauty, physical posture, and romantic relationships, thereby subjecting men to subordination while the women assume the role of power brokers/influencers, even in the acclaimed male-dominated societies. Most of the time, women influence the psychological, emotional, and social being of men to be at the receiving end of their (women's) antics and schemes. The men, the typical 'controllers', therefore, become the 'controlled' through the sensuous and erotic leverages of the female gender (Eze and Balogun, 2023). Technology has aided new platforms as meeting points among women globally. Through such media, women effect their collaborations across cultures to assert transitional power. Women organizations in, mostly in the US and later, countries like India, Nigeria, and Egypt are vigorously using digital tools to make their voices heard unencumbered, even in the middle of patriarchy. They openly challenge male domination as an entrenched gender norm (Adewale and Uche, 2022).

'Mama Eko' is a social commentary on the ills of the society brought about by the admixture of African, particularly Yorùbá culture, with the Western culture, thereby producing a hybrid popular culture. Though the song portrays the predominant life pattern in the cities in general, it is a personal experience of the poet being expressed in the first-person narrative technique.

The song focuses on the decay in the moral value system among the city dwellers, which cuts across sex, age, and social strata. The level of moral decadence could be traced to the rural-urban drift that characterized the immediate post-independence years, especially in the first decade of independence. This period is aptly described as:

A period of revolutionary changes that had far-reaching consequences in terms of values, traditions, and modes of thought, all of which kept changing according to the intensity of the clashes of the Nigerian indigenous culture and the foreign culture of the colonizer (Omo Asein 2008, 162).

The city life has actually affected the society negatively in various ways, including the prevalence of divorce, leading many middle-aged women to become single mothers. Women in this category are often referred to as "Madam" or as used in the song, 'Lagos Mama'. This refers to women that are independent of any man, the type referred to in Yorùbá parlance, as *Owó Lówó, èyìn ní'lẹ* (money in hand, back on the mat). Such women rarely have genuine love/affection for whoever they go out with, as their major motive is to get the best out of men and possibly swindle them of all they have and go their ways. It is in this light that Filmao describes a woman with such love affairs as 'false' because she only seeks material well-being, alluded to as possession of money, a car, luxury furniture and so on. And since the stability of the attachment to the man depends on the presence or permanent existence of these goods for his or her benefit, when they disappear, 'love' also comes to an end (1992, 53). The poet's personal, as a victim of a woman in this social class is relating his regrettable experience because of what comes out of the unfortunate relationship which he humorously narrates.

First, the theme of 'Not all things that glitter are gold' is clear in the poem. Second, one needs wisdom to survive the temptation of the morally corrupt society in which one in which one finds himself.

'Awẹro', the second song, is also a satire based on the moral laxity among city dwellers in the pre-independence era. The setting of the song could be Lagos, which was the base of Ogunde and the seat of the colonial government of Nigeria then. However, the character represented by Awero can be found in many West African cities. The song is aptly described as '... an amusing witty commentary on modern women with their insatiable desire for money' (Clark 1979, 105).

One theme of this song is the vanity of love for material things. Awero, for instance, marries the poet persona because of the comfort she expects as the wife of a wealthy man. This is evident in her propensity for ostentatious

living, as exemplified by her demands for expensive dresses, foods and drinks. The lesson learned here is that money cannot buy love. For instance, the poet's persona hinges on his confidence in maintaining a high society lady relying on his fluence as observed in the song.

The second theme has to do with hope for determined persons despite adversity. The poet highlights the vanity in glossing over the difficulties or tribulations that one faces. He hints that there is no point in lamenting if a wife leaves a man. Even at that point, one needs to hope alive and forge ahead in life regardless of one's present misfortunes.

The song opens with a story-telling style, narrating the experience of the poet persona meeting with Awero, the object of satire in the song. It exposes the character of Awero as a gold digger, who does not mind impoverishing a gullible lover. She is always in demand for flamboyant dresses, expensive meals and alcohol. All these are ordered most of the time, at the expense of her lover on credit. Ogunde further depicts Awero as a high-society lady (who matches the description given by Oduguwa) in the following words:

What is called Olóşó (prostitution) and baby mama (an act of carrying a man's baby without getting married to him) is today common in our society. However, the majority of these deviant behaviors are due to bad peer influence and knowledge of Western culture.

From the excerpt, the moral decadence, especially among women, in contemporary African society is linked with Africans' embrace of colonialism and its attendant 'civilization'. Therefore, Africans' contact with modern civilization has distorted their values and orientation in the pre-colonial time. However, it should be noted that the behavioral patterns described in this song transcend the period of early contact with colonialism to this time. For instance, Awero, like an Olóşó (in current parlance), drops her baby at home and goes out pretending to be a spinster (perhaps) with the intention of engaging in an illicit love affair with other men. The immoral behavior of Awero further makes the husband to feel dejected. This is one of the traumatic experiences a man undergoes while in love with a woman far below his age; more so, when such a woman marries the man for material gains. However, the poet's persona hopes that the woman can still have a change of attitude. He further buttresses the need to remain hard-working and persevere to be financially stable in order to meet all his financial obligations, which include the ability to take care of a woman. This, according to the poet, is achievable with total trust in God.

Ogunde philosophize that it is a futile effort for one to be melancholic over being deserted by a spouse. He further states that a woman who goes her own way today may return to become very supportive if she chooses to return to her husband again. This shows that the man is genuinely in love with the woman, in spite of her infidelity. The man is resolute that with hard work, prosperity is sure and there is hope of reconciling with his wife. The song confirms Awero's decision to finally call it quit with her husband. Nevertheless, the husband remains resolute to keep on working hard to remain prosperous and financially relevant in the society.

The satire in this song is registered as it is foolhardy for a man to work so hard to become prosperous and thereafter goes ahead to marry a high society lady, with the conviction that money can buy love. Subsequently, Awero becomes more embarrassing to her husband (and the listeners/readers) as she engages in humiliating acts, which include buying clothes, food and drinks (alcohol) on credit. In Yorùbá culture, responsible women should not be found frequenting eateries and beer parlor. They are not expected to buy food and drinks on credit. Ogunde uses sarcastic humor in the song with Awero's act of dropping her child to appear unmarried. The reaction of the dejected 'rich' husband to the misbehavior of the fleeing wife also elicits laughter, as he had used his hard-earned wealth to marry a lecherous and irresponsible woman. The poet's persona has earlier described her in a rather uncomplimentary manner as 'omoge olómèrèmere' (ostentatious and elegant lady) before marrying her.

The style of presentation in this song also aids the realization of the satire in it. For instance, the opening of the song, which portrays an individual who believes in the sanctity and dignity of labor, equally reveals his foolishness. In the narration, the plot becomes abridged as ‘meeting a society lady’ quickly runs unto ‘taking a wife out’. Thereafter, the unruly behaviors of the wife are ridiculed by the poet; as he figuratively creates parallels in his imploratory and persuasive expressions in making his audience realize the importance of courage in the face of betrayal and disappointment. For instance, both ‘a thousand fish’ and ‘a thousand stars’ refer to the avalanche of more responsible women out there, when some (women) decide to leave their husbands.

There is the use of exaggeration for distortion, which is a technique of satire. For instance, the character of Awero is deliberately overblown as her longing for high taste is described in lines

*Awero bought the dinner gown without having a kobo
She ordered for plates of èbà on credit
She bought the dinner gown without having a kobo
She ordered beer and could not pay.*

The poet persona’s disdain for his critics is also overstated as he directs his haters to ‘get drowned’. In the same vein, he further exaggerates as he entreats spouses against the grave reaction of committing suicide (hanging) in the case of divorce. It is an irony, however, that the wife of a wealthy man should be buying on credit. Here, the poet persona points to the moral bankruptcy of Àwèró. The expressing the fact that hardly can a woman permanently subject a man to ridicule when such a man is hardworking and wealthy. Therefore, it is insinuated that with handwork and the attendant riches, a man can make choices.

Ogunde further reveals the level of moral laxity in the society as represented in the character of Àwèró as a carefree mother. Africans place much premium on childbearing in marriage for the continuity and sustenance of mankind. Àwèró could easily fit into the class of young ladies in our contemporary society who abandon their babies at public dump sites or elsewhere. Such women perpetrate this repulsive act either to cover up their shame, having conceived such babies without men to claim responsibility for their pregnancies, or because of their financial incapability to cater for children. Therefore, having abandoned her child, Àwèró is portrayed as a woman who does not value children.

Like an unruffled man who summons courage to ignore his critics over his infamous or undignifying act, the poet persona employs artistic maneuvering to cover his shame. He maintains that, in spite of the embarrassment he is subjected to by his wife, he is above all taunts; and that he would still continue to make fortunes. He skillfully attacks his possible traducers: the youths, the elderly ones, friends and so on. He states that in spite of all odds, he would equal whatever success his peers achieve.

Conclusion

In the analysis of the two songs, ‘Mama Eko’ and ‘Temi a Dara’, Ogunde actually explores and exposes the aftermath of his experience from the clutch of two women, Mama Eko, being a mistress and Awero (in ‘Temi a Dara’) a housewife he got married to in a hurry without recourse to proper dating for mutual understanding of character. However, based on the indebted study of the songs and the focus of the writers, the findings provide a general insight into how women wield power over men in African cultural contexts. In many cities, particularly Lagos (Nigeria), the setting of the two songs, we can see how women exercise significant influence and control over men through subtle means. The study reveals the complex and multifaceted nature of women’s strength in a male-dominated culture. Through the portrayal of strong, resilient and resourceful female characters, these songs challenge traditional patriarchal norms and stereotypes, highlighting women’s agency and resilience.

This study demonstrates that women’s empowerment is not a monolithic concept, but rather a dynamic and context-specific process that involves navigating and subverting patriarchal structures. The female characters in

these songs embody various forms of power, and their stories serve as a testament to the strength and resilience of women despite patriarchal dominance.

Ultimately, this analysis underscores the importance of feminist scholarship in uncovering the ways in which women negotiate and challenge patriarchal power structures and, highlights the significance of Ogunde's songs as a cultural resource for promoting women's empowerment and challenging patriarchal norms.

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